

**Report of the Evaluation of DDR and CIP in AFGHANISTAN**

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*One drop at a time makes a river -*

*Collecting one gun*

*at a time makes peace -*



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One drop at a time makes a river -  
Collecting one gun at a time makes peace -*

## **Report of the Evaluation of DDR and CIP in AFGHANISTAN**

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## **THE REPORT CONSISTS OF FIVE PARTS:**

**PART 1: Summary Report**

**PART 2: Lessons and Recommendations**

**PART 3: Commander Incentives Programme**

**PART 4: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration**

**PART 5: Annexes**

### **Abstract**

Between 2003 and 2006 the UNDP and UNAMA assisted the Government of Afghanistan to organise the down-sizing and disarmament of Afghan Military Forces. Generous support from a number of donors, led by Japan, funded the Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) created for this purpose, leading to more than 63,000 ex-combatants being disarmed and demobilized and more than 106,000 weapons collected. An external evaluation of the DDR and CIP components of ANBP was desired by all stakeholders, to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the Afghan experience, to identify its impacts, and to draw lessons from the Afghan experience that can be useful to other disarmament programmes. This is the evaluation report prepared by a team of four independent specialists.

Kabul, 6 September 2007

## PART 1.

# SUMMARY REPORT

### Contents:

Executive Summary

Thanks

Acronyms

- \* 1.1. Introduction: an overview of ANBP's eight (*de facto*) components
- \* 1.2. Background to DDR
- \* 1.3. Relevance of ANBP, DDR, CIP
- \* 1.4. Efficiency in terms of cash (value for money) and delivery (value for people)
- \* 1.5. Effectiveness, Objectives, Dissident Opinions<sup>1</sup> and Stakeholder Satisfaction: did DDR improve lives and promote peace?
- \* 1.6. Impacts (positive and negative)
- \* 1.7. Sustainability

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Evaluation Team was requested to evaluate the DDR and CIP components of the Afghan New Beginnings Project, to analyze the direct and indirect impacts of the programme, and draw Lessons Learned, and to make recommendations to the Government of Afghanistan, UNDP and the donor working group concerning future policies and strategies in support of ANBP's objectives.

We identify eight different components inside the ANBP. The 'Ammo Project' and 'DIAG' were accorded separate project status, but they could have been integral parts of a six-year DDR programme. Likewise the Heavy Weapons Cantonment could have been a separate project, but wasn't. Reintegration is so complex that could have been broken down functionally into a number of different units. This raises structural DDR management issues we address in the Lessons Learned.

**We find that the Disarmament & Reintegration Commission Chaired by Vice-President Khalili (with Minister Stanekzai as Vice-Chairman) is the appropriate high-level mechanism for coordinating inter-ministerial actions and the Afghan government's partnership with UNAMA and UNDP in the delicate security sector.** We recommend that the mandate of the D&R Commission should be extended to cover destruction of surplus weapons and ammunitions and explosives, and that this activity should receive continued UNAMA and UNDP support for three more years.

We find that the original three-year mandate of ANBP was too short, and its work is incomplete due to this programme design error. Donors were generous and far-sighted in their support of ANBP: funding was adequate and flexible, and funds arrived early enough

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<sup>1</sup> UN evaluation guidelines specifically encourage evaluators to provide space for Dissident Opinions.

for project activities to work smoothly. Yet all donors recognize that the work is not complete. We recommend that the Ammo and DIAG projects should not be handed over to the GoA in 2008. On the contrary, **we recommend that UNAMA and UNDP should continue to support the government in managing these projects, assuring international standards and recognition for a further three years.**

We recognize the extreme sensitivity of weapon policy and weapon ownership issues in Afghanistan. Afghans have an historical relationship with firearms that borders on the romantic, and Afghans are sensitive to the fact that the millions of small arms and munitions in the country have cost it dear in money and in blood. Nevertheless some dramatic symbol is needed from the nation's political leaders, to show Afghans and the world that the legacy of war is broken and the flow of weapons must be stopped.

**We recommend that the emotional dependency of the Afghan nation on firearms should be challenged in a dramatic way with a major, public and symbolic destruction of soviet era surplus weapons that tells Afghans, 'We must put the rule of firearms behind us.' This weapon destruction ceremony should take place on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2008 (UN International Weapon Destruction Day).** A documentary film should be made of the ceremony and widely broadcast. President Karzai should describe and highlight this dramatic event – and Afghanistan's destruction of its mine stockpiles - in a speech to the UN General Assembly in September 2008. We believe this will radically change international and domestic perceptions of Afghanistan's progress towards peace.

**Disarmament is first and foremost a political activity, and its success should be judged by political factors. We find that the ANBP disarmament project – and specifically through its DDR and CIP components – has made a significant contribution towards promoting peace and bringing stability in Afghanistan.**

Overall we are favourably impressed with the management, results and impacts of ANBP. The collection of light and heavy weapons changed the level and nature of potential violence in Afghanistan and brought commanders into the political and electoral processes. Downsizing the armed forces, and the defence budget, paved the way for creating a new national army. DDR has been the most successful aspect of Afghanistan's security sector reform. The CIP created significant peace building and reconciliation initiatives, while helping to buy time for a democratic political process to develop. The destruction of weapons, ammunition and stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines has brought very significant benefits to Afghanistan, although these achievements are not sufficiently recognized at home or overseas.

ANBP created an excellent, committed Afghan staff whose competence is a national asset. ANBP missed opportunities with demobilization and reintegration, and we recommend that UNDP should pursue post-integration activities for three more years through the NSP, the RSPE, and the NABDP. We recommend that eight ANBP regional offices should be maintained to support the ongoing Ammo, DIAG and post-reintegration projects, and that other UN projects should use these offices for greater decentralization, for national capacity building, and to obtain development impact in the provinces.



## Thanks

Evaluations seldom offer thanks, but they always mean a lot of extra work for the staff. Evaluators take up space and time, and above all demand extra work from people whose office hours are already filled with their normal workload. It is bad luck on the staff who have to handle evaluators. The staff of ANBP and UNDP were very tolerant and extremely helpful, led by cheerful and efficient managers who put in a lot of time with and for us: David Wilson, Kavil Mohsan, Dominic Grant and Anton Ivanov at ANBP and the five regional offices we visited; Anita Nirody, Ian Holland, Basir Samiri and Lisa Singh at UNDP. We also greatly appreciated the support of Chris Alexander and his team at UNAMA. The two main supporters of our work, however, were Shapari Enshayan of ANBP and Besmillah Ekhlās in UNDP. They put in long hours preparing the mission and organizing dozens of meetings for us. They were unfailingly friendly, helpful and efficient.

The other key people were those who ran the logistics: Ehsanullah and his team of drivers, Achim Bruedgam, Haroon Atmar and Musa Jaji who arranged our secure transport in and out of the country and a whole team of accountants who were efficient and quick and friendly. We thank you all and we remember you all as fine exponents of the legendary Afghan hospitality.

## **Acronyms used in this report**

AITM	- Afghan Institute for Training in Management
AMF	- Afghan Military Forces
ANA	- Afghan National Army
ANAP	- Afghan National Auxiliary Police
ANBP	- Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme
ANP	- Afghan National Police
ATA	- Afghanistan Transitional Administration
BCPR	- Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP)
CDC	- Community Development Councils (of NSP)
CIP	- Commanders' Incentive Programme
CRIB	- Commanders' Incentive Review Board
CSO	- Civil society organizations
CSTC	- It means 'ISAF military people supporting ANA'
DDR	- Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
D&RC	- Demobilization & Reintegration Commission
3D4R	- see section 9.1.
DIAG	- Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups programme
FAO	- Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN
FRP	- Financial Redundancy Package offered to CIP commanders
GAP	- Government Appointments Panel
GoA	- Government of Afghanistan
GOLIAG	- my favourite acronym! Government Officials with Links to Armed Groups. (Have you met any Goliags recently? I had tea with a Goliag.)
HWC	- Heavy Weapons Cantonment
ICRC	- International Committee of the Red Cross
IDDRS	- International DDR Standards (published by UN)
ILO	- International Labour Organisation of the United Nations
IMS	- information management systems.
INGO	- International NGO
IOG	- International Observer Group
IP	- Implementing Partner
M&E	- monitoring and evaluation
MDG	- Millennium Development Goals
MDU	- Mobile Disarmament Unit
MoD	- Ministry of Defence
MoE	- Ministry of Education
MoL	- Ministry of Labour
MoPH	- Ministry of Public Health
MoWA	- Ministry of Women's Affairs
MRRD	- Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation & Development
MoSAMD	- Ministry of Social Affairs, Martyrs and the Disabled
NABDP	- National Area-Based Development Project
NGO	- Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDP	- National Skills Development Program
NSP	- National Solidarity Programme (of MRRD)
PWD	- people with disabilities
RSPE	- Reintegration Support Project for Employment
RVC	- Regional Verification Committees
SALW	- Small Arms and Light Weapons
SRSG	- Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the UN
SSR	- Security Sector Reform
TSA	- Transitional Safety Allowance (given to XCs)
UNDPA	- United Nations Department for Political Affairs
UNDPKO	- UN Department for Peace Keeping Operations
UNFPA	- UN Fund for Population Activities

UNICEF	- United Nations Children’s Fund
UNDP	- United Nations Development Programme
UNMACA	- United Nations Mine Action Center for Afghanistan
UNODC	- United Nations Office for Drug Control
USAID	- United States Agency for International Development
WFP	- World Food Programme of the United Nations
WHO	- World Health Organisation of the UN
XC/Xcom	- ex-combatants

## Table of Contents

* 1.1.	Introduction: an overview of eight ANBP components.....	8
*1.2.	Background to ANBP and DDR-CIP .....	17
*1.3.	Relevance.....	19
* 1.4.	Efficiency.....	20
*1.5.	Effectiveness, Objectives, Dissenting Voices and Stakeholder Satisfactions: .....	23
1.5.1.	Government of Afghanistan.....	23
1.5.2.	Provincial governments and officials.....	26
1.5.3.	Afghan civil society and the general public.....	27
1.5.5.	Ex-combatants’ wives and families .....	31
1.5.6.	Communities receiving XCs, including martyrs’ widows and orphans and disabled veterans.....	32
1.5.7.	International governmental and UN stakeholders.....	35
1.5.8.	International observers of the DDR process .....	37
1.5.9.	DDR-CIP Donors.....	39
1.5.10.	International civil society organizations (some were IPs).....	42
1.5.11.	Local and international business community.....	44
1.5.12.	Current and former members of ANBP staff.....	46
* 1.6.	Impacts - strategic overview of impacts (positive and negative).....	47
1.6.1.	Impact on Security in Afghanistan .....	47
1.6.2.	Impact on peace in Afghanistan.....	48
1.6.3.	Impact on Regional peace.....	49
1.6.4.	Impact on healing Afghan society .....	51
1.6.5.	Impact on political leadership, illegal militias and the rule of law .....	52
1.6.6.	Impact on Afghan democratic governance .....	54
1.6.7.	Impact on the Afghan economy.....	55
* 1.7.	Sustainability.....	56
1.7.1.	Giving new lives to ex-combatants.....	56
1.7.2.	ANBP Staffing.....	57
1.7.3.	ANBP data and information systems.....	57

**\* 1.1. Introduction: an overview of eight ANBP components**

- **DDR – Disarmament for Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)**
- **DDR - Disarmament for Heavy Weapons**
- **Destruction of weapons and ammunition**
- **Demobilization of Afghan Military Forces**
- **Reintegration of XComs and the other ‘Rs’**
- **CIP – Commanders’ Incentive Programme**
- **Anti-Personnel Mine & Ammunition Stockpile - ‘Ammo’ project,**
- **DIAG - the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups programme.**

**• DDR – Disarmament of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)**

The classic micro-disarmament activity of the DDR+DIAG programme had brought in 94,262 light weapons by 30 August 2007, of which 56,163 were destroyed. From our point of view, DIAG is a second phase of the Afghan DDR project which was aimed specifically at reducing the size of the Afghan Military Forces (AMF) and removing their SALW from circulation. This it achieved successfully.

The mechanism used was the Mobile Disarmament Unit (MDU). These units moved and sub-divided as needed (officially they were eight in number). In times DDR has a cantonment process with semi-permanent camps where XCs come, and the DDR process takes place. The innovative MDU system suited the needs of Afghanistan much better since many the AMF units were really local militias, newly registered as units of the MoD after the fall of Kabul. ANBP’s disarmament programme was innovative, efficient, dynamic and well-organised.

Some of the DDR units were originally from the full-time Afghan army, and officered by professional career soldiers. These men did not wish to end their careers, and it is true to say that they were demobilized against their will. This has left ‘high and dry’ some very bitter men in their 40s and 50s, many of whom told us they have only one career – that of a professional military officer – and they wish for no other. In this country built on Honour, these men feel they deserve Respect and Recognition – even more than they feel they deserve a decent pension.

Most of the ordinary soldiers, on the other hand, were happy to leave military service. Only a few of the demobilized men had ever been full-time soldiers. Many were part-time *jihadi* fighters who returned to their farms after the war ended, and for them this DDR process was an unexpected bonus. Some of the long-serving *jihadis* were left out, however: and these too are bitter men who feel they fought against communism to win the liberation of their homeland and they have been forgotten. The table below (supplied by ANBP on 27 August 2007) indicates the number of XCs put through various processes as well as the number of weapons collected:

<b>Disarmament</b>	<b>Demobilization</b>	<b>Reintegration</b>
63,380	62,376	53,145
<b>Light Weapons handed to MoD</b>	<b>Heavy Weapons collected for MoD</b>	
38,099	12,248	
<b>Total weapons destroyed</b>	<b>Total weapons collected</b>	
56,163	106,510	

The disarmament and demobilization phases came to an end in November 2005, with the last AMF members officially handing their weapons over to President Karzai in a ceremony held in Kabul. The reintegration phase of DDR officially ended on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006, when the DDR mandate came to an end.

### • **DDR - Disarmament of Heavy Weapons**

It became clear in late 2003 as fighting broke out in Mazar (and then in Herat in early 2004) that Heavy Weapons Cantonment was a necessary condition for bringing peace. The HWC took place between Jan 2004 and October 2005, and the activity was officially completed Feb 2006.

This was a remarkable triumph for UNAMA and ANBP, for the GoA and for international cooperation which – for once – was quick, focused and effective. We have noted that ANBP was exceptionally good as a quick reaction force, with managers thinking on their feet and finding innovative solutions to each new problem as it arose. The heavy weapon response provides an eloquent example of this.

HWC began with a peace brokered between Dostum and Atta in the north. Very quickly the political pressures ensured that all other commanders followed suit. Using the upcoming elections and the registration of political parties as a carrot, UNAMA and the GoA showed commanders they either had to join HWC or be excluded from the new political process.

The HWC worked as follows: ISAF handled the four sites around Kabul; ANBP handled the rest with funds from USA and Canada. Halo Trust was engaged to remove ammo, breech blocks and fuel pumps which immobilized heavy weapons until they could be collected with heavy cranes and moved to MoD depots. All ammunition was removed, but useless metal was left to lie.

The claim that 98% of heavy weapons have been collected and turned over to the ANA must be treated with caution. Precise figures of the total weapon stocks are impossible to know. It is clear however that most of the heavy weapons have been taken out of circulation and this changes the political and military context in which peace building is taking place. Levels of potential violence in Afghanistan have been greatly reduced; disarmament efforts can now be focused on SALW.

### • **Destruction of weapons and ammunition**

Although this was not managed as a separate component, the destruction activity is sufficiently precise and important that it deserves to be treated separately. The destruction of light weapons was (and is still being) carried out by Halo Trust as a sub-contracted Implementing Partner inside the MoD facility at Pul-i-Charki, near Kabul. The quantities destroyed by ‘chopping’ or ‘shearing’ have reached 56,163 SALW. The Deputy Minister of Defence insists that more are being destroyed - as much as 50% of all the DDR and DIAG weaponry delivered to the MoD, although the exact basis of his calculation could not be established.<sup>2</sup>

We find that the original ANBP design did not include the collection and destruction of ammunition,

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<sup>2</sup> ANBP data shows that by 26 August 2007, weapons collected by DIAG numbered 32,805 of which 20,507 were judged ‘operational’. This word is sufficiently vague to allow multiple interpretations concerning the quality of weapons.

which we consider a serious design fault. All DDR programmes should demand ammunition together with the SALW as a condition for demobilization. On the other hand, ANBP moved with commendable swiftness to develop a major ammunition collection project, once the dimensions of the ammo problem in Afghanistan had been understood.

As of 30 August 2007, 15,833 tons of ammo have been destroyed out of an estimated 32,300 that have been surveyed in 1648 caches. Around 100 tons that have been identified: the distinction is important, for caches may be booby-trapped and many are in remote mountain caves which cannot easily be visited. Meanwhile 9,443 tons of ammo that was judged of usable quality has been consolidated and delivered to the MoD. This is useful information, but we are not directly concerned since the Ammo Project is outside the terms of reference of the evaluation.

ANBP and Halo Trust together have a mandate to destroy stockpiles of anti-personnel mines. By 30 August 2007, 496,717 anti-personnel mines and 16,125 anti-tank mines had been destroyed. Thanks to this activity – and provided that the Governor of Panshir province cooperates - Afghanistan is on target to meet international obligations before the end of 2007 under the Ottawa Treaty on Landmines.

Ammunition in a poor state has been (and continues to be) destroyed by the same IP at various locations, both in MoD areas and in mountainous areas close to where unstable ammunition stocks are found. In most cases there is ANBP and MoD supervision, and safety measures are mostly very good. On one occasion an ammo dump was only partially destroyed: villagers seeking to recuperate steel for recycling picked up unexploded ordnance and were injured. BCPR reported finding an IED being manufactured in one MoD workshop. These are serious issues.

With the proposed ending of ANBP in March 2008, all destruction activities are planned to be handed over to the MoD. The evaluation team has strong reservations about this decision, because guarantees of international supervision and neutrality are likely to help with the maintenance of high safety standards, and improve the chances that more weapons and ammunition will be handed in for destruction. We recommend another three years of UN support.

### • **Demobilization of Afghan Military Forces**

The final number of XCs passing through demobilization came to 62,376 – just four of whom were women (two officers and two nurses). Logistically the operation ran smoothly, as did all the ANBP arrangements where military planning and precision were imposed and admired. Soldiers who had been disarmed one or two days earlier by the MDU, presented themselves with their receipt at the gates of the MDU temporary compound where they were demobilized and received transport money and a printed photographic ID card as justification.

A word may be added here to compliment the ANBP staff on their logistical and technological prowess. MDU planning was meticulous, thanks to careful Recce visits and the field work of the Regional Verification Committees – a local group of retired Afghan army officers hired to negotiate with Commanders, check every ID, and approve every name against the MoD lists of XCs. The RVC is an innovation that may be copied elsewhere. Each province had one respected and respectable representative chosen for the regional team (and paid \$450 per month). The RVC group moved together from province to province discussing with commanders and preparing the terrain for DDR. Each RVC had one young man recruited by ANBP as Secretary, keeping records in all the local languages.

It is no mean feat to create a national computer system and carry it into the middle of the Hindu Kush mountains on the back of a truck, producing an apparently accurate database covering more than 60,000 XCs. It seems to the evaluators equally remarkable that more than 106,000 light and heavy weapons were trucked out of places as remote as the Hazarajat without any reported casualty or accident.

Commanders are said to have used differing strategies to take advantage of the DDR process for themselves. Some placed their family and closest clients on the demobilization list, at the expense of other deserving (even more deserving) XCs. Others are said to have held back some of their men in case of need, or in order to strengthen their hold on them. Others again filled in the spaces of their ghost units with whomsoever they could find: we know one school teacher in Paghman who was the surprised and happy recipient of a cow, after being put on the DDR list by a local commander who had more names in his unit than faces to match the names.

If a wider public relations campaign had been possible in this rugged country and after thirty years of fighting, it might have been possible to make the demobilization process more democratic. Individual XCs might have been able to present themselves and a mechanism might have been invented by the creative management of ANBP to overcome the rigidity of the rule that all XCs had to figure on the MoD registers. In the event, MoD officials and field Commanders had full and complete control over the choice of who should benefit from DDR and who should not. This may have strengthened the patronage power of some commanders.

The MoD registers had doubtful validity as proof of the size of individual units. The reason DDR was initiated in the first place is because the AMF salary bill had become inflated way beyond the capacity of the national budget to pay. In a country coming out of civil war, controlled by heavily armed factions, and surviving the syndrome of ‘Seven Pakistans inside Afghanistan’ (the seven warring factions all funded through sources in Pakistan), we find that the DDR process was a reasonable and realistic way to pay off the commanders and their men in the interest of promoting peace and stability.

Although the DD was very efficient, we find the demobilization process was rather summary – being mainly a series of bureaucratic gestures like filling in forms and receiving ID cards. There were virtually no ‘reinsertion’ activities and this got the Reintegration process off to a poor start. In fact ANBP would have been more successful if it had named its programme DDRR: this would have focused management’s attention on the human rather than the administrative side of demobilization: according to the United Nations international standards for DDR, with Demobilization there should also be Reinsertion.

In other countries, demobilization-reinsertion has focused more on the man and the family, and less on the soldier. For example, a medical check-up and treatment for health problems can be a part of the demobilization process: and probably they should be since we do not want to send sick men home to infect the community and their families with (say) Tuberculosis. Later the same medical facilities could be offered to the XC’s family as part of the reintegration package.

Reinsertion typically includes civic education, literacy and numeracy, using participative teaching methodologies to encourage returning fighters to respect the village hierarchy, eschew domestic violence, protect women and children, understand concepts about human rights and the rule of law. Films and football matches have their place in demobilization and the participatory civic education process. These are important parts of the interface between military and civilian life, between disarmament and reintegration. They were missing from the ANBP strategy, and that is a pity (as many ANBP staff recognise). In future we recommend that these aspects should be an important part

of any and every DDR.

It is important to emphasize that DDR is first-and-foremost a political process. Overall we find there is no reason to criticize either the method chosen to reduce the number of armed men, nor the administrative mechanisms by which ANBP put the demobilization into practice.

- **Reintegration of XComs and the other ‘Rs’**

Every DDR process tends to be easier at the start and become more complex as it proceeds. The reason for this is that initially soldiers and weapons are the focus, and thereafter people and families are involved in every step. The first D takes a few days or weeks; the second D may take a few weeks or months; whereas the R process will take years. In the case of Afghanistan the ‘R’ component should necessarily include Recognition of service, Respect for sacrifice to the nation, Reintegration into civilian life, Rehabilitation of homes and lives, Reconciliation between former enemies.<sup>3</sup> Even if DDR managers do not recognize these components, they are there fixed in the hearts and minds of the people.

In general the Reintegration phase of ANBP was not as well prepared or thought-out as the DD phases. Too little time was allowed, and the design was not carried out in a participative manner involving experienced reintegration people. Implementing Partners (many of whom were international non-governmental organizations with excellent track-records and a long experience of running reintegration in DDR programmes) were not properly consulted. They were treated as contractors hired to execute a task, rather than as partners of ANBP. Collectively the IPs had far more knowledge and experience of reintegration than the ANBP managers, and we feel their experience was not adequately used. It is true that NGOs were few and many regions were poorly serviced – ANBP was successful in persuading some IPs to open new programmes simply to help. Some of them opened a project office in a new province, used it for a few months as a base for vocational training, and then left the area – removing the possibilities for further support.

This is why we heard the witty comment that that ANBP was not providing DDR, but DDT<sup>4</sup>: disarmament, demobilization and training. There is some truth in this, especially where IPs did not provide any follow-up support for reintegration after the training. There is no really hard data about employment, since ANBP did not fund or foresee follow-up. ANBP might have found the NGOs and IGOs to be better partners – and vice versa - if the IPs had been involved in DDR planning from the very start. If INGOs had been involved in the programme design, they might have persuaded the donors of the necessity to plan for six years instead of three.

In most regions the XCs were poorly informed. There was usually a single information session about the future reintegration, and a promise of assistance that was often understood by XCs as a guarantee of a future job. The DD was very efficient in administrative terms, but it was not very effective in human terms: the interface between military and civilian life begins with the demobilization-reinsertion process, and this was too mechanical. For a lot of Afghan XCs, the best part of DRR was the WFP offering 130 Kg of food to every XC involved in the process. This WFP operation was an

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<sup>3</sup> In other countries, Repatriation of refugees and Resettlement of displaced populations may be vital components of the peace and demobilization process, and they may need to be an integral part of DDR or – as we prefer to call it – 3D4R. This will be true for Sudan and Somalia, and for Congo where they already call the programme DDRRR. ANBP would have been wise to take account in its planning of the 2 million refugees who are still returning from Pakistan and are often competitors for resources with the XCs.

<sup>4</sup> DDT is of course also the name of a toxic pesticide: the person making this joke is critical of ANBP.

efficient and effective contribution to DDR, in excess of the ANBP expectations, and was a major factor in producing short-term contentment among the XCs.

The evolution of the reintegration process was – like every ANBP response to a problem – swift and efficient. Case workers were assigned to ANBP regional offices – as many as twelve or sixteen in some regions, but what they had to offer did not really excite the XCs. The ‘package’ solution meant that XCs had to choose very quickly an orientation and a form of training that would determine their future lives. We met some very happy XCs, but we met more who felt that the ‘packages’ did not in the end help them to make a decent living. To take just one example: by all accounts, \$700 is not sufficient to purchase stock for a shop that will support a family. Many XC shopkeepers are therefore living at a miserable level, and on the verge of losing their fragile livelihood. No doubt the caseworkers did their best, but many of the XCs were left confused, facing a world for which the years of war had not prepared them. Many of them believe the government promised them a job, and they are still waiting.

We find the most successful reintegration activity was demining. XCs get prestige as well as an income, as *minepok* are seen as folk heroes by the Afghan population. Around 1000 XCs are believed to have become *minepok*. Far more could have been recruited as deminers but an structured recruitment was made impossible by disagreements over wages, over ANBP’s financial contribution, and by an insistence that DDR demining should be ‘community based.’ It seems most unfortunate that ANBP could not harmonize its policies with other institutions.

Response from a Commander asked if he was satisfied with CIP:

***“When I was a Commander, I was making \$10,000 a month, now I’m getting only \$200, how can I be happy?”***

His answer illustrates the privileges some Commanders received before DDR, and gives an insight into the “needs” of commanders. Most Commanders feel they sacrificed years of their lives to liberate the country from the Russians and the Taliban, therefore they deserve recognition and rewards.

#### • CIP – Commanders’ Incentive Programme

One main problem that the DDR process faced was convincing commanders to enter civilian life. The majority of Afghan commanders were *jihadi* officers nominally integrated into the MoD. Having fought against national enemies, they felt that they were entitled to compensation from the government in return for their years of service. The social structures of many regions have changed during the war, as ‘qomanders’ replaced traditional *beys* or *begs* or *arbabs* and usurped their influence, especially in the South.

One of the foremost problems that has been identified by GoA and UN officials is the close bond between the commanders and their soldiers, and the dependency of the later on the commanders. The strong social network of dependency is seen within ANBP as a potential threat to security. Unless this link is broken, the UN officials feel that DDR will not be successful. DDR seeks the smooth and effective transition of these commanders from their military into civilian life. To address these issues, CIP was launched by ANBP and much attention was paid in demobilization and reintegration of

commanders through special business training, which facilitated their transition from military into civilian life.

CIP special business training programme had several goals, including elements of reconciliation, recognition, changing ideas and introducing commanders to aspects of the modern business world, as well as helping ex-commanders to find sustainable social and economic integration into civilian society<sup>5</sup>. ANBP supported a selected number of 335 ex-commanders with intensive, living-in-a group, business training for a period not exceeding one month at the AITM -Afghan Institute for Training in Management. This was much appreciated by all the commanders we met. Although some gained more from the training than others (at least one we met decided to open a business thanks to the training), they all agreed that the month changed their ideas. Eleven commanders were even taken on a trip to Japan, to see democratic governance in action – and three of that number are now elected members of parliament. This is all training, but overseas visits do not create sustainable livelihoods. Ultimately, ex-commanders must reintegrate themselves into civilian life. The role of ANBP can only be to facilitate this process.

The insurgents are running short of good quality explosives, and this shows we are having an impact. Three Pakistani trucks were stopped recently by Afghan security officials: they were carrying 70T of TNT high quality explosive. Security is improving because rebels are short of explosive material – otherwise they would not have to bring it from Pakistan.  
Colonel Dimiter Jelev, UNHCR security officer

### • **Anti-Personnel Mine & Ammunition Stockpile - ‘Ammo’ project**

When ANBP realized the size and distribution of ammunition stockpiles throughout Afghanistan, it moved swiftly to establish the ‘Ammo Project’. This is not a part of the present evaluation, but it should not pass without notice. There are 8 Ammunition Survey Teams throughout the country, co-located with the DDR and DIAG regional teams, and they are undertaking a valuable and risky enterprise.

The Ammo Project is achieving positive results in a difficult political, security, environmental and developmental context. Safety concerns are caused in part by the difficulty in the recruitment of properly qualified ammunition technical personnel. The BCPR team in 2006 recorded cases of accidents, dangerously overloaded trucks, IED devices found in workshops ... This raises real and serious questions about the conditions under which – if at all - the project should be handed over to GoA officials as it is currently planned, in March 2008. The evaluators believe this would be premature, and recommend that UN support should continue for another three years.

The ammunition survey teams along with the implementing partners are deployed across eight regions within the country and have been able to achieve the following:

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<sup>5</sup> Sustainable social and economic reintegration refers to the strengthening of social cohesion in an environment that encourages economic revitalization and the attainment of sustainable livelihoods, i.e. long-term employment. The Edburgh Associates evaluation criticized the ANBP definition of ‘sustainable livelihoods’ as narrow, equating to mere ‘survival’. They propose ‘income and food security above minimum levels’ as the definition.

### **Ammo Project figures for DDR + DIAG at 30 August 2007**

Ammunition Surveyed DDR	29,623.53	Tons
Ammunition Surveyed DIAG	2,676.80	Tons
Ammunition Surveyed DDR + DIAG total	30,300.33	Tons
Ammunition consolidated total	9,443	Tons
Ammunition destroyed total	15,833	Tons
Total number of ammo caches surveyed countrywide	1,648	Units
Anti-Personnel Mines destroyed	496,717	Pieces
Anti-Tank Mines destroyed	16,125	Pieces

Achievements of ANBP are important. Of the 1,648 caches surveyed, the project has so far recovered 1,032 caches of ammunition and mines. Working in beneficial synergy with its Implementing Partner Halo Trust, the Ammo Project is hoping to ensure that all known stockpiles of anti-personnel mines are destroyed during 2007 to enable the Government of Afghanistan to meet its State obligation to the Ottawa treaty on ban of all anti-personnel mines. Only the province of Panshir stands as an obstacle to Afghanistan announcing to the international community during November or December 2007 that it has reached the prestigious achievement of meeting the mine destruction targets.

Private Security Companies behave like private armies that live outside the law. Unless we control them, they will undermine the DIAG project and continue to thrive in a culture of impunity protected by the international community.  
Minister Massum Stanekzai, Deputy Chairman of D&R Commission

- **DIAG - the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups programme.**

The DIAG programme is also not a part of the present evaluation, but we perceive it as the continuation of the DDR and CIP processes under a new name and with different parameters. DIAG began in July 2005, two years ago, and negotiated disarmament may bring in as many weapons as the DDR process: 20,507 ‘operational’ weapons have been handed over so far to the MoD under the DIAG project from a total of 32,805 collected weapons. In addition, DIAG has collected 296,346 pieces of ammunition.

DIAG’s strength is that it is a government-led programme, overseen by the D & R Commission, which is chaired by Vice-President Karim Khalili. The Vice-Chairman is Minister Mohammad Massum Stanekzai. Although the AMF had been officially demobilized, the presence of other informal armed groups in Afghanistan was seen as a continuing threat to security, and therefore to development.

The original concept for a DDR programme envisaged a caseload of around 100,000 former combatants; many of these individuals could not prove their allegiance to the AMF because they were not on MoD official lists of units. They were therefore were not eligible for DDR under the terms that had been defined. They are among those targeted for DIAG. At the same time, DIAG provides a way to support disarmament within communities in a way that acknowledges that weapons possession and use is controlled by leaders of local armed groups.

DIAG's stated aims are two-fold:

- a. To support the government through disarmament and disbandment of illegal armed groups and reduce the level of armed violence in the community;
- b. To empower existing government programmes for socio-economic development to enhance stability and the promotion of good governance, an essential part of security sector reform in Afghanistan.

The 2006 BCPR mission described DIAG as a political and a law-enforcement programme, and wondered whether its structure as a development programme would allow its essential nature to be expressed. It praised as 'innovative and worth pursuing' the idea of working through commanders of armed groups, rather than attempting voluntary civilian disarmament - a 'rich source of lessons to be learned in Afghanistan and elsewhere'.

In para 82 the BCPR team remarked that, 'If the programme is successful in disbanding illegal armed groups, Afghan security structures are unlikely to be able fill the security vacuum that may be created. The Afghan National Police (ANP) has neither the capacity nor the legitimacy to provide security for the population.'

Since the Security Sector Reform process appears stalled in several key areas, including police, DIAG faces big challenges. The Director of ANBP is aware of the challenges and is coming up with new and interesting, innovative directions for DIAG and for ways to address the legalization of *de facto* armed groups disguised as private security companies. The UN needs to remain committed to the solution of this problem. Working towards 'weapons management' rather than 'disarmament' certainly seems a constructive approach.

The police chief of Badakhshan province – who had been recently appointed through the Ministry of Interior reform process – narrowly escaped an assassination attempt. The likely reason? He had shut down heroin laboratories and supported the implementation at the district level of police reforms that would have limited the capacity of illegal armed groups to benefit from the heroin trade.

DIAG, as originally conceived, was ill equipped to face this new challenge, necessitating as it did intelligence sharing, strengthened law enforcement capacity, and high-level political engagement. It was also essential that ISAF – including all 37 of its contributing nations – be prepared to back up enforcement operations. Such backing was agreed to by the ISAF commander and provided for in the DIAG Concept of Operations, but ISAF troop contributors have been inconsistent in their support.

SRSR speech, Tokyo DIAG Conference, 21 June 2007

## **\*1.2. Background to ANBP and DDR-CIP**

Insecurity remains a major challenge confronting Afghans in their daily lives. The Afghan government has no monopoly on coercive force, and independent commanders wield considerable influence across the country. The underlying cause of this insecurity is not so much ideology as competition between individuals and tribal groups for local scarce resources and power. Afghans despair at the impunity with which many groups operate. In the meantime opium production remains the mainstream of southern Afghanistan's economy; security and disarmament issues cannot be separated from the drug economy. The UNODC's report published 27 August 2007 shows an 18% increase in production this year, particularly in the Helmand areas nominally under British occupation. In July 2001 the US government paid \$43 millions in cash to the Taliban to encourage poppy reduction, but even under the Taliban it is questionable whether opium production was really being reduced. With no alternative cash crop available to them, farmers are bound to plant more poppies.

The US-led occupation of Afghanistan brought the return of the drug lords under American protection, and opium production has soared. Unless the drug economy can be brought under control, Afghanistan will become a 'narco-state' and criminal mafias will take over. The economic laws of supply and demand have proved far stronger than any form of legislation or suppression, so the solution to Afghanistan's drug problem must lie in some form of opium market modification, rather than in policies of repression that have been unsuccessful since the 1970s. Security Sector Reform will fail unless new approaches are introduced to replace failed counter-narcotics policies. Changing a failed policy cannot be achieved with more money, only with new ideas.<sup>6</sup>

Demobilization and disarmament were identified as priorities for the rebuilding of the country after twenty-five years of war, and on 2 December 2002 His Excellency President Hamid Karzai signed a Decree outlining principles and conditions on security and the Afghan National Army (ANA). The decree states that the ANA will be an ethnically balanced organization not to exceed 70,000 – meaning a reduction in the numbers of soldiers and militias who had joined the army since the fall of the Taliban. In 2007 we are informed that the number of men in the ANA has reached 35,000.

In order to direct the implementation of the military reorganisation, President Karzai issued several decrees on 11 January 2003 to establish four Defence Commissions:

1. The Disarmament Commission, to approve the disarmament plan developed through discussions with the MoD and ANBP (responsibilities met on October 8, 2003 and thereafter the Commission was dissolved);
2. The Demobilization & Reintegration (D&R) Commission, chaired by Vice President Khalili, to produce the strategy, standards and methods to guide the ministries that would

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<sup>6</sup> Two radically different recipes for change were offered on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2007 in articles by Vice-President Massoud in the British *Sunday Telegraph* and by Peter Bergen and Sameer Lalwani in the *Los Angeles Times*. (see bibliography for detailed references). The conclusion must be that we are failing.

contribute to this phase of the DDR process;

3. The Officer Recruiting & Training Commission, chaired by General Zadran, to oversee the commissioning and decommissioning of officers;
4. The Soldier Recruiting & Training Commission, chaired by General Wardak, to will oversee the recruitment of soldiers, Mujahiddin and those with no formal training or experience who wish to join the ANA.

The last two commissions and the first have been subsumed into the reformed MoD, while the D&R Commission remains the principle partner of UNAMA and UNDP in the running of the ANBP and a forum for inter-ministerial cooperation in SSR.

Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) was announced in February 2003 at the Tokyo Conference on Consolidation of Peace in Afghanistan as part of the Afghanistan Transitional Administration (ATA) package for Security Sector Reform (SSR). ANBP was created for three years under the auspices of UNDP to help the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, now the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, implement a country-wide Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programme to disarm the Afghan Military Forces (AMF).

ANBP's central office is located in Kabul, and regional offices were established in Mazar-e-Sharif, Kandahar, Nangahar (Jalalabad), Kunduz, Bamiyan, Paktia (Gardez) and Herat. Parwan is covered from the Kabul head office making eight regional offices altogether. These offices are still functioning, and they are extremely well managed. This decentralized structure offers exciting opportunities for UNDP to develop regional strategies using the facilities and contacts developed by ANBP.

The programme was implemented by UNDP on behalf of the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) and United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA). Contributions were channelled to ANBP through the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery/DDR Trust Fund. UNAMA provided overall policy guidance as part of its larger coordination function on behalf of the UN system; UNDP provided technical backstopping and operational support to ANBP. The principal government partners for this programme have been the DDR Forum and the Demobilization and Reintegration (D&R) Commission.

ANBP was organized as three programme components:

- DDR - Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
- Anti-Personnel Mine and Ammunition Stockpile - the 'Ammo' project,
- DIAG - the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups programme.

From the point of view of the evaluators in July 2007, DRR can be broken down into six different components: this makes eight components in all for ANBP, which may also make good sense from an organizational and functional point of view.

ANBP documents say that it has 'assisted the Government of Afghanistan in the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of the Afghan Military Forces (AMF): 62,376 members of the AMF were demobilized and 53,145 ex-combatants joined the reintegration process through one of many 'reintegration packages' including vocational

training, agriculture, de-mining, small business, contracting teams, teacher training or joining the Afghan National Police (ANP) or the Afghan National Army (ANA).<sup>7</sup>

While the Ammunition project and the DIAG programme continue, ANBP's DDR mandate ended in June 2006. UNDP has continued to support the ex-combatants' reintegration process through a Transition Phase run by ILO,<sup>7</sup> with monitoring and evaluation of beneficiaries beyond June '06 to maintain programme sustainability and facilitate initiatives which lead beneficiaries to sustainable livelihoods. The ANBP mandate equated 'reintegration' with 'vocational training'.

The training component was completed by ANBP, but a three-year programme is not long enough for a real reintegration process to take place. The Afghan war-and-drug economy is booming, but the Afghan peace economy is very weak and post-war investments have been slow to arrive. Employment opportunities for XCs are therefore few and poorly paid. UNDP and its partners are rethinking strategic policy to ensure reintegration becomes a sustainable endeavour achieving long-term development goals.

The macro- and microeconomic dynamics of post-conflict communities also influence the outcome of DDR programmes... The ending of hostilities alone is not enough to improve economic conditions, although a rapid increase in economic benefits, often seen as a 'peace dividend', is often expected by populations recovering from conflict. Economic recovery is also a long and complex process. DDR programmes should therefore be designed to reinforce economic recovery efforts and not to compete with them.

*Post-conflict Stabilization, Peace-building and Recovery Frameworks, UN 2006,  
2.3. The economic environment*

### **\*1.3. Relevance**

In the context of Afghanistan's post-conflict recovery, and the urgent need for Security Sector Reform (SSR), ANBP was a highly relevant programme. Indeed DDR and the reorganization of the Afghan army that it initiated, were two of the five pillars of SSR<sup>8</sup> identified by the President, and the ones that have worked best so far.

It is important to remember, as we look back over five years, that ANBP was conceived and implemented in a war zone. It involved bringing into an embryonic political process large numbers of armed men whose commitment to peace had not been declared. Most DDR programmes are part of a peace process. This one was not, and much of its action took place in a context of rumbling war against Taliban rebels who remain excluded from the Bonn Agreement. Many observers think it was a mistake to have excluded the Taliban.

<sup>7</sup> RSPE = Reintegration Support Project for Employment

<sup>8</sup> The Five Pillars of Security Sector Reform are: Military Reform, Police Reform, DDR, Judicial Reform, and Counter-Narcotics.

The initiation of ANBP was important for Afghanistan. Its swift implementation was impressive, especially when it is viewed against the insecurity, dangers, broken infrastructure and post-war chaos of the time. In terms of helping to create an enabling environment for weapon management through the control of armed groups (and the disbandment of some of them), the programme has had an extremely positive impact. The CIP has engaged Commanders and officers from different areas and many political persuasions and factions and brought them together, thereby creating the first elements of reconciliation between people and regions. Many recent aspects of Afghan political evolution in the area of SSR would have been impossible without the DDR and CIP programmes. The relevance of ANBP is not in doubt.

Asia Times □ 14 August 2007

By Haroun Mir □ Kabul, former advisor to Masoud

Afghanistan and Pakistan face a far greater dilemma than their historic territorial disputes. Because of almost three decades of intensive radicalization of Pashtuns in Pakistani madrassas (seminaries), they are losing their traditional tribal structures.

Traditional leaders have been replaced by the likes of Mullah Omar and Mullah Dadullah; the latter hardline commander was killed in fighting in Afghanistan this year. Many traditional Pashtun leaders in Afghanistan were killed during the war against the Soviets or were assassinated by the communist regime in the early 1990s.

#### \* 1.4. Efficiency

##### **in terms of cash (value for money) and delivery (value for people)**

We believe that ANBP has given good value for money, and its donors should be well satisfied with their investment. We feel that some aspects of its design were poorly thought through, and this reduced the sustainable impact of DDR in some areas: but this does not change the fact that the political impacts of the programme have been positive and important for Afghanistan.

In terms of implementation and delivery, we are impressed by the efficiency of ANBP management, its clarity of purpose and its control systems. The mechanisms ANBP created for regional structures and mobile teams succeeded in reaching commanders and XCs throughout the complex geographical layout of Afghanistan, and they provide a model for similar programmes everywhere.

Not all XCs were reached, and this will remain a source of grievance in some regions. We believe that this was largely due to the self-interest of certain commanders. Whether this should be seen as a 'failure' of the ANBP is questionable in the circumstances of the DDR process, controlled as it was by MoD officials whose lists were the only source of identification of DDR beneficiaries. It is possible that more flexibility in time and selection criteria, and a wider public information programme, might have allowed more XCs to lobby for inclusion, but this is not at all certain – and numbers might have got out of control. How

can any DDR programme identify ‘a man with an AK47’ as a genuine ex-combatant, unless there is a framework for his identification? It is not realistic to believe that flexibility alone can provide adequate controls. Nonetheless, some XCs who were missed out of DDR are now causing headaches for the DIAG programme.

The CIP component reached out to a selected list of commanders, chosen after considerable effort had been put into an innovative identification survey.<sup>9</sup> The CIP certainly had a favorable impact on those commanders whom we met. Their eyes were opened to new ideas, and they were brought into contact with – and even into friendship with – other commanders against whom they had recently been fighting. Was the CIP simply ‘buying time’ by involving some commanders in non-violent activities? Possibly so, and this seems perfectly acceptable in the circumstances. We find it was a very efficient and cost-effective strategy for the moment at which it was designed.

While some people criticize the ANBP as an ‘expensive’ programme, this is a view we do not share. Although there are undoubtedly areas in which some economies could have been made (fewer vehicles?), this may be more obvious with hindsight than it could have been in 2002 when donors agreed to fund the demobilization of 100,000 XCs. In the event fewer came forward for demobilization, but managers could not predict that.

The reintegration part of ANBP was less obviously efficient than the DD and CIP parts of the project. To a large extent that is because ANBP was funded for only three years, and this was the fault of the donors: no one believes that a DDR project can enable XCs to achieve ‘sustainable civilian livelihoods’ in just three years. When the time is subtracted that it takes to set up an organization the size of ANBP to handle a case-load of 63,000 or more XCs (at its peak, ANBP had 693 employees), and the time needed to plan operations and order vehicles, it becomes clear that the period actually available for field operations barely exceeded 18 months. This is obviously inadequate for any DDR programme.

No one can judge the success of reintegration until DDR beneficiaries have been established in civilian life for at least five years – the length of time that we normally judge the viability of a new small business in Europe or America. In the ANBP project document, the ‘R’ was described mainly in terms of vocational training, and in that regard the project largely fulfilled its mandate.<sup>10</sup>

ANBP is so admired in Afghanistan; its reputation for efficiency is so great, that our reservations about the ‘R’ process are resented by military personnel. “The first principle of war is, ‘Selection and maintenance of the aim’,” comments the Halo Trust, ANBP’s closest

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<sup>9</sup> We have heard about the identification forms A and B but the M&E section of ANBP was unaware of them and has no data on commanders who were left out of the database (no one can explain why this was done). ANBP has underestimated the value of the database. Neglect of such a tool soon renders it useless. DIAG does not use CIP data – indeed DIAG doesn’t seem to have any data at all about commanders. The DDR-CIP bank of information has not been used or updated since June 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Whether 6 months are long enough to count as ‘vocational training’ is another matter. We recognize that the ILO’s design of and support to the National Skills Programme had not yet started when ANBP was designing its programme, but specialist expertise is not evident in the ANBP training design.

implementing partner. “What was the aim in this process and was it achieved? If the aim was to take weapons off people, get the heavy weapons out of circulation and let the ex-combatants return to their villages, then the aim was largely fulfilled.” That is true, but it is not the whole story. We agree the disarmament process was brilliantly and efficiently executed, and we are only sorry that the other parts of the DDR process were not as brilliant as the first ‘D’. Was disarmament the most important part? Undoubtedly. Will collecting weapons by and of itself produce sustainable peace? We think not.

To improve efficiency we believe that DDR projects should benefit from the lessons of previous experience, and plan for seven years in order to allow the ‘R’ time to happen. The fact that UNDP, ILO, USAID and others are busy designing follow-up projects to assist beneficiaries succeed in their reintegration, confirms that it would have been better to start in 2002 with a proper, seven-year DDR programme. Efficiency would have improved by taking advantage of lessons learned in other programmes – not Sierra Leone (where the DDR programme was greatly criticized and not too successful), but the large number of DDR experiences that have been recorded and analysed since the seminal Rhodesian-Zimbabwe DDR experiment 30 years ago. This would have involved bringing in a broader range of expertise at the ‘inspiration’ and design phase, and ANBP would have benefited greatly.

Not all lessons can be transferred, of course. The ANBP attempt to provide temporary incomes with road building labour failed because Afghan XCs did not want building work. This was a perfectly laudable idea, a creative way to generate short-term incomes that may have been inspired by the World Bank experiment in 2004 linking road building and DDR in Burundi (that loan cost more than the economic return to DDR of the road).

In response to those who claim that ANBP was too expensive, against what measurement shall we decide that \$120 millions are ‘too much’ – or indeed ‘too little’? By what standards can we judge? It made much more sense for Afghanistan than the World Bank’s \$84.71 million loan agreement with Burundi. One contributing donor embassy official remarked, “We have wasted so much money in Afghanistan that the ANBP project seems quite modest.”

We do not believe that number-crunching is very useful at this level of evaluation. An audit looks at facts, while an evaluation considers impacts. The overall impact of DDR and CIP must be measured in political terms, not by counting numbers of weapons or packages of 130Kg of foodstuffs. We will consider the details, of course, in the two thematic reports: but once we have decided that ANBP had a major and positive influence on Afghan’s political processes, enabled security sector reform to begin and facilitated the creation of a new Afghan National Army, we must conclude that the Japanese, British, Canadian, US and other supporting governments – and above all the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) - received good value from their investment.

“Commanders who have joined DDR are very bitter because they are not recognized, jobless and humiliated. They feel the Gov is stigmatizing them because they are suspected of remaining loyal to old commanders. A council of commanders should be formed to advise the government on political and military issues. That way the government would be able to keep an eye on the commanders. Commanders would appreciate recognition and their influence at the community level could be used.”

Comment from ANBP regional office manager.

## **\*1.5. Effectiveness, Objectives, Dissenting Voices and Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

- did DDR improve lives and promote peace?**
- what were the objectives (stated or not)**  
**and did ANBP meet them ?**

While ANBP managers were very efficient in getting things done, the broader question of ANBP's effectiveness in promoting Afghan peace and stability, and improving lives by promoting sustainable reintegration of XCs, requires a more subtle appreciation. Appreciation of effectiveness should take account of the views of a range of stakeholders who base their appreciation of ANBP's effectiveness on very different points of view. Each group had different objectives, some of which were never stated. We have tried to discover whether ANBP gave them satisfaction. The evaluators have met with representatives of all these stakeholders:

- Government of Afghanistan, and its institutions involved particularly in security sector reforms (MoD, MoI, MoJ) and other ministries such as Ministry of Social affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Ministry of Education which should be concerned with reintegration.
- Provincial governments and officials
- Afghanistan civil society and general public.
- Ex-combatants (XCs).
- Ex-combatants' wives and families
- Communities receiving XCs, including martyrs' widows and disabled veterans
- International governmental stakeholders, including UNAMA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP and other UN agencies, international humanitarian organizations, and ANBP implementing partners (IPs) including GTZ, AGEF, IOM, CFA, Care, World Vision, Halo Trust, CSTC-A.
- International observers of the DDR process, including EU, EC, NATO, ISAF
- DDR Donors.
- International civil society organizations (some of whom were IPs)
- Local and international business community
- Members and former members of ANBP staff

### **1.5.1. Government of Afghanistan**

#### **Objectives:**

Governments are not homogenous institutions. Different departments have different objectives. Soldiers have a different perspective from policemen or teachers or ministers – and ministers do not always agree. To make the situation more complicated still, GoA is centrally weak. Governments have always been weak in Afghanistan, which has always

been run by a Royal Court with ‘courtiers’ being appointed as governors. In terms of European models, the Afghan system most closely resembles Switzerland which has strong, independent cantons and a weak coordinating central executive. The court system persists at national and provincial level. That is how Afghan central government needs to be seen to be understood.

ANBP was most closely involved with the Ministry of Defence which had the main task of downsizing the Afghan Military Forces (AMF) and creating a new Afghan National Army (ANA) with regional and ethnic balance. The secondary aim of MoD was to collect as much hardware and ammunition as possible, irrespective of real or calculated equipment needs, and remove it from illegal hands so that- for the first time in many years – dissuasive force could become the sole preserve of a legal Afghan government. The MoD was very clear that they have ‘ownership’ of all collected weapons and ammunition. The MoD is also very clear that they wish to keep a monopoly of decision-making over the destination and disposal of all weapons and ammunition. In a democratic system, however, judgements of elected political leaders take precedence over the views of technical ministries. The ultimate decision-making power therefore resides with the elected President. Through the D&R Commission many other ministries were involved – at least theoretically. Our impression is that the D&R Commission worked quite well, but that technical ministerial involvement was minimal. Most ministries are interested in survival, which means the accumulation of funding and power – that, after all, is what ministries and courtiers do. When ANBP was seen to offer funding or other advantages, collaboration was forthcoming; when ANBP asked for support to make a success of reintegration through finding jobs, most sectoral ministries were quite unhelpful.

“We knew that MRRD was launching a big project with a need for lots of labourers,” one ANBP programme officer told us, “So I went there to talk with them in the field. I told them we have all these XCs with some training and they need jobs. But the ministry people were not really interested.” The Ministry of Education is said to have been more helpful than other ministries, and some educated XCs and their wives have been taken on as teachers.<sup>11</sup> Generally speaking, however, Ministers have done little to impress on their staffs that President Karzai labeled DDR and SSR as national priorities.

### **Satisfaction:**

The Government of Afghanistan at the central level is well satisfied with the positive impacts of ANBP: diminishing the crippling MoD budget through DDR, promoting peace, weapon management, reduction of levels and threat of conflict thanks to the heavy weapons cantonment, ammunition collection, and through ANBP’s ongoing contribution to security sector reform through the DDR process and the disbandment of disparate units listed as belonging to the Afghan Military Forces, through the DIAG and Ammo projects. The CIP programme – and its successor DIAG – have high level political support and are appreciated as important projects for engaging and neutralizing dangerous, and potentially

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<sup>11</sup> For a certain number of literate wives of XCs, ANBP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education and provided a six-month upgrading course leading to a teaching certificate issued by the MoE. Yet in Kunduz and Nangahar provinces we found ladies whose certificates had later been refused by the MoE – even though they hold MoE certificates! And we are desperately short of teachers!

destabilizing commanders.

Inside the MoD - and in other ministries like the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Martyrs and the Disabled - there is concern that 'reintegration' has not guaranteed jobs to the thousands of XCs, although everybody (including the two Deputy Defence Ministers we met) recognizes that job security and business success for XCs depend more on economic growth than on ANBP's actions.

The economy is said to be growing at 12% per year which is less than half what one would expect from a war-torn economy recovering its energies. This is because of poor agricultural conditions and because too much of the international effort has been invested in the war economy. Donors after 2002 were very slow indeed to invest in the peace economy, and GoA officials at every level are bitterly critical of the international coalition and its failure to invest. Finally that is happening: roads and bridges are being built, and the long-awaited, American-funded Shir Khan Bandar bridge across the Amu Darya was actually inaugurated by President Karzai during the evaluation mission. The hope is that the ANBP vocational training provided to XCs has equipped them to hold down solid jobs as the economy grows.

Many (perhaps most) of the XCs are in fact working, many of them doing at home what they were always doing except when they were away being occasional, short-term, part-time *jihadis*. In the current economic climate, however, many XCs find their revenues are small and they are not able to support their families at the level they desire. Their disappointment is palpable and understandable.

The fact is that ministries in Kabul are weak, and the international community is overloading them with projects. Donors have a centralized mentality, and they like projects to be implemented from Kabul. The donors and the ministries would get better results if – like ANBP – they decentralized their actions to the provincial level. If more projects were decentralized, Governors would get things done. This would leave government ministries the time to focus on coordinating national strategies. Local implementing capacity would grow in the provinces, and Afghanistan's peace economy would benefit.

Decentralization would benefit ANBP as well. One governor complained that the DIAG weapon collection process is paralyzed by Kabul: it takes 6 months to get permission, by which time the targeted weapons have already been sold. One minister retorted that it suits governors to blame Kabul for their inaction: that way they can blame someone else and avoid taking any risks themselves. As he might have said, citing a proverb, "They don't want to get their feet wet."

*Ab-ra na didi mozara az poi makesk* - Proverb

'If you don't see water, don't remove your shoes'

Meaning: Plan before you act

Or : Look before you leap

Or : Kabul should take the risk, and I'll keep my shoes dry

## 1.5.2. Provincial governments and officials

### Objectives:

Provincial officials wanted both DDR and CIP to improve security. Jobs are an important part of this equation, because Provincial Governors are constantly aware that that unemployed men who once used guns to make a living, are easily enticed back into illegal activity or open rebellion. Some officials can be classed as Goliags<sup>12</sup>, and some of these have used the DDR process to legalize themselves and their militias by integrating government structures (some are good, some are not so good). As insecurity increases in the south, so officials in other regions watch warily for signs of growing criminal activity in their zones, or for a resurgence of the Taliban with local, regional support.

### Satisfaction:

All officials have a positive view of the disarmament programme, of its political value and its neutralization of many troublesome commanders. They recognise DDR's positive impact on peace through the removal of weapons; but they have to live with the results of 'reintegration' and with the complaints of disappointed people who thought the GoA was going to give them a job. Broken DDR promises have cost the government a lot of prestige – and it is local officials who bear the brunt of that disappointment. Local governors see more of the local job problems than do members of the presidency in Kabul, and may have less appreciation for the strategic gains of ANBP.

The first, early ANBP mistake was giving out cash in the form of a short-lived Transitional Safety Allowance (it was perceived across Afghanistan as cash-for-weapons, even if this was not the intention). A private commercial operator commented spontaneously, 'ANBP, they are the ones who bought weapons for cash.' For XCs who had heard about the offer, its withdrawal was a disappointment and a broken promise. Those who received cash payments found it a bitter experience, as they were forced to surrender the payment to their commanders ... and those who resisted were beaten up!

The GoA has had even more negative political fall-out from its dismissal of elderly members of the professional officer corps who have been demonstrating and protesting in Kabul on a regular basis. This has nothing to do with the DDR programme since many dismissals took place before ANBP started work: but that is not how the colonels and their friends see it. The GoA missed an opportunity here: these colonels could have been put through the DDR process. GoA is considered to have failed to care for professional army officers. Both GoA and ANBP get criticized about the lack of jobs for XC colonels, as well as by soldiers and *jihadis* who believed - often with good reason - that jobs had been promised to them. "Why do we allow road construction to take place with foreign labor?" asked one provincial Governor in frustration, adding that unemployment is an invitation to Commanders to take up arms and for soldiers to be recruited.

Another Governor is worried about six or seven powerful, restless commanders in his province: "They need to be occupied, or they might join Taliban." The Governor would like to see them sent overseas for 3 years. Some of these commanders dare not travel outside their

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<sup>12</sup> Government officials linked to illegal armed groups

own zone, for fear of vengeance. On the other hand, ‘real *jihadis*’ cannot put food on the table... and this is often blamed on DDR, although it is really a function of the weak peace economy. A general at MoD laughed bitterly, “What economy? There is no economy!”

‘I know some former officers are protesting. They feel they deserve a better deal. They want respect. We give them respect, but respect has to be earned. Some of them have lost it.’

Deputy Minister of Defence

### 1.5.3. Afghan civil society and the general public.

#### Objectives:

The Afghan general public wants peace and prosperity. Before DDR liberated them from the rule of the gun, a lot of them wanted to be free from the commanders and their abusive demands for free food and tithes. This is expressed in private conversation rather than in public debate, which is not widespread. There is no tradition of civil society in Afghanistan outside the urban elites who create teachers’ unions and lawyers’ associations, and more recently NGOs and human rights organizations with small, elite memberships. Through the NSP, elected Community Development Committees (CDC) have been created in many of Afghanistan’s 40,000 villages. However these are new, imported structures that have no deep community roots<sup>13</sup>, and they are often dominated by the local strong man (*khan* or commander). In Afghan society as a whole, the only indigenous civil society structures we see are the mosques *masjid* and *takiyakhana* (respectively for Sunni and Shia worship) and the *sufi* brotherhoods.

#### Satisfaction:

What most Afghan civilians know about DDR, if they know anything at all, is the failure of XCs to get jobs is. At the same time citizens accept the benefits and peace dividends of DDR, without realizing how they came about. The 2005 Charney Afghan Omnibus Survey found that 77% of Afghans believed their country was heading in the right direction – up from 64% the previous year. This suggests that DDR had an impact on people’s appreciations of peace and security, even if they didn’t realise it was because of ANBP and the D&R Commission. Maybe ANBP and the D&R Commission need to ratchet up their public information campaign and target more accurately certain specific segments of society so that people hear the truth about DDR and its achievements. 77% is an approval rating many governments would be glad of. An informed observer might suspect that the approval rating has slipped since then, as security has decreased in the South.

The average urban citizen is glad there are fewer weapons on the streets, relieved that Commanders are no longer racing through the cities in huge, darkened limousines

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<sup>13</sup> In Africa the CDC movement is strong, and rooted in African traditions of civil society and democratic governance. This is simply not the case in patriarchal Afghan society.

accompanied by a bunch of trigger-happy armed bodyguards spilling out of two pickup trucks. At the same time, ordinary Afghans do not see any improvement in the peace economy, where job opportunities should come. They are worried by rising levels of insecurity, and the failure of the international community to invest in wealth-creating, job-creating enterprises. The successes of DDR and CIP are becoming lost in the general malaise. Some Afghans who moved back from exile and invested in business ventures are talking of leaving if security becomes worse.

The few urban, educated, English-speaking Afghans who are active in what we call Civil Society, recognize that DDR and CIP have been good for Afghanistan: DDR helped bring peace, reduced the presence of weapons on city streets, and reduced the problem of commanders in large areas of the country. Some big commanders became very rich from having their ghost militias registered with the Ministry of Defence, and they made more money still out of DDR which benefited their families and cronies, but at least many of their militias have now been disbanded.

A lot of people have heard that Commanders were sent to Japan, which they see as rewarding thieves with an overseas holiday – suggesting an unfortunate lack of public communication skills in the CIP and DIAG offices. (In fact just eleven commanders visited Japan, and the purpose of the trip was both to give the visitors insights into democratic governance and the rule of law, and to show the Japanese public that their money had been well spent in Afghanistan).

Many small commanders have lost their power to tyrannize local people, and so did lots of middle-level commanders, which people across the country see as a benefit. In places like Badakhshan, Badghis, Uruzghan, Ghor and the southern Pashtun provinces, certain commanders have strengthened their position through lack of a strong police force and through their control of drug trade. There is no rule of law, and no strong, reliable, honest police presence. This worries thoughtful Afghans, and some people see this as a failure of the DDR and CIP processes – although it is actually a failure of the Security Sector Reform process of which DDR has been the most successful pillar.

In the provinces, commanders often lived by brute force, seizing 10% of the local harvest and livestock and using the proceeds of their illegal taxation to reward their men. In most places where DDR took place, the commanders have lost their weapons and the pillaging has stopped. Rural people are happier: most areas a calmer than before, the men are back and rural communities have a larger, more reliable workforce which they need to feed the widows, orphans and disabled left from war. In the southern provinces where violence is on the rise, life is more stressful. Some people make a lot of money from opium poppies, but rural communities are subject to unannounced attacks from American helicopters, from British counter-narcotics agents, from Taliban insurgents, and from criminal armed gangs.

For the Pashtun regions of South and East Afghanistan, there is no peace dividend from DDR and there won't be any until the failing Western counter-narcotics policies have been changed. Right now every Afghan citizen and most Western journalists believe that British counter-narcotics policy is the Taliban's principal source of strength.

Indigenous civil society structures – *shura* councils in the Pashtun lands, religious charity schools *madersas* and *madrassas*, mosques *masjid* and *takiyakhana* (respectively for Sunni and Shia worship) and the *sufi* brotherhoods across the country – are composed mostly of ordinary Afghan men whose religion Islam contains the word *salaam* = peace. What they mainly want is a peaceful life. Afghans are tired of war. A few are affiliated with radical Islamic movements, and quite a few mosques have been taken over by radicalized *mullahs* brought from Pakistan. Some of these preachers live in a fractious partnership with the villagers, whom they dominate with Islamic learning thanks to Saudi money but with whom they have no very warm relationship because they are ‘foreigners’. Most of these people want the foreign occupying forces to withdraw, and they wonder why DDR brought no wealth to them.

Communities received nothing out specific out of DDR, except that they got peace. That is what they wanted most of all, after 30 years of war. If they had more help with their widows and orphans, they would be happier. If their disabled veterans had received more help and greater recognition, they would feel better about the DDR process. We conclude that most Afghans, if pushed into a longer discussion of the benefits and disbenefits of DDR, would agree that DDR had its disappointments but that overall the results were positive for them and for their children.

“DDR was fine for the country, because it reduced weapons and it helped to bring a reduction of violence. But for DDR people it was useless because there are no jobs. Where are the factories to employ the DDRs? Life is better now than before, but people are uneasy about what is happening with the Americans in the south. We are scaring, and wonder if we will lose our business and have to flee.”

Stationery trader Delawar, a Hazara from Mazar with a shop in the Habibullah Market in Kabul

#### **1.5.4. Ex-combatants (XCs).**

##### **Objectives:**

XCs wanted plenty of benefits, wealth, or at least a steady government job. Some were happy just to get home and live with their wife and kids, but most were hoping for economic security in exchange for giving up the firearms with which they and their commanders had been making a living. Many of them believe they fought for a income, earned a job, deserve to be rewarded. We cite elsewhere the XC who said, “I am happy. I have a wife and a house. DDR should give me a second wife and a second house.”

##### **Satisfaction:**

Many ordinary XCs have returned to their farms where they eke out a living, and which many of them only left on an occasional basis for a swift campaign. They sometimes feel they have lost out because DDR removed the tool with which they made a living: the gun. They may not like DDR’s results, but that doesn’t mean that DDR was bad for the country – only bad for them!

We met XCs who were delighted to get out of the military, relieved to break away from their commanders, and happy to see the demise of the AMF. On the whole, **the most satisfied DDR customers are soldiers, officers and commanders who own and cultivate land; educated men who have found a job**, or who managed to start a business that feeds their family; and older men who have become tired of fighting and ‘running up mountains’ as one put it.

We have met others – a larger number - who feel let down by the failure of DDR and GoA to provide them with a job. It seems pretty certain that many of these XCs did hear officials promise during the demobilization process that DDR would bring them a job (rather than vocational training for prepare them to find a job). Certainly most of them think that is what they heard.<sup>14</sup> These are men who believe they have fought for the nation and deserve recognition (and a job) in exchange for their effort and sacrifice.

There is some evidence that educated XCs have done better than those with no literacy or numeracy. Some have found government positions. Shopkeepers and businessmen who can keep accounts tend to do better than those who have to remember everything in their head. Those XCs who return to their communities with literacy have greater prestige than the uneducated and there is even some spiritual benefit: education is highly prized in Islam, for *the pen is mightier than the sword*.

It is inevitable that Afghan public opinion will be divided concerning the benefits of DDR. Ordinary XCs did well enough if they were literate. XCs have found jobs as teachers, in the ANA and ANP, or in government administrative positions. Some have found jobs in the problematic but lucrative security sector, working for unlicensed Private Security Companies. PSCs pay well, and the XC feels comfortable with his weapon, although it still an illegal weapon. Maybe a job with a PSC brings good value for the XC, but maybe it represents a failure for the hopes of DDR. A licensing system for the problematic PSCs will be one of the outcomes of the DIAG project, hopefully reaching the statute book during 2008.

Commanders who combine accumulated wealth with commercial acumen have made a good living out of business. Plenty have chosen drugs as their most profitable option. They are probably the happiest XCs of all, but they don’t necessarily make the rest of Afghanistan happy, for their financial influence may be as pernicious as their military influence was before. The 2005 Charney Omnibus Survey showed 34% of Afghans worried about corruption, and 41% saying that getting rid of the warlords was a top priority (and some of the respondents are presumably XCs who want to be rid of their Commanders). That is a mandate for DIAG, and shows the importance of the work that ANBP has been doing. There is more still to be done.

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<sup>14</sup> The 3-minute *Demobilization* film, funded by USAID and made by Richard Scarf for D&R Commission and Afghan television broadcasts to promote DDR, shows a DDR briefer telling XCs sitting in a class room: “As you know, weapons oppose construction. Think about which option will suit you best. When you leave this room, you will go to see the caseworker who is in charge of finding you jobs (or reintegration options). You can tell him which job suits you best.”

A pair of appropriate proverbs

Pashtu: *Chaqu ka de sroo she sog-e pa gaeda na mandee*

Even if a knife is made of gold, a person won't stab his own heart with it.

Meaning: Don't side with your best friend if he is in the wrong

Or: Even if DDR is good for the country, what did it do for ME?

Dari: *kas namega ke dogh-e ma tursh ast*

No one says his own buttermilk is sour.

Meaning: No one advertises his own faults.

Or: Commanders will never admit they have done wrong.

### 1.5.5. Ex-combatants' wives and families

#### Objectives:

Wives and families wanted to get their menfolk home alive and with two legs and two arms. Like their husbands who are happy just to get home to their wife and kids, most women were hoping that economic security would arrive along with their men. This has not happened, as the economy stays sluggish, peace investments have been slow, and harvests have not been good. However, by and large Afghan women do not suffer like their men from hang-ups about wealth and status. A quiet life is what they want, without hunger. If there is prestige so much the better, but physical security is the key thing for a woman's survival in this tough land, and the presence of men as farmers and herders, merchants and negotiators definitely makes the lives of women easier.

#### Satisfaction:

In general, the wives and families of XCs have been primarily glad that their husbands and sons and brothers are back from the war, and that fighting has ceased. The joy and celebration has its economic drawbacks: one woman told us she has had four children in five years since her husband stopped fighting! But children who cost money and demand food in the short term, will provide a future source of wealth, comfort and social security for their parents' old age.

Incomes and jobs are the main problem. ANBP showed imagination in bringing teacher training to a small number of (mostly urban upper class) women, some of whom have found jobs – although the Ministry of Education has not been as supportive as expected in getting placements for these qualified and certified teachers. Maybe some of the MoD's disappointed, early-retired colonels could be retrained as teachers. This would bring them incomes and employment, along with the prestigious title of *moalem sahib*.

The vast majority of families, however, were left out of the DDR and CIP equations. All attention was focused on the demobilized soldier as an individual<sup>15</sup>, and nothing was attempted in terms of supporting extended families and communities in which numbers of XCs – including unknown numbers of disabled veterans and martyrs' widows – have to be integrated.

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<sup>15</sup> For the small number of disabled XCs that came within the purview of DDR, however, the handicapped veteran was allowed to nominate a member of his family to receive vocational training in his place, so that the training might lead to income creation to support the XC and his family - a sensitive ANBP innovation.

The 2005 Charney survey showed that only 22% of respondents feel that the UN has done enough to empower women – which concurs with the evaluation team’s regrets about ANBP’s neglect of gender issues. At the same time, 86% of Afghans felt in 2005 that the situation of women has improved since 2001. This would seem to be a vote of approval for the Government’s continued stubborn resistance to Taliban rebels in the South of Afghanistan.

We have no satisfaction data from child soldiers, who were not included in the DDR equation by ANBP. This is a field, in which UNICEF takes the lead, but ANBP was bound to find some under-age soldiers turning up in the DDR process, and they did. ANBP insisted - against all previous DDR experience - that ‘only soldiers with weapons’ would be accepted. Military labourers, carriers, intendants, cooks and sex-slaves were excluded from DDR by ANBP’s rigid and idiosyncratic criteria. Were there any? We shall never know!

None of the ANBP staff who admitted they had come across under-age soldiers, really knew what happened to them. Every XC has mental trauma and adjustment problems. Young men will be parents one day, then they will be fathers. What sort of fathers will they be? Every DDR project has a responsibility to the future generation to make every effort to help XCs adjust properly and productively to civilian life.

There was not even any health check-up to ensure that veterans returning from *jihad* were not carrying tuberculosis with which they might infect their children, or sexually transmitted diseases with which to make their wives’ lives a misery – far less was there an offer of medical facilities for the families themselves. Health treatment is a reinsertion option which would have been extremely valued by XCs and their families, which they would have seen as showing respect and recognition for their service. This is an area in which XC families are not satisfied.

We find the original design of DDR flawed not only in terms of its neglect of fashionable themes like ‘gender equity’ and ‘child soldiers’ and ‘equality for the handicapped’, but also in terms of its approach to reintegration: there was no room for women or families in the DDR implementation. This was partly because staff were not recruited who could handle these issues, and partly because there was not enough time to develop sustainable livelihoods, community development or family wellbeing in a project conceived to last only three years.

**Mr Ghaus Rashid, Deputy Minister of Labour**, says there are 2 million child-headed households and widows in Afghanistan.

UNICEF says there are 8,000 child soldiers in Afghanistan.

IRIN news release, United Nations, 29 September 2004

### **1.5.6. Communities receiving XCs, including martyrs’ widows and orphans and disabled veterans**

#### **Objectives:**

Communities want peace, and an improvement of their livelihoods. Civil society in most

Afghan villages today has a new expression: in addition to the mosque, which is the centre of worship and community decision making for the men, there is a rival institution called the CDC, the Community Development Committee. Part of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) the CDC is an elected body charged with promoting economic and social development. If asked their wishes for DDR, CDC leaders will express hope that DDR will bring peace and prosperity, incomes for their war veterans, and pensions for widowed and disabled community members who are a burden on their families and communities. Widows and the disabled cannot survive on subsistence agriculture because they cannot plow the fields. The mosque will want the same things as the CDC, and also request a new wife for their *mullah*.

In theory the CDC should be a great bonus for any community, and for DDR, by providing an institution that can help reintegrate XCs. If they had been asked, the CDCs would have been enthusiastic reintegration partners. They would have developed objectives and strategies with and for XCs.

In practice ANBP did not seek to use the CDCs. We see great potential for UNDP to develop relations with CDCs for ongoing reintegration support, and in this there is a natural partnership available with UN Habitat, which is one of the leading partners of NSP. A big question-mark hangs over the CDC: when the initial \$10,000 block grant from the World Bank has been spent, what will keep the CDC alive? We do not believe that elections, or a desire for free speech, will be enough to keep the CDC in existence. The natural community forum for debate and decision-making is the mosque. A new XC reintegration partnership with UNDP or other donors could provide a new purpose for CDCs, an opportunity to reach out to the forgotten people of DDR, and a new chance for XCs to gain respect and a earn a position in the community that recognizes their contribution.

### **Satisfaction:**

The answer you receive depends on the question you ask ... and to whom. Ask an XC who has lost his weapon, his power and his source of illegal incomes (from checkpoints and hold-ups and illegal tithes on neighbouring villages, and the question will be negative: "we got nothing out of DDR." Ask his uncle or his mother or his neighbour, about changing security patterns in their region, or the *mullah*, or one of the CDC leaders, and the answer may be positive because nothing is more important to communities than peace, after thirty long years of war. Or they may give a negative answer because their brother is an XC who believes the government owes him - and promised - him a job.

Do rural communities understand the role of DDR in peace building? The link is clearly there, but it does not always seem obvious to people living in remote villages, especially if they think that owning weapons is their chief source of security. What they often see most clearly, however, is the result of CIP and **reduced power of local commanders**. If the commander is their 'boy', they may have enjoyed the fruits of his pillaging. But most communities are tired of war and tired of the commanders with their illegal taxes and their constant threats and demands. DDR brought a peace dividend to many Afghan villages even if they do not realize it came from DDR. CIP and DIAG are the ANBP programmes they probably most recognize as having an impact on their lives.

Communities were not entirely taken aback by the DDR process, for many of the XCs had never really abandoned the village. “There was no reintegration,” a senior official at the MRRD told us, “because no reintegration was necessary: most of these part-time fighters never left home.”

While some *jihadis* spent fifteen years in the mountains of Nuristan or Badakhshan, many of the DDR veterans were really no more than part-time militiamen following a local commander in occasional skirmishes against a national enemy (Russians, Communism, Taliban) or internecine struggles against neighbours who happened to be of a different party, a different faith, or tribe, or whose land their commander coveted. If the local commander is a rogue, his militia may be described by local communities not only as an ‘illegal armed group’, but as an ‘armed criminal gang’. This is why there are commanders in almost every province who never leave their home village, for fear of assassination.

When war ends and DDR arrives, communities hope for a better life. Maybe they have excessive expectations, but the financial burden can be heavy when a village finds itself with numerous widows and orphans, and disabled men who cannot plough the fields or tend the herds. These communities may consider DDR a failure, if they can see no additional incomes brought to the community. The pittance paid to urban disabled in Kabul (500 afs per month = \$10) doesn’t reach the villages. Even if a disabled veteran could travel, the fare to Kabul would consume the pension and the round-trip might take three days or a week. Contented men who opted for the agricultural package and went home perfectly happy with their milk cow, have found themselves under pressure from the community because they have no income generation: the milk cow feeds their children, but it brings them no money.

Thirty years ago, rural Afghans had little use for money in their daily lives: they produced what they ate, selling the surplus to purchase Eid gifts for their wives, kerosene for their lamps, candles, salt and sugar for their households, tobacco for stimulation. War and refugee camps have changed all that: this generation of XCs are used to having, and using, money. A cow is nice for the kiddies’ health, but it does not bring the prestige associated with cash and guns. The lack of cash incomes has therefore coloured the views of communities in urban and rural Afghanistan alike. For most, peace is a success, but DDR was seen as a source of revenues. If the jobs and wages didn’t materialize, then they consider DDR was a failure.

Most international officials, aid workers and consultants in Afghanistan live a hermetically sealed life - advised not to step outside by armed security guards, and often working at very high salaries on very short-term contracts. So too much of the money earmarked for aid to Afghanistan actually goes straight back to donor countries.

The Chief of Staff at the Afghan Counter-Narcotics Ministry, Abbie Aryan, condemned the culture of "champagne and caviar consultants" who come to Afghanistan and "deliver nothing". There is still no internationally agreed strategy on how to tackle the drugs problem. Mr Aryan says that large amounts of . . . money have been wasted on things that the Afghans do not need. The international community is only paying lip service to the idea that Afghanistan should determine aid priorities for itself. BBC report David Loyn 26 June 2007

### 1.5.7. International governmental and UN stakeholders

#### Objectives:

Peace, stability and Security Sector Reform was the general objective for this category, through down-sizing of the AMF ... followed by 'sustainable livelihoods' for XCs through the reintegration process. For many of the UN agencies and INGOs, DDR was also offered potential partnership and funding. ANBP was a huge project needing implementing partners. UN specialized agencies and others hoped or expected to find a role, especially for those whose mandate or expertise fitted them particularly well to work in DDR.

#### Satisfaction:

UN political and strategic thinkers in embassies, in UNAMA, NATO, UNDP and the UN family are generally satisfied with the positive impact of DDR and CIP. They see both programmes as integral parts of a peace process and security sector reform (SSR) process that has changed the patterns of violence and political debate in Afghanistan. The heavy weapons cantonment (HWC) is generally recognized as a turning point both in international cooperation and in reducing levels of violence. HWC also proves that political incentives are stronger than economic incentives in promoting a peace process.<sup>16</sup> By decree the GoA changed the status of heavy weapons from 'booty' *ghanimat* to 'Government Property', and challenged Commanders politically to defy the decree. The elections and the registration of political parties were used as carrots for Commanders to support the HWC. ISAF and US government were brought in as partners of UNAMA, ANBP and MoD, while US and Canadian funding oiled the collection machinery – and the excellent result is a compliment to all of them. HWC provides an example as to how cooperation can happen. It brings dividends for everyone involved.

At the Tokyo DIAG conference on 21 June 2007, the SRSG in his speech described DDR as "one of the landmark achievements of the Government of Afghanistan and the international community, led by Japan. DDR catalysed the reform of the Ministry of Defence, yielded massive cost savings in the defence budget, and most importantly, removed the possibility of heavy weaponry again being employed in internal armed conflicts."

Afghanistan's DDR programme is already seen in UN circles as a rich source of lessons learned. During 2007, ANBP staff have helped design UN DDR strategies in Nepal and Sudan. At the same time as they are proud of the DD success story, UNDP officials are very conscious that the Demobilization phase was reduced to an administrative function by ANBP, that 'Reinsertion' was missed out, and that the 'Reintegration is still a work in progress'. They are taking steps to remedy certain lacunae and to make integration happen so that DDR will be seen as an increasingly successful story as the Afghan peace economy develops.

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<sup>16</sup> One UNAMA political advisor commented, "No matter how many carrots you offer a man, no one will give up his weapon if he thinks he will die."

Other high spots of ANBP identified by the UN leadership as major sources of satisfaction include the weapon destruction (although 56,000 is a small number of weapons to be destroyed by international standards,<sup>17</sup> and compared to the vast number of weapons in Afghanistan); the ammunition destruction; the destruction of stockpiles of anti-personnel mines; the formal dissolution of whole AMF units and the demobilization of all their listed members; the collection of SALW and their delivery to MoD; the management of the mobile units and the regional verification committees; the creation of a mobile XC database system for more than 60,000 XCs; the engagement of commanders through CIP and later DIAG; the vocational training of more than 50,000 XCs for reintegrations; and the reorganization of ANA and MoD - both of which would have been impossible without DDR.

ANBP not only helped change the local political canvas: it also gave great coherence and credibility to UNAMA as the political mentor of ANBP, and to UNDP as the implementing agency, linking in a most positive way DPKO + UN development agencies and – through the D&R Commission – their partnership with the Government of Afghanistan

Not all UN senior staff are convinced that the CIP-DIAG strategy is beneficial. There are worries that it may simply support certain political factions and strengthen commanders' influence over their former fighters (just as DDR may have done when commanders were able to exploit it as form of patronage). These are complex issues involving questions of political judgement, and with the benefit of hindsight (which they did not have) we can see that ANBP leaders did not always get it right. But they did pretty well! On balance, the evaluation team shares the opinion of the majority of UN staff, that the CIP-DIAG strategy is a good way to engage with and neutralize troublesome commanders.

Whereas ANBP provides a good example of coordination between UNAMA and UNDP (between the Peacekeeping and development arms of the UN secretariat), other international partners saw cooperation with ANBP as something of a disappointment. Getting UN agencies to work together is often tricky, for it depends more on the egos and petty jealousies of the local staffs than on the political commitments of their bosses in New York or elsewhere. No one doubts the technical competencies of the UN agencies. We understand that the failure of ANBP to work well with UNICEF illustrates weaknesses on both sides, but there is a presumption of competence for UNICEF on the issue of child soldiers that ANBP should have been prepared to recognize<sup>18</sup>. In other cases the UN agencies were ignored more-or-less because ANBP was so focused on its military and disarmament mission.

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<sup>17</sup> For comparison, the EU-ASAC Cambodian project Assistance to Small Arms control in Cambodia ended on 30 June 2006 with a total of more than 198,000 small arms destroyed by the government since 1999. Of these, 144,000 were destroyed in public ceremonies supported by EU-ASAC that were specifically promoted to build confidence in the peace process.

<sup>18</sup> We understand that part of the problem was ANBP's refusal to accept that XCs under 18 years as 'child soldiers'. In Afghan society, childhood has a very different meaning from Europe, and in a sense the age of 18 is absurd. Yet UNICEF was using international guidelines which we consider ANBP – as a UN programme – should have been willing to accept. In the end, Afghans were the losers.

If ANBP had managed a better balance in its senior staff, it would have been better equipped to plan and manage its reinsertion and reintegration mandate and could have achieved synergy with many of the UN Agencies (such the military wing of ANBP did achieve with Halo Trust). Perhaps UNDP should be faulted for allowing the R&R side to be neglected, and for not recruiting stronger development people into the ANBP team. In this context, thanks and recognition are due to WFP for its food contribution to XCs and for a successful partnership that significantly helped DDR to succeed. This success was due mainly to the initiative and professional competence of WFP, and the experience of their staff from other DDR programmes across the world.

**Other international organizations were treated rather as contractors than as partners**, and instructed to deliver the predetermined ANBP ‘menu’ to XCs. We feel that the Reintegration part of DDR suffered for it. It is difficult to talk about ‘cordial relations’ when experienced international relief and reintegration organizations say they were treated like subalterns by army commanders from the UN! There are many ways of doing business, and military hierarchies do not always fit well with UN or NGO culture. The former Director of ANBP disagrees with this analysis and believes that he consulted adequately with IPs: but not one of his IP reintegration partners agrees with that. We feel that ANBP missed some precious opportunities here.<sup>19</sup>

DDR activities were not part of a proper DDR process as there was no legal frame or agreement between parties and armed groups, apart from the Bonn Agreement from which the Taliban were left out. The rebuilding of the country did not take place; it brought stabilization to a certain category of people but did not stabilize the country.

Director of IOM, ANBP Implementing Partner

### 1.5.8. International observers of the DDR process

#### Objectives:

The International Observer Group was a small body staffed largely by Japanese and German ex-servicemen, which followed the MDUs around the countryside to supervise and observe the DDR process. Their objectives were equity and transparency in the DDR process: indeed the IOG and ANBP each held one of the two padlock keys sealing the containers filled with SALW, and jointly proceeded on each occasion to the handover of weapons to the MoD at the Pul-i-Charki weapon depot outside Kabul. Like the EU and

<sup>19</sup> An exception must be made for partners working in the de-mining field: UNMACA and Halo Trust report good working relations with ANBP and there seem to have been very good synergies here. “They needed us and we needed them,” comments the manager of Halo Trust. We suspect that ANBP managers were more comfortable dealing with people in the familiar military area of de-mining and weapon destruction, than in the reintegration/ development field where command structures are less formal.

other observers, the IOG gave credibility and support to the general political objectives of the DDR process and its execution, in terms of its promotion of peace, stability and Security Sector Reform. We did not interview members of the IOG, since their job finished long ago. The comments below are drawn from interviews with outside observers of the ANBP project DDR process working for a variety of international organizations.

**Satisfaction:**

International representatives who were not responsible for the design and implementation of ANBP are well satisfied with the political contribution made by DDR, CIP and DIAG, and the achievements of ANBP in collecting heavy weapons and ammunition, launching SSR and down-sizing the Afghan armed forces so as to make way for the new ANA. Heavy Weapons Cantonment is frequently highlighted as the ANBP's major innovation. Removing the heavy weapons - and placing them under GoA control - changed the nature of conflict, reduced levels of potential violence, and stimulated international cooperation in ways that (sadly) are seldom repeated.

The admiration is not uncritical. While ANBP was working in extreme conditions of conflict, culture and climate, and was successful in seizing a window of opportunity that may have closed since the DDR process was completed, there is a feeling that ANBP was slow to recognize the importance of key elements in the process. Ammo was not a part of the original disarmament design, and this was a mistake. Giving out cash was another early mistake – and both of these errors could have been avoided if lessons had been learned from West African DDR experience. The feeling is that senior managers came in with pre-conceived ideas about DDR, and applied them without sufficient thought and without drawing on the experience of a wider range of experienced professionals.

M&E started late, and the databases have not been used as well as they could have been – suggesting that there were no senior managers with a good grasp of sustainability issues and the intricacies of reinsertion, reintegration and reconciliation. Reintegration planning was late to start, and the process stopped before it could complete its task - a programme design fault for which UNDP is currently trying to compensate.

Decentralization is one theme that comes up approvingly: ANBP was successful in decentralizing its efforts through 8 regional offices, and this is thought by some observers to be a better model than centralized donor efforts that seek to build bureaucratic capacity in centralizing, Kabul-focused ministries. Donors ask too much of ministries with their limited staffs, and too many donors are asking the same small number of Afghan ministry people (especially the ones with good English) to do too many disparate things, and all at the same time. ANBP emerges as a decentralized model for efficient and appropriate development implementation.

The CIP programme is recognized as a reasonable and constructive way to engage commanders. There is general support for its successor DIAG programme. Most outside observers feel that weakening the power of commanders is important for Afghanistan's peace and stability – though not everyone is convinced the DIAG programme approach is the only way to do this. DIAG is seen as important for creating genuine, nonviolent

political spaces for civilian governance, and for installing the rule of law across the country. Its success is considered more and more problematic as violence increases in the south of the country.

The ‘ammo project’ is respected and seen as important, but observers wonder why ammo became a ‘sudden discovery’ when even laypersons know that SALW require ammunition to be lethal. DDR research shows that uncollected ammo provides an incentive to purchase new weapons: “I’ve got all these bullets; it’ll be wasted if I don’t get myself another firearm”. While the lack of ammo collection with weapons was a weakness in ANBP’s planning and design, the successful scaling up and collecting thousands of tons of ammunition and explosives is recognized as a strength.

The destruction of anti-personnel mine stockpiles is also recognized as an important ANBP contribution to peace in Afghanistan. Nearly all international observers are keen to see Afghanistan meet the conditions during 2008 for adherence to the Ottawa Convention on Landmines. Since the known remaining stockpiles are in the Panshir valley, only the Governor of Panshir stands between Afghanistan and Ottawa!

The very size and importance of the ammo and landmine problem means that most external observers want ANBP to continue well beyond March 2008. Handing the project over to the government removes much of the ‘clout’: without the neutrality and political positioning of UNAMA, and without the technical and supervisory skills of UNDP and the ANBP international staff to support Afghan technical staff, there is a fear both that safety standards will suffer, and that the ammo project will run out of steam. In that case the huge Afghan reservoir of ammo will be opened to illegal smugglers and Afghanistan’s stores of ammunition and weapons will feed insurgent and terrorist organizations all around the region.

“We are satisfied with the result, which was the best we could have achieved in the difficult circumstances. DDR took place at the ‘perfect moment’ – UNDP seized the window of opportunity, which would probably not be open any longer in the conditions of 2007. Was ANBP expensive? Maybe, but it was certainly not a waste of money!”

Comment from the First Secretary of one donor embassy

### **1.5.9. DDR-CIP Donors**

#### **Objectives:**

Donors – the governments of Japan, Britain, Canada, USA, Netherlands, Switzerland, and Norway (and the European Union - EC – for the destruction of mine stockpiles but not for DDR and CIP) were extremely supportive of the objectives in the original project document. The objectives of ANBP were set out in a short enabling document rather than a detailed programme. We have no criticism of this approach, which allowed UNDP to get the ANBP

off the ground quickly and efficiently. The objectives were stated as follows:

**Disarmament:** Assistance in weapons collection and storage.

**Demobilization:** Assistance for former AMF members, including commanders, officers and soldiers, in identifying alternate sources of income in return for leaving behind military life.

**Reintegration:** Assistance to former combatants to return to civilian life; to assist communities to increase their employment and economic absorption capacity; and to provide former combatants with sustainable and appropriate means of making a living through offering packages, including but not limited to community based de-mining, vocational training/job placement, agriculture, contracting teams, small business, teacher training and placement in the Afghan National Army or Afghan National Police.

Ref: UNDP/ANBP factsheets (<http://www.undp.org.af>)

### **Satisfaction:**

Recognizing the positive political impact that DDR and CIP have had on Afghanistan's recent political evolution, the donors are generally very pleased with their investment.

Substantial amounts of ANBP money remained unspent (around \$40 millions, depending on how you count the earmarked funds). This is not surprising since the project lasted only three years and had been budgeted for demobilizing 100,000 XCs. A tangible sign of donor satisfaction is that most of the unspent money has been passed on into DDR successor-projects including DIAG and RSPE.

US Ambassador Khalilzad remarked on leaving Afghanistan for Iraq, that the two greatest achievements of the donors had been the Afghan elections and DDR. That can be read as a sign of considerable donor satisfaction.

DDR in Afghanistan has been promoted as a high-profile success story, and not only by the Japanese government whose support was critical to its conception and its success. The Japanese are aware that the three-year time-scale placed limits on ANBP planning and hindered success for the reintegration phase. The same is true for other donors, several of whom gave additional funds to DIAG and Ammo projects to ensure that ANBP could continue after June 2006. Meanwhile the UNDP is looking for new strategies to keep the reintegration process alive. UNDP and ILO have created the Reintegration Support Programme for Employment (RSPE) through 2008 to keep helping XCs across the country find jobs appropriate to their skills in the public, private and social sectors.

Although USAID contributed \$9 millions, the Americans have been reluctant to engage fully in the ANBP partnership and have most often been critical from the outside. This can be helpful. In large part the M&E process was started inside ANBP because of constant complaints and badgering by Americans – including a mission that made critical and helpful suggestions that were acted upon inside ANBP.<sup>20</sup> In return, ANBP senior management found

<sup>20</sup> Brief Review of Afghanistan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Program (DDRP) and Recommendations for Possible USAID Assistance, by Ted Morse and Sharon Isralow, November 2004

American attitudes to DDR - and their half-promises about funding - unhelpful. American support and cooperation was erratic. We believe this is partly due to frequent personnel changes at every level. Some US ambassadors, diplomats and military officers understood the importance of the ANBP mission; others did not, or were less inclined to be cooperative.

This is really unfortunate. The evaluators found USAID staff very friendly and interested during this evaluation process, but we have US diplomatic and army personnel were unapproachable and unhelpful. Most have simply said they know nothing about DDR – a serious admission in and of itself. Other email contacts have been polite, but forced, and after six weeks of trying they have provided no useful information to this evaluation.

“My data regarding strength would only be for the present as no records were provided to me regarding strength prior to my arrival. Perhaps the data does exist but to be frank, I don't care much about past strength figures only present and future,” wrote one US colonel in the CSTC about Afghan army recruitment, when we were trying to confirm numbers we had received verbally from elsewhere.

That contemptuous ‘brush off’ is not the sort of support an evaluator hopes for when he asks open and transparent questions of someone who is supposed to be a partner in the Afghan peace building process. If that is typical of US army cooperation with its allies, it goes a long way towards explaining the confused and unsuccessful policies of the international coalition in Afghanistan and the disappointments of ANBP.

Rapid staff turnover may explain the apparent US lack of knowledge and expressed lack of interest. The public information activities that USAID funded for the D&R Commission in 2004-5 would have brought more benefit to everyone if they had been incorporated inside the ANBP and developed sustainability. The activities lasted a year, and then – just as the new micro-credit process was beginning to attract interest from the XCs it was designed to assist – funding was cancelled by a new ambassador who had no interest in disarmament and reintegration.

Belatedly recognizing the danger (‘middle commanders can be spoilers’ said former US Ambassador Newman who was one ambassador who grasped the importance of DDR), USAID has launched a pair of business planning projects aimed at 300 ‘dangerous’ commanders whom they have identified with ANBP’s help: ASMED (training) and ARIES (business loans). These are helpful and constructive efforts, designed specifically to take ANBP’s reintegration process forward. All USAID contractors are also instructed to hire DDR people; we were not able to find out what impact this has had on XC employment.

The main problem I have had in dealing with the US government is that they have no single policy. Every US government agency has a different policy, and very often some policies are in direct contradiction to the others.

Senior official in the British MoD in London  
who formerly served in Iraq with Ambassador Bremer

### **1.5.10. International civil society organizations (some were IPs)**

#### **Objectives:**

International non-governmental organizations (NGO) were supportive of the same strategic objectives as the donors, except that they all put greater emphasis on the social aspects of demobilization and reintegration, on gender and child protection issues, and the sustainability of employment or income generating 'packages. On the whole, the NGOs had greater hopes and ambitions for development processes and reintegration projects, while the embassies were focused more on political and military aspects of DDR.

#### **Satisfaction:**

International NGOs share the opinion of the international community that the programme was broadly a success for Afghanistan. Disarmament was well-organised and had a positive impact, but several experienced INGO managers saw ANBP burdened with deep flaws from the design stage. They feel that the 'R' was designed in too much of a hurry inside ANBP by too small a number of people, and that not enough prior consultation took place. In some ways ANBP was 'more of an inspiration than an organization' and it suffered from that. Management innovations and structures had to catch up with the inspiration, as one unplanned, unexpected activity led to another.

INGOs recognize that ANBP was very successful in implementation, efficient in management, and innovative in its flexible response to the unexpected challenges of commanders, heavy weapons, large ammunition stockpiles. Some of them feel, on the other hand, that the long-term strategic planning was deficient. "Why," they ask, were problems with commanders and ammunition so unexpected?" Other DDR programmes have already made the mistake of not collecting up bullets with small arms, so the lesson should have been learned.

The NGOs are mainly grassroots organizations with field agents who are focused on different areas than the international and political achievements of ANBP. Without denying the political and strategic contributions to peace and stability perceived by UNAMA and ambassadors, the NGOs are watching the lives of XCs who received short-term training that was not always market-oriented, and did not provide families with sustainable incomes.

If the ANBP design process had been participative, NGOs would have organised reintegration market studies, rehabilitation, reconciliation, micro-credit operations, and provided the family/gender sensitivity that was lacking inside ANBP. They would have worked with UN Habitat and other NSP partners to help CDCs design coherent community development plans with full participation of men and women (separately) that

would have taken account of reintegration and XCs as well as returning refugees, child soldiers and people with special needs.

Child soldiers as a category were neglected<sup>21</sup>, and sexual violence was all but ignored. Health issues were left out of the reinsertion process, despite the clear UN guidelines for DDR, and this is an area many NGOs consider very important. Literacy and numeracy could have been provided to all XCs, but this was done in only certain places. Training in civil and human rights was not mentioned by ANBP, although they have been important components of other DDR experiences during the demobilization phase and widely disseminated using the skills of civil society organizations (CSO).

Likewise CSOs consider that the length of the project – three years – could and should have been recognized as inadequate for the task of reintegration. The project document almost equates ‘reintegration’ with ‘vocational training’ and this is unacceptable to an NGO community composed of highly qualified professionals committed to long-term sustainable development. The ‘interface’ between DDR and Development was not worked out, which is why UNDP is struggling in 2007 to work out the post-DDR phase which should have been prepared back in 2002.

A lot of NGOs believe ANBP has no real handle on impacts and results because each IP has a different idea of impacts, and a different way of measuring results. No IP data was fed into the DDR database - thus neither ANBP nor its partners had access to meaningful monitoring statistics. This is why the wonderful database of 63,000 XCs couldn't provide the evaluators with any useful information.

ANBP was driven by numbers, not by impacts. The Programme Office of ANBP could see how many XCs were sitting in classrooms, but had no way to find out what individual XCs were learning or whether the vocational training would ever prove useful to the supposed beneficiaries. The claim of 65% success for reintegration is widely challenged, but we have no way of appreciating the real figures. Better follow-up is needed. It didn't happen since DDR was planned for just three years.

Some NGOs question the fixed ‘menu’ of training options, and wonder whether – in the absence of any sort of market-based survey - the choice on offer was always appropriate. As stated in the ToR for the DDR portion of the current evaluation:

“ .. choice was considered an important element of ANBP's reintegration philosophy. ANBP developed a broad-based menu of careers, training and job options, and provided a system of directed counselling that would assist XCs to make a sensible and informed choice. A focused public information campaign aimed at potential participants and their families preceded the initiation of the DDR process while in the course of a ‘demobilization day’ XCs were briefed ...

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<sup>21</sup> Several INGOs have been working with UNICEF on this issue and are frustrated that ANBP ignored it. This is not because child soldiers are a secret! The website <http://www.alertnet.org/childsoldiers4.htm> states for Afghanistan: There are 8,000 actual and former child soldiers. Boys reportedly joined or were forcibly recruited into factional armed groups and militias. There are reports that girls were forced into early marriages with armed group commanders. Under-18s arrested in Afghanistan were held at the U.S. military detention camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. □ □

*U.N. protocol prohibiting use of child soldiers:* Afghanistan acceded September 2003.

about the various ‘opportunity packages’ on the reintegration ‘menu’.

NGOs were not consulted on the composition of the menu. As Implementing Partners (IPs) they consider they were treated as contractors, not partners, and their institutional expertise was largely ignored even though some of the INGOs have long experience of DDR in other countries. Rural development specialists in certain regions who proposed changes to the menu, were turned down (ie COOPI wanted to provide small credits to XCs, to assist the sustainability of their chosen career paths which was especially relevant as a coping mechanism in view of the coming winter season – this was refused by ANBP).

As it turns out, the biggest reintegration success stories are those where non-ANBP funding provided the largest part of the NGO’s budget and the institutional support for XCs is therefore constant even fifteen months after the end of DDR. In Jalalabad, in Kunduz and in Herat we found IPs with ongoing programmes (craft training, micro-credit, micro-enterprise, child soldiers, women’s education, drug rehabilitation, etc) that are still assisting XCs with their reintegration. If ANBP had started from the basis of genuine partnerships with other organizations, synergies might have developed in a much broader and more durable manner. In that case, the degree of satisfaction expressed by INGOs would certainly have been much greater.

ANBP was supposed: “to provide former combatants with sustainable and appropriate means of making a living.” To achieve that, vocational training by itself is not enough. Good planning could have achieved so much more, and this is the main criticism of the INGO community.

“If we ask soldiers, they will all say DDR ‘failed’ because it did not transform their lives. But the ‘R’ was generally a success.”

Former ANBP programme officer

### **1.5.11. Local and international business community**

- **Objectives**

The business community is fairly interested in DDR’s impacts on peace, but mainly in DR reintegration packages providing training to satisfy the private sector’s need for skilled employees. In Kabul their focus tends to be on English language competence and computer skills. In the provinces the main area of work is road building, and agricultural transformation for the regional market.

Although many private sector operators are sophisticated international operators (many with two passports and a family in USA or Sweden or Germany or elsewhere) and they appreciate the peace and the commercial opportunities brought by ANBP and other programmes, they are getting increasingly worried about the security situation. Some are openly wondering whether they should sell-up and move away.

### **Satisfaction:**

There is recognition among business investors (there are too few of them) that ANBP has made significant contributions to reducing armed tensions and promoting security sector reform – although there is disappointment that more progress has not been made by GoA and the international community with police reform, justice reform, drug regulation and installation of the rule of law.

The one area where employment opportunities beckon XCs is the security sector, where **Private Security Companies have been happy to hire former combatants**. Some local PSCs were founded by former commanders, who employ their former fighters dressed in new uniforms. They argue that they are needed because the ANP is not providing adequate security: they are not only filling a market niche in the private sector, but also supplying a need. These men generally recognize that DDR was necessary for the country, and say that it provided opportunities for them to recruit trained security personnel.

Those who are not running PSCs recognize that they pose a major security problem for Afghanistan. Even companies that hire private security guards recognize that these PSCs – and this is equally true for American and Afghan companies – are *de facto* private militias and potential criminal gangs, moving around the country with unregistered weaponry and subject to no form of law. ANBP-DIAG is working to assist the GoA in regulating PSCs. A draft law is expected to be approved by GoA before the end of 2007, after which it will be presented to Parliament.

In terms of providing employment opportunities, other business leaders are fairly indifferent to DDR and the needs of XCs. They will take a trained DDR building supervisor if he turns up, but there doesn't seem to be any feeling among business leaders of a personal responsibility to make DDR a success – rather like the lack of interest we found among government ministries.

Most of the opportunities coming up in private sector employment in Kabul require English language and computer skills: **the global economy require skills that most XCs do not have. The fighting skills they do have are feared by business**, but the responsibility for dealing with XCs is left to 'government' or 'international community' in a classic private sector 'cop-out'.

“People in Panshir think, ‘They are taking our weapons from us, and then how do we know what will happen tomorrow? Will we need our weapons?’ That is their view of DDR. Taliban are distributing money to people- and GoA is not. Taliban pays \$200, and ANA pays \$70. The Taliban have force and they have money. How is that? How does the International Coalition allow that? Where does this Kuwait and Saudi and other money come from? Thank God, they are not in Panshir yet. Not yet.”  
Afghan member of the PRT in Panshir

## 1.5.12. Current and former members of ANBP staff

### Objectives:

Whatever indifference they may have felt about the job when they joined ANBP, we have found all the staff well-trained and highly committed to the cause of micro-disarmament and reintegration. Both international staff and Afghan staff are excellent. These men and women have been well-led and well-motivated, and they all believe that DDR and CIP will improve the security of Afghanistan and the lives of the XCs - although recent rises in violence in Kabul and the South make even the most dedicated ANBP peace worker wonder if the achievements will prove vain.

### Satisfaction:

Without exception, ANBP staff and former staff are proud of what has been achieved. As the former ANBP Director wrote to us, “The collection of 12,000 heavy weapons and 55,000 light weapons, and the destruction of ammunition should be regarded as a ‘miracle’ ... in this society.” It is worth remembering that this is the society of which a Pashtun gun merchant once told the famous American newspaper *Christian Science Monitor*, ‘In Afghanistan women wear jewelry, and men wear guns.’<sup>22</sup>

We find that the level of expertise and motivation in the ANBP organization was and remains exceptional, its management systems and implementation skills were and are unrivalled in Afghanistan. People are beginning to leave ANBP only because of its planned closure. Since the evaluators recommend a further three years of support to security sector reform, weapon and explosive destruction, DDR and CIP-related activities by UNDP and UNAMA, **a rapid decision will encourage good staff to stay on and continue to believe in their future role with UNDP.**

We found the staff and former staff ready to talk, and we found them extremely open to discussing the strengths and weaknesses of ANBP. The decentralized nature of the organization is praised; all staffers are proud of the way the MDU-RVC-IOG structure worked and the remarkably smooth DDR process it administered.

Running the DDR, CIP, DIAG and Ammo projects has required great moral and physical courage from both national and international staff. The ANBP staff play down the risks of their chosen profession, but they have been frequently threatened with weapons, and have sometimes come under fire from armed militias who did not want to surrender their weapons or their stocks of ammunition. Commanders make dangerous playmates: even during our evaluation mission, one regional director of ANBP-DIAG received death threats to himself and his family. ANBP may provide staff with a well-paid position, but theirs is not an easy mission.

Training and promotion were available to national staff. We found young men and women of exceptional talent throughout the organization, often exercising with great skill

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<sup>22</sup> Baldauf, Scott, ‘Report from Landi Kotal, in the Khyber Pass’, *C S Monitor*, 27 March 2002.

and knowledge some high responsibilities that few organizations would leave to such young people. This is entirely to the credit of ANBP and its senior management.

ANBP in 2007 is smaller and less well-staffed than it used to be. The evaluators sometimes found it difficult to extract the information needed, because ‘X is no longer working for ANBP’ or ‘Y is on leave’. This was tiresome, especially in terms of finding tables of data and specific data from the M&E section. Our work would have been much easier, if ANBP had planned our visit with their usual efficiency and arranged to produce in advance the data we were bound to request and need.

Despite the quality of the original database, M&E was always the runt of ANBP’s litter and that is very much the case today. DIAG does not seem to be maintaining coherent institutional records. If the database is to be useful, M&E section needs today to benefit from the management attention it was denied in the past.

Andkhoy wants water  
Maimana wants roads  
Kandahar wants security  
Helmand wants to be free to grow opium

Former ANBP staff worker explaining  
that different people want different  
results from DDR

## \* 1.6. Impacts - strategic overview of impacts (positive and negative)

### 1.6.1. Impact on Security in Afghanistan

DDR is not the only reason that there are fewer armed men on the streets, and CIP is not the sole influence that has brought many commanders into the political process (and some to elected positions). Nevertheless it is fair to claim for ANBP that it has made a major contribution to improving Afghan security. There are no longer commanders driving around with Kalashnikov-toting bodyguards. Fewer rural commanders are terrorizing their neighbours and demanding *osher* illegal taxes of 10% on all crops, with which to pay their illegal armed groups. Rebels find it harder to obtain high quality explosive supplies inside Afghanistan: Taliban supplies are coming across the frontier from Pakistan. DDR and CIP have contributed to these positive changes.

Private Security Companies remain a major security problem. Although some in the international community think they provide security, the GoA, the UN and the evaluators see PSCs as a significant threat to stability. An unknown number of XCs have found employment with PSCs. The international donors are part of the insecurity problem, for it is

through their protection that PSCs act above and outside the law, enjoying impunity even for the most outrageous behaviour. Many are really no more than illegal private militias acting outside the law but with the protection of Western embassies. ANBP is helping the GoA to regulate PSCs as part of the DIAG process, and this will have a further beneficial impact on security and on security sector reform.

### **1.6.2. Impact on peace in Afghanistan**

DDR has had a positive impact on the Afghan peace process, creating the conditions necessary for security sector reform and the creation of a new Afghan National Army. Levels of violence, and overt intimidation by military commanders using threatening behaviour, have been reduced thanks to the ANBP. Whether this will still be the case in a few years time depends on how political and military processes evolve between Pakistan, Afghanistan and the international coalition. If all goes well, history will record ANBP as the starting point for long-term peace and security in Afghanistan. If violence grows and the sub-region sinks back into generalized warfare, ANBP and the DDR process will become a forgotten irrelevance. Let us hope this is not the case.

One of the major contributions of ANBP has been its technical and political support for the destruction of surplus weapons, ammunition and anti-personnel mines. Thanks to this, Afghanistan is expected to be able to ratify the Ottawa Convention on Landmines before the end of 2007, although some hidden reserves in Panshir province still need to be found and destroyed. This will have a positive impact on public confidence in the peace process, and on the international image of Afghanistan.

All stakeholders acknowledge the positive impact of Heavy Weapons Cantonment, which changed the political climate of the country by bringing certain major commanders into the electoral process and reduced substantially the risk for further violence. We believe this to be unique among UN supported DDR programmes. As the 2006 BCPR mission remarked, “This achievement has a potentially important impact on the medium-term security of Afghanistan and the resumption of war.”

Peace has not yet returned to the country, despite the success of DDR. One problem is failure of the international coalition to develop a coherent strategy for building a peace economy: most investments have been in the war economy. This has encouraged many commanders to remain outside the system, and CIP was neither long enough nor strong enough to bring all the commanders in. Unless a coherent job-creation programme is developed and unless the drug trade can be addressed with new, innovative policies (with practical support from ISAF), permanent peace is going to be difficult to find.

Security sector reform is the critical mechanism for assuring sustainable peace in Afghanistan. DDR is the pillar that has worked best. DIAG and other ANBP successor components need to work closely with the army and police reform, counter narcotics and reform of the justice sector, if peace is to become permanent.

### **Recommendation to the GoA and UN**

***We recommend that the United Nations should continue to work with the GoA providing three more years of technical assistance and political support for the collection and destruction of mines, surplus ammunition and SALW, and provide three more years of support to the D&R Commission to expand and strengthen its mandate.***

### **1.6.3. Impact on Regional peace**

For centuries, Afghanistan has been the nodal point of the Central Asian region, and the focus of a Great Game played between global powers to gain control of the trade routes and resources of this fascinating part of the world. Whenever war has disturbed Central Asia, Afghanistan has been in the center of it. Afghanistan is always the key to victory, and the key for peace. On the Afghan peace process rests the future of all the ‘Stans’ – from Pakistan in the south to Turkmenistan in the north-west and to Kazakhstan in the north-east.

There is a lot of concern about the destination of the collected weapons, and the large stocks of ammo that have been collected by ANBP and delivered to the MoD. These weapons are GoA property but it is not clear if they are all needed by MoD. So far as we can judge, supplies of SALW from Central Europe received in 2003-2004 were more than adequate for the needs of ANA which has 35,000 soldiers in August 2007. Therefore the DDR and DIAG weapons about which the MoD complains may very well be surplus to current needs.

With the ANA and ANP about to be equipped with a completely new set of NATO equipment, all existing stocks of Soviet era Kalashnikovs, mortars, RPGs and other SALW will presumably become obsolete and surplus to government needs. The Deputy Minister of Defence told us that surplus weapons and ammo will be destroyed. ISAF is aware of this and the US army colonel who is currently Director of International Donations CSTC-A told us by email dated 14 August 2007: “From my knowledge, we are working on a plan to both distribute the NATO standard weapons and to deal with the old Eastern bloc weapons - some will be going to the ANP (good weapons) and the rest will most likely be destroyed.”

If the destruction does not take place, there is a real danger that huge stocks of weapons and ammunition will be shipped out of Afghanistan (both legally and illegally) and could destabilize surrounding states. Judging from international lessons learned, as they become surplus to need the MoD weapons collected by DDR and DIAG will find their way into armed conflicts elsewhere - unless they are destroyed.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> To this end there are some important lessons to be learned from the Mozambique DDR, where the UN Security Council ended the mandate in 1994 before huge stocks of collected weapons had been destroyed. These weapons undermined security across Southern Africa for years to come. This is a comment by Ana Leao from an ISS paper published in 2004. <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/Monographs/No94/Chap1.html>

We see an opportunity for GoA to solve the problem of surplus stocks with a dramatic act of weapon destruction that will change the way Afghans see their relationship with weapons, and transform Afghanistan's international image. This is one of our main recommendations.

We accept that changing GoA or NATO policy is not something for which UNDP or ANBP are responsible in any way. Senior management sent the following written statement to us:

"The weapons that ANBP collected and handed over to the GoA were done so on the basis that they were actually MoD property - and the MoD therefore sought their return to be able to properly equip their own Forces. This was the mandate to which ANBP was instructed to operate and therefore did so. It would be unfair to lay ... the responsibility for possible world supplies of weapons at the door of the UN!"

Creating peace in Afghanistan will definitely have a beneficial effect on peace in the whole region. If peace arrives, ANBP will have had a beneficial impact on peace in Afghanistan and in Central Asia. Alas! we are unable to predict what the future will bring, or what historians may judge the impact of DDR and CIP to have been.

### **Recommendations to the Government of Afghanistan**

***1- We recommend that the mandate of the D&R Commission chaired by Vice-President Khalili - which is the appropriate high-level mechanism for coordinating Afghan government partnership with UNAMA and UNDP in this delicate sector - should be extended to cover destruction of surplus weapons and ammunitions and explosives.***

***2- We recommend that the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2008 – United Nations International Day for the Destruction of Weapons – should be celebrated with a large-scale, public weapon destruction ceremony and that the President of Afghanistan should report on this in September 2008 to the General Assembly of the United Nations.***

***The event should be filmed and widely broadcast abroad and at home to convince Afghan public opinion that destroying surplus arms is a good thing for their country.***

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"Another point of consensus was the military component of ONUMOZ, which Mozambicans did not hesitate in labelling a failure. They are not the only ones who have made this assessment. The fact that most UN documents on ONUMOZ include but a few paragraphs on the disarmament process, as opposed to extensive debates on other aspects of the mission, seems to indicate the dissatisfaction of the UN itself with this area of work.

"In all fairness, one has to say that given the political circumstances at the time, the UN mission was confronted with tough choices, which required rapid decisions in an environment still pervaded by mutual suspicions between the two warring parties. For the sake of the ultimate goal – to bring peace to a country that had experienced conflict for over 30 years – compromises had to be made. Furthermore, some of the prevailing problems seem to have been more the doing of the Government of Mozambique (GoM) at the time than with a lack of will or capacity of the UN to solve them. Nevertheless, the fact remains that when the UN withdrew in the end of 1994, the GoM inherited disgruntled armed forces, overstuffed paramilitary institutions, and the volatile combination of jobless demobilized soldiers and arms caches around the country in an economic environment offering few opportunities. Adding to this, weapons collected during the ONUMOZ period were handed over to the GoM, to arm an already over-armed army that had little capacity to manage the stockpiles under its supervision."

*We find that the commercial and military value of old weapons and outdated stocks of ammunition is far outweighed by the political value of their public destruction, which will build public confidence in peace and will bring international renown to the government and to the Afghan nation.*

#### **Recommendation to UNAMA and UNDP**

*We recommend that the Ammo and DIAG projects should not be handed to the GoA in 2008. On the contrary, we recommend that UNAMA and UNDP should continue to support the government in managing these projects for a further three years, to assure international standards and recognition, and that three years further support should be given to the D&R Commission.*

#### **Recommendation to the international community**

*His Excellency the Deputy Minister of Defence assured the evaluation mission that surplus stocks will be 'melted or burned'. While this is reassuring, the international community should put in place safeguards to ensure that Soviet model surplus weapons and munitions are destroyed, and not exported from Afghanistan.*

#### **Recommendation to UNDP, UNAMA and GoA**

*In a country awash with weapons, and with new weapons and munitions coming in for the ANA on a regular basis, we consider that the logical position for the UN (and for the DIAG and Ammo programmes) is to destroy all collected weapons. At the very least, one old weapon/box of ammunition should be destroyed for every new weapon/box of ammunition delivered to the ANA or ANP. The 'disarmament' phase of all DDR programmes should include destruction equal to the number of weapons and munitions collected.*

### **1.6.4. Impact on healing Afghan society**

While DDR had a very positive political impact on promoting peace and stability at the macro level, its impact at the micro level is less clear-cut. Demobilization and Reinsertion provide a platform for Reintegration, and this phase normally includes health checks and treatments, trauma counseling, and participatory teaching about civil rights, domestic violence, reconciliation, human rights and the rule of law. These issues are important for the healing of war-torn societies.

Gender issues did not register in ANBP's planning. Domestic violence and gender-based violence were ignored, despite the fact that they are areas of very major concern throughout Afghan society – even in peacetime. What will be the medium-term implications for community healing of thousands of XCs living in their families with their war memories?

The gender imbalance risks exacerbation if ex-combatants find reintegration difficult, fail to generate the new incomes they hoped for, blame the government or ANBP for not giving them jobs, and take it out on their wives and families. The ANBP could have made more effort to link the DDR reintegration process into other programmes, including notably the

Reintegration is a mid to long term process. The most difficult and important phase of the DDR process is Reintegration. Its success will be the benchmark in the mid to long term upon which the DDR program in Afghanistan will ultimately be judged.

Richard Scarf, USAID's former public information advisor to the D&R Commission

NSP and their creation of CDCs<sup>24</sup>. These institutions could promote healing and reconciliation, and assist XCs with their intergration. This opportunity was missed, although the NSP was – like DDR - a priority Presidential programme that started around the same time as ANBP. It is not too late: UNDP could still mobilise the NSP to help the reintegration process, and thereby help NSP contribute more significantly to the healing of society.

The Commanders' Incentives Programme, on the other hand, provides an creative example of how healing can be promoted through training and discussion, and bringing together former enemies to discover ways in which they can begin to rebuild society. Although it is still early to judge, we believe that the CIP has had a positive effect on healing Afghan society.

### **Recommendation to the UN system**

*UN funded DDR programmes should prepare and design the demobilization-reinsertion phase as a launch-pad for reintegration. Activities should include health checks and treatments and health education for XCs and for their families, trauma healing, participative training on gender issues, child rights, human rights, the respect of women, national reconciliation and the rule of law, literacy and numeracy, as well as studies of training and employment opportunities that may ensure sustainable livelihoods for XCs and their families.*

### **Recommendation to UNDP**

*UNDP should review its ongoing support to reintegration, and envisage a decentralized programme using the REABP or NSP and the experience of UN Habitat and other IPs, to incorporate some post-ANBP reintegration and rehabilitation efforts into the programme of CDCs.<sup>25</sup>*

## **1.6.5. Impact on political leadership, illegal militias and the rule of law**

The DDR process had a clearly beneficial impact on the stability of Afghanistan's political leadership, as tensions diminished and commanders bought into the political process. Both the heavy weapons cantonment and the demobilization diminished the threat of serious

<sup>24</sup> There are around 40,000 villages according to MRRD. In August 2007 there are already 18,000 CDCs with more to be created. Afghanistan has 34 provinces and 364 districts. A Census is planned for 2008 with UNFPA technical assistance.

<sup>25</sup> We apologize for the acronyms, but we are proud that we have managed to cram seven acronyms, none of them military, into a single sentence of three lines. Is this a record?

Case Study July 2007

**Mohammed Sideq works for an NGO helping extremely vulnerable victims of war**

I was a soldier for more than one year in the time of Najibullah. At first I was a guard in the Shomali Plain at Bagram, and later were sent into the mountains to a guard post. The Mujahiddin used to use the area at night for transporting weapons and food and other stuff and I told my men, “We will not attack them because they are Afghans and we are Afghans.”

The Najibullah communist government was nearly ending and soon the Mujahiddin attacked right across the region and they destroyed all the other guard posts. But our guard post was left unharmed and my eleven soldiers were very happy. The Mujahiddin used to send us food, their women brought us food to eat in our guard post. War is ended, but war leaves scars – external wounds and also damages inside your head.

What are the mental scars left behind in my head? I do not know. One time I was at the bus stop when Kabul had seven Presidents all of whom were destroying the city. Many people were waiting for the bus. I turned into the market beside the bus stop to buy some small food items for my family. I was inside the market for only two minutes, when a rocket exploded at the bus stop. More than 100 people were killed, exactly where I had been standing two minutes before. In those days Hekmatyar was sending so many rockets to destroy Kabul. In one week he sent more than 100 rockets against the city.

Everything was black with smoke. For maybe five minutes I sat on the floor curled up with my hands over my head and my arms covering my ears. I was in shock from the blast. After five minutes the air cleared and maybe I felt calmer. I opened my eyes and in front of me on the floor I saw the head of a woman. Only her head. That was another shock for me, and I do not know if these experiences will have an impact later on my life and my behaviour. How can I tell?

I was wounded in the leg in two places from that rocket. There were people who lost their arm in the explosion, and they saw their arm on the pavement beside them with their fingers still moving. Such a thing is a great shock, and it can have impact later inside your head. Who knows what will happen to me?

I am happy now, with a complete family: my mother, my wife and my two children including the 4-year old daughter who is my BOSS! But I have already lost three sons who died – one died just four months ago, and my wife is not in good health. She has been operated three times, twice because of the babies who died after five days, and now the doctor tells me she must not bear any more children for five or six years. That is no problem. I am happy.

violence as senior commanders joined the political process, and the disbandment of military units brought significant lessening of tensions across the country.

The impact of the micro-disarmament (SALW) is less obvious, since it is generally assumed that commanders held back plenty of light weapons while handing in only part of their store. In terms of progressing towards permanent peace, **the process of micro-disarmament is more important than actual numbers of weapons collected**. ‘Not using weapons’ is more important than ‘not having weapons’.

Despite the efforts of CIP and DIAG, some commanders remain outside the political process. Some have joined politics, some are bandits, while others avoid the rule of law by creating unregistered and unregulated private security companies (ANBP is helping the GoA to

produce regulations through DIAG). Legal reform is one of the SSR pillars that has made the least progress.

Fighting continues and even intensifies in the South, and illegal militias remain a problem in certain provinces. Some commanders have taken their private militias into the Afghan National Auxiliary Police or into the highway police, and this may also be a problem in the medium term. UNAMA and UNDP seized a window of opportunity for DDR, which did not remain open for long, and they were successful in getting DDR and CIP to work. As the slow progress of DIAG shows, the window may now be closing.

**Recommendation to the GoA, the International Community and UN**

***The present security climate is not propitious for disarming Afghanistan and destroying all illegal weapons and explosives. Instead of disarmament, Afghanistan needs to think in terms of ‘weapons management’.***

"It's very important that these Afghan National Auxiliary Police (A.N.A.P.) get trained to an adequate level as soon as possible, so that we can put them out with the (regular) A.N.P. in a support position, doing the jobs that A.N.P. would normally be doing, so they [the police regulars] can be free to do other tasks.

“After just two weeks training, the question is, will the new policemen be more loyal to their former bosses or to the Afghan government, based hundreds of kilometers away in Kabul?”

Sergeant Mark Davidson, a senior police trainer. <http://www.ddrafg.com/ANP.htm>

### **1.6.6. Impact on Afghan democratic governance**

The CIP and DDR projects worked in a complementary fashion to bring commanders into the democratic process. Some have been elected to Parliament and others to Provincial Development Councils. CIP had a positive impact on elections and on the whole of the government and governance process.

For many middle-level and senior commanders – and for many former professional army officers who were forcibly retired – not enough has been done to occupy them, to find them jobs and to give them honour: Respect and Recognition are two ‘R’s that are especially important for Afghan DDR. The CIP by itself is insufficient to bring satisfaction to these disgruntled men.

Several governors are worried that local commanders will become untenable unless the government finds them jobs and occupations. One told us that he has half a dozen commanders who need to be sent to jobs in embassies overseas: not only to break their hold on their followers, but also to remove them from possible links to the Taliban. To make it worse, most of these men either believe the government promised them jobs (which is probably true in most cases – we have seen plenty of official letters from Kabul requesting ministries to hire them), or believe that they have fought for - and deserve - a government position. This is

not a negative impact of ANBP so much as a limitation on the economic and political possibilities of CIP.

At a more subtle level, we find that the recruitment and training of an exceptional team of national staff inside ANBP, and their deployment across the country through the regional office system, has provided exceptional support to decentralized democratic governance. Provinces are strengthened by the presence of ANBP offices, and the by the competence and intelligence and positive commitment of their staff.

### **Recommendation to UNDP**

*UNDP should take over the ANBP regional offices to support programmes that promote equality of national development based on decentralized governance. The ANBP regional structures and the widespread influence of the DDR and CIP programmes offer an opportunity for UNDP and other UN agencies to regionalize and decentralize their management.*

### **1.6.7. Impact on the Afghan economy**

The impact of DDR and CIP on the Afghan macro-economy is considerable, thanks to the transformation of the MoD budget which threatened to bankrupt the government. On the micro-economy, however, there is less impact. Yet this is where jobs must be found. Employment can come only from investment in job-creating enterprises. Some Commanders have invested money in businesses thanks to the training they received. Some money from ANBP went into the economy: up to \$1500 was invested per XC on the reintegration process, much of which went into vocational training budgets. This strengthened some IPs and provided vocational training that may generate incomes for XCs in the medium term.

ANBP definitely tried to stimulate employment. Although road-building jobs were offered, XCs were almost unanimous in their refusal to work in MRRD road building unless they were supervisors. Some ministries have been uninterested in employing XCs, and even international agencies have been mixed in their support.<sup>26</sup>

We have no means of measuring the real economic impact of ANBP, and in any case it is too soon to make a judgement. Theoretically the time that XCs used to spend in soldiering is now being invested in economic activities. The opportunity cost is probably so small however, that most of these part-timers sacrificed very little of their normal incomes to soldiering – although the time they may have spent pillaging other villages for the profit of their commanders is certainly an economic disbenefit that has been removed by DDR and CIP. The ANBP database for 63,000 XCs and their families could be updated as we suggest to UNDP (see the Sustainability section below). If this database can be transformed into a development tool, the measurement of DDR's economic impact could be attempted in two years' time. In the meantime, the evaluators believe - given the small size of incomes being

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<sup>26</sup> While USAID insists that its contractors hire XCs as a preference, the World Bank refused a request from MRRD to include this in their contracts.

generated by XCs whom we have interviewed - that DDR did no harm to the micro-economy, but its economic impact in the provinces is too small to register.

## \* 1.7. Sustainability

### 1.7.1. Giving new lives to ex-combatants

ANBP's reintegration component was aimed at assisting the XCs to develop a new civilian livelihood. Giving XCs a choice of training and career was also considered an important element of ANBP's reintegration philosophy. According to ANBP project documents, efforts were made in order for all reintegration opportunities to be:

- *Sustainable:* Long term solutions as opposed to short term interventions
- *Multi-sectoral:* ANBP offered a range of opportunities based on the needs and aspirations of the former combatants
- *Integrated:* Where possible, ANBP placed former combatants in national priority programmes, Ministry initiatives or coordinated programs with other UN agencies

How long should we wait to determine sustainability? Some of the XCs only completed their vocational training in 2006, and one year is certainly too soon to decide. Western bankers usually allow five years for a small business to determine whether it will be profitable and sustainable (although it may easily fail earlier, its success cannot be judged until the company has had time to develop products and a customer base).

Many of the complaints directed at the ANBP reintegration programme concern the lack of job opportunities: and while it is true that many XCs have no work, or have jobs that pay very little, this can be blamed more on the small size and slack growth of the Afghan peace economy than on ANBP. The slow pace of Afghanistan's peace economy should be blamed on the war focus of the international coalition, and not on UNAMA, UNDP or ANBP.

Of all the re-training efforts of DDR, the greatest sustainability comes from the de-miners. Halo Trust believes that at least 1000 of the 2500 deminers are XCs, and this is a job that brings prestige as well as a salary. *Minepok* has become not just a profession, but a term of respect and admiration. Every *jerib* of land they clear will provide an annual crop that did not grow when the land was mined. Every yard of road they clear improves trade and information flows. Demining is a truly sustainable investment in peace.

Vocational training has sustainability built into it. If the DDR reintegration training leads to XCs making a living – and if that can be monitored - then sustainability can be proved. Education is an investment in the future. It is a pity that DDR didn't teach reinsertion literacy and numeracy to thousands of XCs who had no previous chance of schooling. Literate XCs

seem to have found it easier to get better paid jobs than those who cannot read – and the same is true for commanders who can expect government employment if they have education, but not otherwise.

With the completion of bridges<sup>27</sup> and roads – and if the 2007 and 2008 harvests are good, and provided war doesn't break out again – the economy may turn up and jobs may become plentiful. After five years of reintegration (by 2011) it may well be that the tailors trained by ANBP and its IPs will be making a decent living with their sewing machines, carpenters will be making a good living making windows and doors and furniture, and the building supervisors will be busy rebuilding the country.

### **1.7.2. ANBP Staffing.**

One of the lasting, sustainable legacies of ANBP will be the training of the national staff. We have been unfailingly impressed by the quality and motivation of ANBP staffers, including those who have since joined other organizations: in fact they are sought after, since the reputation of ANBP for efficiency and good management systems is widely known and respected in Afghanistan. We have found ANBP managers constantly curious and questioning, proud of their achievements for their country, conscious and open-minded in discussing both the strengths and weakness of DDR and CIP. In large part, the conclusions of this evaluation report are their conclusions. In the future, ANBP staff will be found in positions of responsibility throughout the political economy of Afghanistan.

Much of the international war economy is based in Kabul, and its occasional spinoffs into the peace economy are most visible in the capital. Capacity building and investment in the regions are sadly lacking. In this respect ANBP has made a significant contribution to the sustainable growth of the provinces. National staff members are remarkably well qualified, well-trained and well-motivated. Recruitment has been excellent, and so has on-the-job training. ANBP has been a learning project, and its impact will be sustainable through the work of its regional staffs and their future management of their country.

### **1.7.3. ANBP data and information systems**

The evaluators expected to find sustainability in the database for all 63,380 disarmed XCs, created by the Mobile Disarmament Units. To our dismay, instead of IPs updating the national monitoring database, each organization collected information separately on Excel sheets for reporting to ANBP. Data from the IPs has not been integrated into the ANBP database (despite the recommendations of BCPR in 2006), nor has the original data been 'cleaned up'. The database was never used for monitoring.

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<sup>27</sup> On 26 August 2007, as we were presenting this report to Vice-President Karim Khalili, President Karzai and the President of Tajikistan were presiding over a ceremony at Shir Khan Bandar to open the first Afghan bridge across the Amu Darya (the mythical and distant Oxus River of the Ancient Greeks). This US investment in peace should give a huge boost to the northern economy and create thousands of jobs.

The DDR database should have been the principle ANBP monitoring tool, allowing managers to see on a quarterly basis how programme activities were reaching the supposed beneficiaries, how the training course were progressing, and how the XCs were reacting. Instead, the M&E section created new monitoring tools, using separate (and doubtful) sampling to produce their four annual Client Satisfaction Surveys. There were crossover questions, however, that fed into the DDR database, and these concerned between 5,000 and 6,000 XCs each time – the last one being in July 2006 as DDR was closing down. For the past year the database has been dormant, its managers have mostly moved on to graze new pastures. At present unused, the database has obvious potential as a development resource if it is maintained and updated.

**The CIP database is in a similar position.** Commanders were not included in the DDR database (which seems a pity – they could simply be pulled out as a subset). The rump of the M&E section took five weeks to find the CIP on a ‘P’ drive in one of their computers. DIAG could and should be using this, updating the information on a weekly basis so that all managers are able to access the same information about the commanders, their needs and demands. Instead, it seems that DIAG managers keep their relations with commanders personal, so contacts, discussions and negotiations are unrecorded by the agency. The evaluators recommend that DIAG should manage its information in a more sustainable manner, using the CIP database as the basis for monitoring its own work.

**Sustainability was raised in the Edburgh evaluation of July 2005.** Many of these issues were addressed. Edburgh Consultants made proposals for improving and prolonging M&E, and expressed concern that the sustainability factor was receiving scant attention from management whose 3-year project was due to end in June 2006.

“The point that we are underlining is that the social outcome of DDR should not be left to chance; social goals must be set and agreed upon, in order to design strategies to ensure the project optimizes desired impacts and minimizes undesired social impacts.” (p18) If this challenge to UNDP was not adequately met, the reintegration process can still be turned into a success and the database may be a key factor.” Edburgh Consultants Evaluation July 2005

Edburgh provides a good analysis of the weaknesses in ANBP’s data analysis systems, concluding: “The fact that information on approximately 50,000 Ex-combatants is retrievable is a valuable asset. It is recommended to cherish the database and upgrade the quality if information it contains.” (p13)

On the next page they give a very accurate description of data-gathering difficulties in Afghanistan, which should be used to guide every researcher.

What should be done with the ANBP data legacy to ensure sustainability of the reintegration process? Other UN agencies such as UNFPA (which is helping GoA to organize a National Census in 2008), UNICEF, UN Habitat, FAO and RSPE project (ILO) should be interested in the value of such a database, which potentially provides information on 63,380 families scattered through many of Afghanistan’s 40,000 villages and more than half the 364 districts.

Worries inside ANBP concerning confidentiality seem easy enough to handle. The main problem is that no one has asked ANBP to focus on the database since the end of DDR. The evaluators recommend that UNDP should look at the DDR database to see what needs to be done to prepare it for use as a development monitoring tool, so that the flow of data inform Afghan development policies.

### **Recommendation to UNDP**

*UNDP should contract the company Digistan [Tamim.samee@digistan.com](mailto:Tamim.samee@digistan.com) (Samee, Tamim created the original database as a UNDP staff member) to study technical questions associated with the database to see what it would take to prepare it as a development monitoring tool. Discussions with UNFPA and other agencies will determine its potential value of the DDR database. This approach for long-term support to the reintegration process is one that every future DDR programme should study, and apply to their own circumstances. If the technical review is favorable, UNDP should use the decentralized structures of ANBP to maintain the database as a UN development resource.*

### **Recommendation to the international community**

*There is evidence that educated XCs have done better than those with no literacy or numeracy. Self-esteem is notably enhanced among XCs who learn to read and write and handle written arithmetic. In terms of sustainability, education has some obvious long-term benefits. Every demobilization programme should therefore have a period of reinsertion training that includes numeracy and literacy training.*

Cartoon by Samedī in the Afghanistan Times

