



Drugs and Development: The Great Disconnect

Julia Buxton

Policy Report 2 | January 2015

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Key Points

- The 2016 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS) will see a strong lobby in support of development oriented responses to the problem of drug supply, including from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- The promotion of Alternative Development (AD) programmes that provide legal, non-drug related economic opportunities for drug crop cultivators reflects the limited success of enforcement responses, greater awareness of the development dimensions of cultivation activities and the importance of drugs and development agencies working co-operatively in drug environments.
- Evidence from thirty years of AD programming demonstrates limited success in supply reduction and that poorly monitored and weakly evaluated programmes cause more harm than good; there has been little uptake of best practice approaches, cultivators rarely benefit from AD programmes, the concept of AD is contested and there is no shared understanding of 'development'.
- AD was popularised in the 1990s when development discourse emphasised participatory approaches and human wellbeing. This is distinct from the development approaches of the 2000s, which have been 'securitised' in the aftermath of the Global War on Terror and which re-legitimise military participation in AD.
- UNGASS 2016 provides an opportunity for critical scrutiny of AD and the constraints imposed by the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs on innovative, rights based and nationally owned supply responses. Cultivation is a development not a crime and security issue. Consideration must be given to a reconfiguration of institutional mandates, with supply and cultivation control removed from the UNODC and brought into the remit of development agencies.
- Deliberation around the post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals provides an entry point for new approaches to drug issues in the Global South and an opportunity to reverse the human, development and public health harms caused by current counter-narcotics policies.

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INTRODUCTION

This report argues that ‘drugs’ are a development issue and must be recognised as such by development agencies. The cultivation of opium poppy, coca leaf and cannabis for anything other than medical and scientific purposes is prohibited under the UN 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol. However conditions of marginalisation and exclusion have sustained the cultivation of these low capital input/high yield drug crops. Poverty, insecurity and inequality also exacerbate the vulnerability of ‘bridge’ states to trafficking activities. These factors are development concerns requiring economic and political solutions. Yet ‘drugs’ continue to be conceptualised primarily as a crime and security issue, institutionalised in the agency of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The resulting law enforcement response sees drugs as a cause, rather than symptom of the structural problems that make countries susceptible to penetration by the transnational trade.

This approach has particularly detrimental impacts on development prospects in the Global South due to the enduring ‘source focus’ of drug control (Box 1). Despite calls for a ‘balanced approach’ to illicit drug demand and supply¹ this still emphasises eradication and interdiction activities in ‘producer’ and ‘transit’ states, imposing disproportionate costs on developing countries that are front line states of the international drug ‘war’. The financing of law enforcement is to the detriment of social and capital spending, while militarised interdiction strategies exacerbate conditions of impunity, insecurity, corruption and rights abuses. The resulting environment is inimical to the achievement of development objectives, good governance and human security.

In recent years, the UNODC has recognised the ‘vicious cycle’ of drug production, drug trafficking, poverty and instability² in particular through the promotion of Alternative Development (AD)

Box 1: Supply and / or Demand Strategies

Source focused or supply reduction strategies aim to prevent illicit drugs from reaching existing, or creating new, consumer markets by cutting them off at origin, and through interdiction along distribution chains. This approach accounts for approximately 70 per cent of global drug control expenditures. By contrast, demand reduction focuses resources on reducing consumer participation in drug markets through strategies and programmes to prevent drug use and through support to dependent users.

for the estimated 4 million men, women and children reliant on drug crop cultivation for their livelihoods. UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov have urged closer collaboration between drug control and development agencies in the elaboration of the post-2015 international development agenda and ahead of the 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS).

It is argued here that efforts to deepen the engagement of the UNODC in development initiatives should be discouraged. AD is a contested proposition that is unworkable within the broader framework of the criminalisation of the drug trade and ongoing reliance on militarised enforcement. Shorn of development indicators, absent explicit harm reduction and human rights principles, and without requisite expertise and reform of UNODC bodies, AD programmes are inchoate, fragmented and risk doing more harm than good. They are an old ‘solution’ to drug supply, having been implemented for over thirty years without evidence of tangible success or uptake of lessons learned.

Addressing the development dimensions of the drug trade in a meaningful, sensitive and sustainable way requires a paradigm shift, not a tinkering at the edges of the current prohibition model. Consideration must be given to how development interventions in regions negatively impacted by production activities can be brought into the remit of development agencies and taken out of the hands of drug control institutions. More space must be allowed for national level innovation in cultivation and supply control, and the international community must move away from generic, one size fits all ‘development’ recommendations configured around market liberalisation strategies and promotion of the private sector.

Among the many impediments to advancing a coherent development response is the reticence of the development community to engage with the ‘taboo’ of drugs.³ This is an extraordinary situation given the centrality of ‘multidimensional’ poverty (deficits in cash, land, security and citizenship) to drug trade dynamics.⁴ Where development agencies have engaged with the ‘drugs and development’ nexus, this has been framed by the drug control perspective that drugs are a threat to development rather than under-development increasing the threat posed by drugs. This securitisation of the drugs and development nexus in the 2000s is underpinned by the conceptualisation of narcotics as a transnational security concern and a conflict commodity. It represents a manifestly different understanding of AD from that of the 1990s, when debates around the development dimensions of the drug trade were informed by concepts such as human security, participatory approaches and human wellbeing.

This shift in the development discourse particularly since the launch of the international ‘war on terror’, legitimises ongoing military engagement in supply reduction through unified interagency missions

that integrate counter-terrorism and counter narcotics objectives. This approach focuses AD in areas of insecurity and conflict, and does not prioritise asset inequality, poor governance and poverty as drivers of the drugs trade. To achieve development objectives (or at a minimum, not exacerbate the threats to development posed by current counter narcotics approaches), development agencies must reconfigure their engagement and understanding of the drugs / development and security linkages. Moreover the disjuncture between international development efforts and the record of success in poverty reduction highlights the progress that must be made if development responses to drug supply are to be embedded in a pro-poor framework.

To contextualise the critique of AD, and the anti-development impacts of counter narcotics efforts, Section 1 introduces the drug control model in historical perspective, framing Section 2, which explores why achievement of zero narcotic drug crop cultivation has proved elusive for the international community despite binding treaty obligations and trillions of dollars spent. Particular attention is paid to the dynamics of illicit markets and the impact of militarised responses led by the US with reference to Latin America as a case study. Section 3 analyses the evolution of Alternative Development and the divergent interpretations of the concept of AD and of ‘development’ more broadly. Section 4 examines the limitations of AD and related ‘drug sensitive’ development responses, leading to the conclusion that the 2016 UNGASS and post 2015 development agenda must consider radical change to how drug production in the Global South is understood and addressed. The drug policy and development communities must realign approaches, priorities and institutional responsibilities in order to develop formulate based interventions, address the needs of the poorest and to reduce the harm associated with *both* the drugs trade *and* counter narcotics efforts.

1 PROHIBITION AND THE SUPPLY SIDE FRAMEWORK: AN OVERVIEW

At the June 2014 UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) event ‘Sustainable Development and the World Drug Problem’, UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon emphasised the importance of supporting drug crop cultivators to find alternative legal income streams. According to Moon, such measures not only contribute to the ‘fight’ against drugs and crime, they enable ‘peace and progress.’⁵

Moon’s promotion of development oriented solutions to illicit drug crop cultivation builds on the impetus generated by the 1994 UNODC report ‘Drugs and Development’ and subsequent 1998 UN ‘Ten Year Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development’. Into the 2000s, AD has evolved into more sophisticated Alternative Livelihoods, Preventative Alternative Development, and Development Oriented Drug Control (DODC).

Box 2: The International Drug Control Treaty Framework; D. Bewley Taylor 2001

Agreement	Signed / Effective	Significance
International Opium Convention (IOC)	1912/1915 and 1919	World’s first international drug control treaty
Covenant of the League of Nations	1919	IOC integrated into World War I peace treaties. League of Nations established and becomes the custodian of the IOC.
Agreement Concerning the Manufacture of, Internal Trade in, and Use of Prepared Opium	1925/1926	Requires import, sale and distribution of opium be under government monopoly, prohibits opium smoking by minors, requires anti-opium instruction in schools, limits number of opium retail shops.
International Opium Convention	1925/1928	Establishes a statistical control system within the League of Nations supervised by the League’s Permanent Central Opium Board; incorporates cannabis into the reporting system.
Convention Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs	1931/1933	Establishes a two tier schedule of controlled drugs; aims to restrict supply to amounts needed for medical and scientific purposes.
Agreement for the Control of Opium Smoking in the Far East	1931/1937	Limits retail sale and distribution of opium to Government shops, fixed salaries mandated for retailers; licensing of smokers; minors under 21 prohibited from smoking or entering smoking facilities, mandatory prison sentences for enabling opium smoking by minors or their use for procuring opium.
Convention for the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic in Dangerous Drugs	1936/1939	The first international instrument to make drug offences international crimes
Amending Protocol	1946	Moves administrative responsibility for drug control to United Nations, with responsibility for drug policy assigned to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.
Paris Protocol	1948/1949	Addresses loopholes in 1931 Convention to bring opioid derivatives into the control framework
Protocol Limiting Opium Cultivation and Trade	1953/1963	Limits opium production and trade to medical and scientific needs.
Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs	1961/1975	Merged existing drug control agreements, lists all controlled substances, creates the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) with responsibility to limit the cultivation, production, manufacture and use of drugs to the amount required for medical and scientific purposes; ensure availability of drugs for medical and scientific purposes, and prevent illicit cultivation, production and trafficking.
Protocol Amending the Single Convention	1972	Incorporates treatment and care of drug users into the 1961 Single Convention
Convention on Psychotropic Substances	1971/1976	Brings psychoactive drugs into the control framework
The Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances	1988/1990	Addresses the security threat posed by drug trafficking, mandates international cooperation on law enforcement (extradition, money laundering etc)

The UNODC has approved a number of technical and best practice documents, for example in relation to gender mainstreaming, and in 2013, ‘Guiding Principles on Alternative Development’ were approved.⁶

The significance of this institutional emphasis on AD cannot be overstated. The international drug control treaty framework that evolved from the first International Opium Convention of 1912 (see Box 2) institutionalised strategies to repress supply at source. This was to prevent substances produced in the Global South reaching consumer markets in the North. The end goal, restated over eighty years later alongside the 1998 UNODC ‘Political Declaration and Plan of Action’, is a ‘drug free world’.⁷ This ambition has led to increasingly repressive and militarised strategies to terminate the production and trafficking of drugs from the 1980s onwards.

In a tradition of ‘hard’ enforcement responses to illicit drug crop cultivation, AD has emerged as a more gentle, development oriented approach. However for critics: ‘Alternative development is at best a “more humane” way to not solve a problem.’⁸ The objectives of AD and coercive interdiction are the same: preventing access to mind and mood altering substances. This is grounded in the ideology of prohibition that frames the international drug treaty system and which first inspired nineteenth Christian evangelicals from the United States to lobby for international controls on the free trade in opium, which was cultivated freely and commercially across the globe for centuries, including in the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, British and Chinese Empires.

Prohibition’s contention that an ‘immoral’ private behaviour could be prevented by criminalisation, state policing and punishment fell into abeyance in the US with the repeal of alcohol prohibition in 1933. Nevertheless the prohibition lobby was a powerful actor in pre- and post-War US ‘narco-diplomacy’,

influencing the evolution of the international drug treaty system and national level drug policy stemming from treaty obligations.

Indicative of the resulting path dependence, those drugs of concern for turn of the century Evangelicals remain the focus of drug control today - when the area under illicit opium poppy and coca cultivation has been reduced to just a handful of countries and as chemically manufactured synthetic drugs (Amphetamine Type Substances, ATS) and Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) manufactured in the Global North have become more popular than ‘organics’ (Box 3).

Box 3: World Drug Consumption Trends; UNODC World Drug Report 2013

Drug Users	Africa	North America	Caribbean and South/Central America	Europe	Asia	GLOBAL TOTAL
Cannabis	16,735,000	29,950,000	9,170,000	29,680,000	48,045,000	159,830,000
Opiates	1,805,000	1,335,000	1,030,000	3,555,000	9,493,000	17,360,000
Cocaine	1,845,000	6,170,000	2,732,500	4,770,000	1,350,000	17,225,000
ATS	3,375,000	3,150,000	2,180,000	2,845,000	21,210,000	33,305,000
Ecstasy	1,140,000	2,490,000	1,790,500	3,965,000	8,995,000	18,180,000

Justification for the ongoing and disproportionate focus on cocaine and opioids manufactured in the Global South has evolved two main arguments; firstly that they generate the bulk of revenues in the illicit trade.⁹ However: ‘the evidence is very soft; there are no systematic estimates of the flows from other drugs such as methamphetamines and marijuana.’ This underlines a lack of reliability in drug control statistical reporting and the absence of an evidence base for determining the value of drug flows.¹⁰

A second claim is that the trade in cocaine and heroin is most particularly associated with violence, and that the revenues from the production and trafficking of these drugs finances insurgency and terrorism. This threatens stability and development in the Global South and the security of the North, making external interventions to reduce supply of mutual benefit. From this perspective, eradicating narcotic plant cultivation enhances prospects for state building, development and peace by reducing insurgent capacity, drug related violence and criminal behaviour.

This elision of counter terrorism and counter narcotics objectives, of which Colombia and Afghanistan are key examples, fails to engage with the diversification of funding streams by rebel, criminal and insurgent groups, the complicity of the state in drug activities, or the structural conditions of conflict and insecurity that attract and sustain the drug trade. In particular, the assumed linkage between the heroin and cocaine trade, violence and conflict requires more sophisticated interrogation of the impact of *counter* narcotics activities on drug markets in the Global South, drawing on the counterfactual example of stability and 'peace' in drug markets that are not subject to coercive intervention, for example Northern synthetic markets. The preoccupation with raw narcotic plant materials is additionally a factor of the concentration of cultivation in a handful of countries. This: 'creates the sense, probably illusory, that success is just around the corner because only two or three countries need to exit the industry.'¹¹

Prohibition based approaches and the emphasis on terminating supply at source as promoted by the US never commanded broad international support, with implications for coherence of international action thereafter. From the 1909 Shanghai Opium Conference and through the rest of the century: 'the elusive quest - control of agricultural production in the field - remained a central tent of US drug policy.'

However: 'Such a strategy required little sacrifice from Americans while demanding fundamental social and institutional change for others.'¹²

The pre-War drug conventions sought to craft international co-operation around regulation and reduction of opium and cocaine manufacture through statistical reporting on cultivation, import and export certificates, and licensing of drug manufacturers, submitted to League of Nations drug control institutions. This regulatory approach is judged to have been successful in reducing opium supply from 41,600 tons in 1906 to 7,600 tons by 1934 with strong falls in key source countries, in particular China.¹³

During pre-war treaty negotiations, cocaine and opium producers in the Global South resisted US pressure to restrict cultivation to medical and scientific need, maintaining this would be economically disadvantageous, and that opium poppy and coca were linked to historical traditions, cultures and religious practices. European colonial powers that had embedded opium monopolies in their imperial territories were similarly sceptical, while the dual use nature of opioids as essential medicines as well as substances of abuse complicated assumptions of smooth, linear cultivation reductions.

The post war period saw a dramatic reconfiguration of global power enabling an ascendant US to advance a draconian model of cultivation and consumption control (Box 4).¹⁴ The post-War conventions adopted a prohibitionist hue, criminalising engagement in all aspects of the trade while embedding the source focused approach of the pre-War regulation model. This was reflected in the 1953 Opium Protocol, which although superseded by the 1961 Single Convention, established the principle that opium production be limited to medical and scientific requirement, with legal cultivation restricted to a handful of countries

Box 4: The US and Counter Narcotics

The US has been the lead actor on global counter narcotics affairs, forging an international framework aligned with the US worldview, national interest and ideological orientation. This is linked to:

- a) *The country's role as initiator of 'narco diplomacy' at the end of the nineteenth century, and its guiding role in the development of the international treaty system;*
- b) *The country's capacity for unilateral action and force projection (contrasting with the multilateralism of European countries);*
- c) *The salience of the drug 'problem' in the US - the world's largest consumer market, from the 1970s onwards (contrasting with the limited drug trade presence in the closed, authoritarian societies of the Soviet bloc and People's Republic of China).*
- d) *The predominance of the US in the financing of UN drug control institutions.*

J. Buxton (2006). *The Political Economy of Narcotics*

internationally agreed as exporters of medical opioids. European states maintained this was unworkable and counterproductive in alienating producer countries such as Turkey, which in turn protested the emphasis on naturally occurring rather than synthetic drugs manufactured in the Global North. Nevertheless, the delineation of legal, medical and illicit cultivation was carried into the 1961 Single Convention, which mandated signatory countries to eradicate all non-medical and non-scientific opium poppy and cannabis cultivation by 1979 and coca leaf by 1989.

Article 26 of the 1961 Single Convention sets out that Parties: 'shall so far as possible

enforce the uprooting of all coca bushes which grow wild. They shall destroy the coca bushes if illegally cultivated.' Tight regulation of licensed opium poppy, coca and cannabis cultivation for medical and scientific use is set out in the Convention, Article 36 of which states that: 'Subject to its constitutional limitations, each Party shall adopt such measures as will ensure that cultivation [...] shall be punishable offences when committed intentionally, and that serious offences shall be liable to adequate punishment particularly by imprisonment or other penalties of deprivation of liberty.'¹⁵ In relation to the chewing of coca, a long established tradition among indigenous communities in the Andes, Article 49 set out 'Coca leaf chewing must be abolished within twenty-five years from the coming into force of this Convention.'

Beyond criminalising cultivation of drug crops, the Single Convention introduced a four tier control schedule. Raw plant materials (opium and coca) and their derivatives were placed under the most severe restriction, while many synthetics manufactured in the Global North were placed under less stringent schedules.¹⁶

Box 5: Realpolitik in Drug Control

The Cold War warped attempts to impose stringent limitation by creating countervailing pressures favouring increased agricultural production and pharmaceutical manufacture. Fears that drug-control measures could cause economic hardship or political upheaval, which in turn might drive strategically located producer states into the Soviet camp hindered the efforts of control advocates.

W. McAllister, *ibid.* p. 183

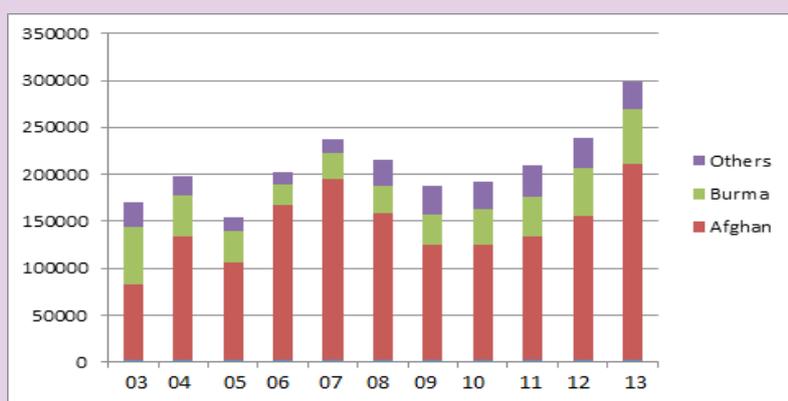
Three types of programmes were established to reduce cultivation: government operated agencies to license small volumes of legal coca and opium poppy for the licit market; forced or voluntary eradication of non-licensed, illicit cultivation; and technical and financial support for alternative crop development and alternative livelihoods. After the launch of its ‘war on drugs’ in 1971, the US placed primacy on eradication and interdiction, by contrast regional organisations such as the European Union (EU) and the Organization of American States (OAS) have emphasised development based responses. This lack of consensus has implications for illicit drug trade dynamics and - over the long term - the viability of the AD programme environment.

It should be noted that while the US has been at the forefront of cultivation control efforts, geopolitics have influenced calculations. Pragmatic US and European security alliances and covert relations with insurgent, rebel groups, warlords and governments engaged in drug trade activities but who can assist in achieving other, higher ends (anti-communism, counter terrorism) has run against consistency in cultivation control and supply reduction efforts.¹⁷

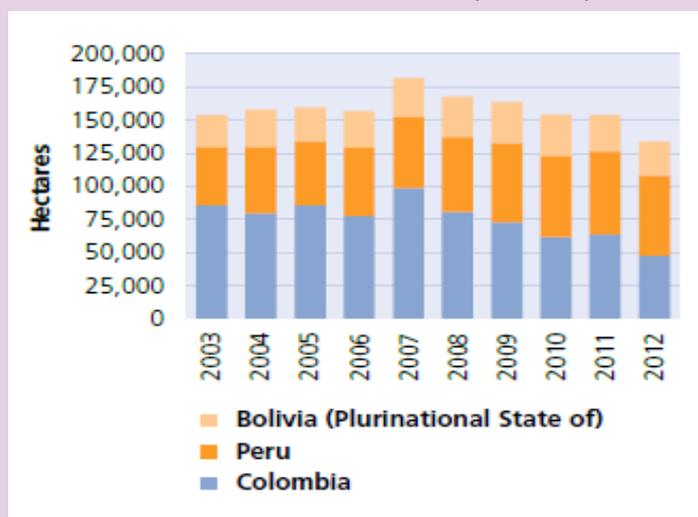
Over fifty years since the Single Convention was ratified, and decades after the passing of eradication deadlines set out in the treaty, the 2014 *World Drug Report* cites the area committed to opium poppy in 2013 as 296,720 hectares: ‘the largest area since 1998, when

Box 6: Estimated Global Illicit Cultivation Levels; UNODC World Drug Report 2014 and South East Asia Opium Survey 2013

Illicit Cultivation of Opium Poppy (hectares) 2003-13



Global Illicit Cultivation of Coca Bush (hectares) 2003-12



estimates became available.¹⁸ Afghan opium cultivation increased 36 per cent between 2012 and 2013 to 209,000 ha. The area under coca cultivation in Peru, Bolivia and Colombia has declined but was still 133,700 hectares in 2012 (Box 6).¹⁹ This equated to production of an estimated 6,993 tons of opium and 560 tons of heroin in 2013, and between 714 and 973 metric tonnes of cocaine in 2012.²⁰

By way of comparison with licit crops, the area under rice cultivation was 106 million hectares; 10 million hectares were cultivated with coffee, while the figure for tea was 2.8 million hectares. In global terms, and in relation to cultivation of legal agricultural commodities, drug crop cultivation is marginal. Nevertheless, as Mansfield notes the entire cocaine and heroin demand of the US can be met by just 35 square miles of opium and 11 square miles of coca - equivalent to 9,000 hectares and 2,800 hectares respectively. The following section examines why the goal of zero cultivation has proved such an intractable challenge.

2 ACCOUNTING FOR FAILURE

The persistence of cultivation in the Global South is attributed to drug policy failure on four levels: the lack of international consensus on reduction methods within the drug control system, recurrent failure to engage with the drivers of drug crop cultivation, illicit market dynamics and the primacy afforded to enforcement. This section focuses on markets and enforcement.

Illicit Market Dynamics: Prohibition is based on the postulation that successful eradication of raw drug materials will elevate the cost of diminished supply, pushing consumers out of the market;²¹ and that punitive criminal justice frameworks will dis-incentivise participation in the trade, forcing cultivators and producers into legal employment. A second assumption

is the presence, structure and functioning of a capable deterrent nation state in source countries, predicated on the Westphalian system of a sovereign entity with demarcated borders, territorial integrity and governance of a defined citizenship.²²

As has been extensively documented by the experience of other prohibitions (sex work, alcohol, tobacco, coffee) criminalisation generates a lucrative illicit trade.²³ In the case of addictive and dependence inducing substances produced in the developing world, markets have proved resilient. This is due to the inelastic nature of demand, with consumers acceding to pay escalating costs rather than be forced out of the market, while from the supply end, the value added by prohibition to illicit commodity farming incentivises production. These factors offset the costs of punishment at all levels in the manufacturing and distribution chain.

The profit made at each stage of the transition from raw plant material cultivated in the Global South to refined end product retailed in the Global North is a key dynamic undermining ambitions of zero cultivation: 'A very successful program in one country, whether it be eradication or alternative development, might raise poppy or coca costs sufficiently to make another nation more attractive as a production centre',²⁴ however:

It is less plausible that successes even in a few nations could substantially reduce global production of either opium or coca. The reasoning is simple and rests largely on the fact that production costs (both cultivation and refining) constitute a trivial share of the retail price of drugs in the major Western markets [...] the costs of the coca leaf that goes into a gram of cocaine is usually less than \$0.50; the retail price of that same gram sold at retail in the West is more than \$100.²⁵

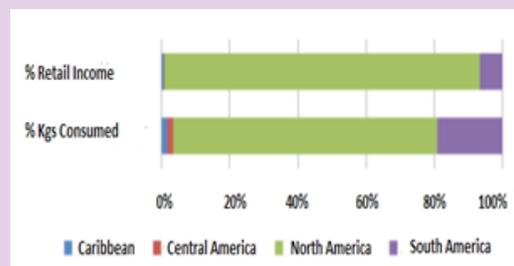
Value added production chains in the illicit drug market catalyses relocation of crops between countries following demand shocks created by ‘successful’ interdiction or locally enforced bans. This has implications for source focused strategies including AD, pointing to the limited viability of *global* supply reduction efforts through national level counter narcotics programmes.

The ‘balloon effect’ was evidenced in the 1950s as Turkish and South East Asian cultivation (Burma, Laos, Vietnam and Thailand) filled opium supply declines when Iran accepted cultivation controls and following China’s post revolution eradication exercises. As Turkey and Thailand engaged in illicit crop reduction programmes in the 1970s and 1980s, Burma and Afghanistan became key suppliers, their position as illicit global opium source embedded by conditions of conflict in the 1990s and 2000s.

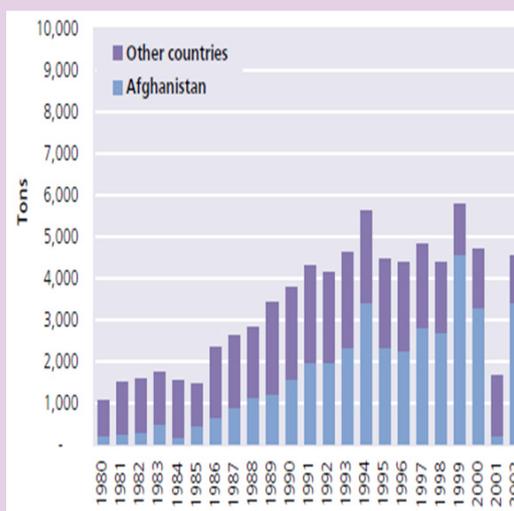
As demonstrated in Box 8, supply falls from Afghanistan have historically been offset by other countries (and vice versa). By 2014, the pattern of global opium cultivation was less one of ballooning than expansion in all regions, with increases in Mexico, Burma and Laos adding to not offsetting high cultivation levels in Afghanistan.²⁶ Similarly in the Andean coca cultivation regions of South America, Colombia displaced Peru and Bolivia as the leading coca and cocaine supply source in the 1990s following coercive eradication efforts in the latter two countries (Box 9). In turn eradication in Colombia in the 2000s and 2010s shifted cultivation and production back to Peru.

Patterns of cultivation displacement within state territories (the mercury effect) are persistent, spanning from the 1950s with the emergence of Jalisco, Nayarit and Michoacán as key opium sites in Mexico following eradication efforts in Sinaloa,²⁷ to five decades later with the relocation of coca cultivation from Caquetá and Guaviare to Putumayo, Cauca and Viachada

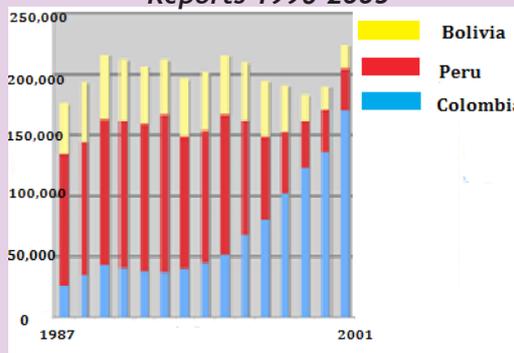
Box 7: Distribution of Value in Latin American Cocaine Markets; OAS *The Drug Problem in the Americas* (2014)



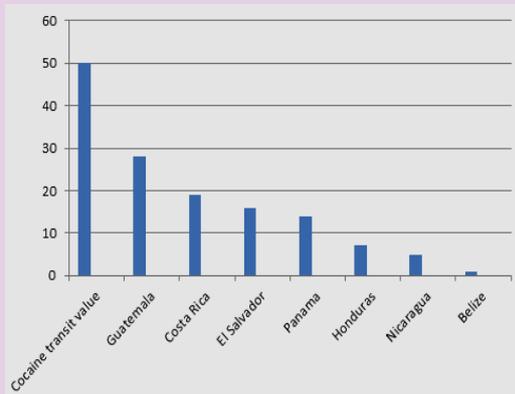
Box 8: The Balloon Effect in Opium Production: 1980-2002; UNODC *World Drug Report 2010*



Box 9: The Balloon Effect in Coca Cultivation; State Department *International Narcotics Control Strategy Reports 1996-2005*



Box 10: Retail Value of Cocaine Transiting Central America (US\$ Billions) to National GDP in 2004; UNODC *Crime and Development in Central America 2007*

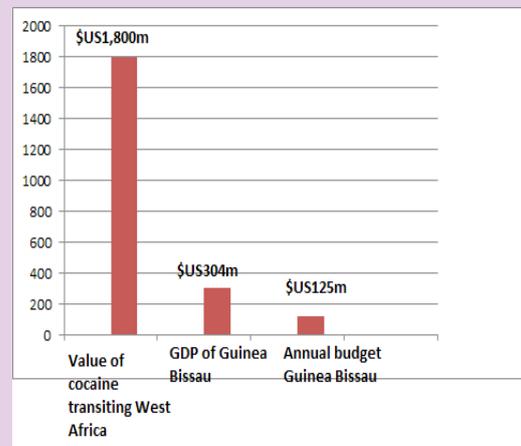


following eradication operations in Colombia,²⁸ shifts in opium cultivation from Burma's north east to southern Shan states following cultivation bans and peace negotiations (2003 and 2005) in the traditional opium cultivation areas in the Kokang and Wa regions,²⁹ and in Afghanistan, where the southern provinces of Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Daikundi and Zabul supplanted traditional cultivation zones in the North and Central provinces such as Badakshan and Balk.³⁰

Fragmentation of cultivation and production zones in turn impacts trafficking routes, with poor, developing, conflict prone and post conflict countries demonstrating high vulnerability to displacement impacts. Efforts to intercept and disrupt supply chains between Colombia and the US drug market through the Caribbean in the 2000s accelerated a push of production and transit activities into Mexico. Militarised enforcement efforts by Mexican authorities after 2006 pressed these illicit chains down into Central America, where the value of cocaine transiting the region represented almost double the GDP of the seven Central American countries (Box 10).

Containment responses in the Central American 'corridor' in turn incentivised adaptation in drug supply, with new transit routes emerging in poor and post conflict countries in West Africa to European markets. The disproportionality between the value of cocaine and national resources to 'fight' the traffic and contain its localised economic impacts are illustrated with reference to Guinea Bissau (Box 11).

Box 11: Value of Cocaine Transiting West Africa to GDP of Guinea Bissau; UNODC *Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat in West Africa (2008)*



Parallel patterns can be traced in the opioid transit zones out of South East and South West Asia, through Central Asia,³¹ the Middle East,³² East Africa³³ and Southern and Eastern Europe.³⁴ This accounts for the exposure of an increasing number of states and populations to the drug trade in the liberal transit and trade environment of the Post-Cold War era of globalisation, including through payment in drugs for trafficking activities.

Enforcement efforts generate a dynamic organisational response from drug trade actors. This further complexifies local, regional and transnational linkages between states and criminal organisations, and nodes of interaction between licit and illicit markets. The targeting of so-called 'cartel' leaders, including through US Drug Kingpin legislation (1988) and related

national level initiatives exacerbate this trend by splintering hierarchically organised drug trafficking oligopolies³⁵ and incentivising pragmatic commercial ties between diverse (and frequently ideologically conflicting) criminal and insurgent groups linked directly and indirectly through regional and global networks.

The balloon effect can also be evidenced at the consumer end in relation to type of drug supplied, again with ramifications for the success of AD - and enforcement strategies more broadly. In Burma, opium cultivation bans in north east Shan State has catalysed an increase in ATS manufacture.³⁶ A similar trajectory is reported in Afghanistan with shifts from opium poppy to cannabis cultivation³⁷ and in Mexico - where methamphetamine and heroin has substituted for (added to) cannabis and cocaine supply and trafficking. The vibrancy of supply chains underscores the flexibility of source responses to enforcement efforts and ongoing consumer demand³⁸ - with the latter influenced by factors that include shortages of drug of choice, economic crisis,³⁹ and altered preferences in response to social change (such as cultural and demographic shifts and urbanisation).⁴⁰

Indicative of these trends, the UNODC reported that in the US: 'amphetamines are being used as a substitute for cocaine',⁴¹ while ATS is increasingly preferred to opioids in China, Thailand and Burma. This demonstrates that progress toward zero coca and opium poppy cultivation within the context of ongoing criminalisation and demand for intoxicating substances portends a future of booming synthetic drug manufacture by swift, small scale and mobile producers that are not geographically tied by dependency on raw plant materials.⁴²

In generating the possibility of large rents for those willing to engage in illicit supply, criminalisation fuels competition for territory

and markets, including by state actors (Box 12). This intensifies as a result of enforcement as rivals compete for vacated market share and influence.

Box 12: Explaining Drug Related Violence

Cato Institute, *Handbook for Congress* (2003)

Because violence is the main form of regulation of illegal markets, drug trafficking is necessarily accompanied by arms trafficking, territorial disputes, corruption and the undermining of democratic institutions, especially the police, the judiciary system and governmental institutions.

<http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/serials/files/cato-handbook-policymakers/2003/9/hb108-56.pdf>

From their analysis of Colombian drug markets (1994-2008), Mejia and Restrepo outline that:

*These rents cause systemic violence as different armed groups fight each other, the government and civilians for their control and extraction. Violence becomes a profitable strategy in illegal markets precisely because property rights are poorly defined in such environments and because there are no alternative ways to enforce contracts.*⁴³

Border areas demonstrate a heightened propensity to the 'frontierisation effect' (relocation of illegal cultivation to the borders between countries) and to drug related violence. This underlines the extent to which the Westphalian assumptions of the drug control model inadequately accord with the weak state presence and informal networks of power and legitimacy in countries of the Global South⁴⁴ and the dynamic of cross border value added in the drug trade.

The presence or incursion of the drug trade in countries of the Global South is antithetical to their development prospects. The intimidation, coercion and brutality associated with efforts to capture, defend and expand drug rents leads to population displacement, violent land grabs, civilian casualties in drug related violence and the erosion of public participation due to intimidation and violence. Revenues from the cultivation, production and trafficking of drugs exacerbate corruption in governance and the security sector, while narco-dollars distort economies and fuel illicit asset laundering and the blurring of formal and criminal sectors.

These well established, negative impacts are a direct result of a criminalisation strategy that converts the cultivation of otherwise worthless plants and shrubs into a ruthlessly contested enterprise valued at an estimated \$320 billion per year. Set against low levels of remuneration, weak opportunities for social mobility, opaque governance and lack of viable economic alternatives, the lucrative nature of the international drug trade makes poor

and developing countries susceptible to the opportunities for corruption and livelihoods that are presented by the illicit economy. This vulnerability is a development concern requiring comprehensive socio-economic and political responses. However the dominant approach is reactive, seeking to ‘fight’ the trade through strategies of violent confrontation and ‘war’. These militarised responses exacerbate rather than alleviate the negative impacts of the drug trade, compounding the already deleterious implications for development, peace and security.

The Securitisation of Drugs and Militarisation of Enforcement in the US: Dating from President Richard Nixon’s declaration of a ‘war on drugs’ in 1971, the US has prioritised robust enforcement strategies. This has been characterised by an escalation of military-based ‘at source’ responses overseas, either by US forces and contractors or through defence support (weapons, equipment, logistical support, training,) to source country militaries and the security sector (police, intelligence,

Box 13: Institutionalisation of the US Drug ‘War’

- 1971:** Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control established to co-ordinate US civilian, military and diplomatic counter narcotic efforts;
- 1973:** Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) established to coordinate domestic and overseas efforts in the ‘all-out global war on the drug menace’;
- 1986:** National Security Directive 221 incorporates the Department of Defence (DOD) into overseas enforcement;
- 1988:** Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) established to coordinate agencies involved in US counter narcotics activities;
- 1989:** Defence Authorization Act establishes the lead role of DOD in the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime trafficking into the US; integrates command, control, communications and intelligence assets of DEA, National Guard, US Embassies and USSOUTHCOM (Southern Command) to improve inter-agency and civil-military co-ordination.
- 1993:** Presidential Decision Directive 14 incorporates military assets including US Air Force AWACS, US Navy P-3 Orion and E2-C Hawkeye radar aircraft and a network of ground-based radars into counter narcotics efforts.

customs). This approach contrasts with that of the European Union, which came late to drug supply control efforts but which subsequently prioritised demand reduction in consumer countries of the EU and institutional strengthening and development assistance to source countries.

The drug 'war' marked a dramatic reconceptualization of illicit drugs by the US, from legal and diplomatic challenge to national security threat as outlined in President Ronald Reagan's 1986 National Security Directive No. 221 'Narcotics and National Security'. This securitisation of drugs has institutionalised the influence of the US security and defence

sector in the planning, command and execution of overseas counter narcotics efforts (Box 13), and led to a major expansion to over forty agencies responsible for domestic and international counter narcotics efforts co-ordinated through the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP).

The primary theatre of US operations has been its 'backyard' of Latin America,⁴⁵ the source of global cocaine and US heroin supply. For over thirty years, Latin America has been the focus of US funded and designed multiyear security agreements that aim to support and enhance the capacity of the security sector to eradicate and interdict drugs (Box 14).

Box 14: US Counter Narcotics Programmes in South America

Operation Blast Furnace (1986) Bolivia: Blackhawk helicopters and 160 personnel for logistical support to search and destroy operations against coca-processing facilities conducted by UMOPAR (Rural Area Police Patrol Unit), a US sponsored coca eradication unit.

Andean Strategy (1989) \$2.2 billion five-year programme that included Air Bridge Denial (ABD) targeting aircraft suspected of drug trafficking.

Ghost Zone (1992) Bolivia: 'to restrict and ultimately eliminate the production of cocaine' through joint US and Bolivian activities to prevent aerial, land or river transportation of coca base, deploying 750 Special Antinarcotics Force personnel (incorporating the UMOPAR), the Bolivian Navy Blue Devils, Air Force Red Devils and 35 US Army, Coast Guard and Customs officials.

Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act and Plan Colombia (1998) Initial \$3bn support to coca fumigation in Colombia; 90 per cent allocated to the Colombian security sector, \$234m ring fenced for supply agreements with US military contractors. Supplemental assistance of \$862.3m (2000-2001) provided \$521.2 million to the Colombian armed forces (16 UH-60 Black Hawk and 30 UH-1H Huey transport helicopters), \$123.1 for the police. By 2011, total US spending on Plan Colombia was \$7 billion.

Andean Counterdrug Initiative (2001) \$625m fiscal year 2002 including to sustain Plan Colombia.

Mérida Initiative or 'Plan Mexico' (2007) A three year \$1.9 billion programme to equip Mexican and Central American law enforcement through the provision helicopters and surveillance aircraft, and technical resources to combat drug trafficking, in addition to training and technical advice for military, judicial, and law enforcement officials. Maintained in Mexico in 2014 with an additional appropriation request of \$47.7 million.

Central America Regional Security Initiative (2008-2012) \$496.5m to law enforcement and counter narcotics capacity building in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama; \$2.8bn US authorized weapons sales / radar equipment, \$67m defence contracts; deployment of 4,000 US troops in counter-narcotics operations, Fourth Fleet in Caribbean, National Guard in Honduras and 200 marines on Guatemalan coast under Operation Martillo. Requested funding for Fiscal Year 2014 was \$34.8m.

As outlined by Wylér:⁴⁶

Congress authorizes US Department of Defense (DOD) to offer counternarcotics assistance to train and equip foreign countries in their efforts to build institutional capacity and control ungoverned spaces used by drug traffickers. DOD supports foreign counternarcotics activities through [...] counternarcotics training and provisions of equipment to foreign governments, [...] transport of law enforcement personnel to foreign law enforcement agencies worldwide [...] by providing nonlethal protective and utility personnel equipment, including navigation equipment, secure and non-secure communications equipment, radar equipment, night vision systems, vehicles, aircraft, and boats.

In 2014, the total of funds requested by the US Federal government for international and interdiction programmes was \$5.2 billion.⁴⁷

After the terrorist attacks on the US of September 11th 2001, there was a re-conceptualisation of security and defence policy, and of the war in drugs within this framework. Whereas during the Cold War, countries of the Global South were viewed as objects of geostrategic security competition - not a direct source of threats to the West, after 9/11 weak and failed states were constructed as the source of diverse security challenges (crime, drugs, terrorism, migrants) to the US and Global North. As outlined in the US National Security Strategy of 2002: 'America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing states.'⁴⁸ This has led to the integration of counter terrorism and counter narcotics operations, as outlined in the 2002 NSS:⁴⁹

Parts of Latin America confront regional conflict, especially arising from the violence of drug cartels [...] This conflict and unrestrained narcotics trafficking could imperil the health and security of the United States. Therefore we have developed an active strategy to help the Andean nations adjust their economies, enforce

their laws, defeat terrorist organizations, and cut off the supply of drugs.

In Colombia, we recognize the link between terrorist and extremist groups that challenge the security of the state and drug trafficking activities that help finance the operations of such groups. We are working to help Colombia defend its democratic institutions and defeat illegal armed groups of both the left and right by extending effective sovereignty over the entire national territory and provide basic security to the Colombian people.

Under the 2002 'Supplemental Appropriations Act for Further Recovery From and Response To Terrorist Attacks on the United States' and Section 1022 of the 'National Defence Authorisation Act for Fiscal Year 2004' DOD was authorised to use counter narcotics funds for a 'unified campaign' integrating counter terrorism activities.

This elision of the drugs and terror nexus paralleled Colombia's President Álvaro Uribe Vélez's (2002-2010) assessment: 'that the armed conflict was worsening, largely because armed groups had access to resources from drug trafficking.'⁵⁰ Under the resulting Democratic Security (*Seguridad Democrática*) and *Plan Patriota* (2003-04): 'Uribe's first term saw mass military deployment to clear areas controlled by the leftist guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, FARC), with military forces: 'carrying out shock operations where concentrations of illicit crops and illegal armed groups persist.' This was supported by a doubling of the Colombian armed forces and a tripling of the country's defence budget, with the cost of expanding public security forces between 2002 and 2006 estimated at US\$1.1 billion.⁵¹

As discussed in the following section on development, the Uribe government's strategy

was one of 'consolidating' areas cleared by the military by providing reconstruction projects and state services - including delivery by the military, under the National Territorial Consolidation Plan (2004-2010). The 'conceptual successor' to the US funded Plan Colombia,⁵² this received ongoing financial and technical assistance from the US. Uribe's revised approach, which abjured peace negotiations with the FARC, dovetailed with US emphasis on 'inter-agency operations' based on securing zones and then delivering services in the consolidation phase of operations, as outlined in National Security Presidential Directive 44 (2005).⁵³ This made the State Department the focal point for reconstruction and stabilisation efforts, with responsibility for 'harmonizing' activities with the US military in: 'complex emergencies and transitions, failing states, failed states, and environments across the spectrum of conflict.' At the same time, Department of Defence Directive 3000.05⁵⁴ set out the role of the military in these interagency operations as including restoring or providing essential services and repairing critical infrastructure.

While most immediately oriented to the experience of Afghanistan and Iraq, the move to: 'revise the entire way that the planning and implementation of Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) operations are conducted'⁵⁵ informs a new joint agency approach in militarised counter narcotics strategy, including in regional frameworks such as Plan Mexico, the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) and the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI).

At the national level in Latin American countries, the militarisation of enforcement and policing⁵⁶ in line with US counter narcotics strategy has led to the integration of the security sector into domestic law enforcement activities and the application of military concepts to domestic drug control efforts such as lethal force, martial law and states of

emergency. This approach is being rolled out through defence exchanges between countries led by the Colombian security sector and currently incorporating officials from forty seven countries: 'focused largely on a cluster of countries where distinct drug-related problems have migrated including Mexico (which accounts for half the total number of trainees), Panama, Honduras, Guatemala, Peru, El Salvador and Costa Rica.'⁵⁷

Running parallel with the transfer of military hardware and changes to defence and security doctrine, draconian 'iron fist' or *mano dura* policies have been introduced at the domestic level. These punitive regimes include arbitrary detention, stop and search, and harsh mandatory minimum sentences for drug-related offences. They replicate the model of domestic enforcement in the US, which as outlined by President George Bush in 1989 has been one of: 'more prisons, more jails, more courts, more prosecutors'.⁵⁸ This has contributed to the US recording the highest rate of incarceration in the world at 724 people per 100,000. Rhetorically at least, recent years has seen a growing recognition within some parts of the US government that incarceration for many drug related offences is not only costly (both in financial and human terms), but also counterproductive. Nonetheless, between 2001 and 2013, more than half of prisoners serving sentences of more than a year in federal facilities were convicted of drug offenses, with 98,200 inmates (51 per cent of the federal prison population) imprisoned for possession, trafficking, or other drug crimes in 2013.⁵⁹

Replication of the US model of domestic enforcement, including as this relates to possession offences has been compelled by instruments such as the Rodino Amendment to the 1971 Foreign Assistance Act.⁶⁰ Through an annual certification mechanism, the US rewards countries that co-operate with US counter narcotics efforts with foreign assistance, loan and trade agreements, and support in

multilateral forum such as the International Financial Institutions. Conversely, countries assessed to be non-compliant are ‘punished’ by the suspension or blocking of economic aid.⁶¹ This carrot and stick approach has locked producer countries into multi- and bilateral agreements that tie financial assistance to a unified model of counter narcotics, counter terrorism and market liberalisation.

Impacts: Militarised eradication and enforcement has been repeatedly shown to be ineffectual, costly and counterproductive. US government agencies have flagged problems of inadequate monitoring and evaluation of results linked to the absence of benchmarks, indicators and timeframes, and problems of oversight and accountability (Box 15).⁶² In a review of counter narcotics funding to Andean countries from 2006 to 2011, the US Government Accountability Office set out:

*Given the strategic importance of reducing drug production and trafficking in the Andean countries—accurate and reliable information on the results of this assistance is essential [...] ONDCP has minimal assurance of the reliability of DOD’s reporting on its estimated \$956 million in counter narcotics assistance [...] without reliable information, Congress and other decision makers, including ONDCP, may lack information that is essential to assessing progress toward the U.S. goal of curtailing illicit drug consumption in America, making decisions on the allocation of resources, and conducting effective oversight.*⁶³

The conservative National Defense Council Foundation (NDCF)⁶⁴ points to lack of strategic vision and bureaucratic infighting to account for a ‘defective’ US performance in the drug war, which: ‘took shape without well-defined objectives, a comprehensive plan of action, or a clear appreciation of the resources likely to be required.’ This has: ‘prevented our drug control planners from adjusting to the flexibility and creativity of our drug adversaries.’

Box 15: Drug War Record; Cato Institute *ibid*

The war on drugs—a program whose budget has more than quadrupled over the past 15 years—has failed remarkably in all aspects of its overseas mission. Most telling, illicit drugs continue to flow across U.S. borders, unaffected by the more than \$35 billion Washington has spent since 1981 in its supply-side campaign. The purity of cocaine and heroin, moreover, has increased, while the prices of those drugs have fallen dramatically during the same period.

Militarised enforcement has had destabilising and violence inducing impacts on countries of the Global South. These spill-over effects compound the problems caused by the presence of the drug trade and further erode development prospects by exacerbating inequality, human insecurity, impunity and state corruption.

The cycle of violence created by coercive enforcement demobilises and intimidates rural and urban communities, making it difficult for grievances, needs and interests to be articulated. In targeting drug crop cultivators, the focus is on the most vulnerable (and easily replaceable) element of the drug chain while support to the security sector assumes a neat delineation between the ‘bad’ drug trade and ‘good’ state authorities that does not exist in practice. The result, as surmised by Atkins is that defence aid and drug control legislation: ‘has endowed historically undemocratic forces with even more control over civic life while providing no safeguards against the abuse of that power.’⁶⁵

Corruption is recognised as a critical development challenge. It has disproportionate impacts on the poor,⁶⁶ depresses investment, and lowers the returns on development

assistance. The US strategy of escalating enforcement monies to countries where sanctions against corruption are absent, civil society is demobilised and oversight of the security sector is negligible has created predation and graft at the highest level.⁶⁷ While distorting national political economies, this external financing can never be substantial enough to compete with the resourcing of the drug trade for example in Mexico, which has received over \$4 billion security sector funding from the US since 2006 to 'fight' a trade valued at \$40 billion in the country.

In relation to forced eradication exercises in drug crop cultivating countries, including aerial fumigation in Plan Colombia, the widely documented regressive impacts include:⁶⁸ state violence against cultivators involving beatings, arrest, disappearances and extra judicial killings,⁶⁹ forced displacement of marginal and vulnerable communities, contributing to the estimated 5 million internally displaced people in Colombia (15 per cent of the population) and 65,000 hill people displaced in Laos PDR,⁷⁰ and the generation of severe economic stress for cultivators. In Bolivia, a new wave of forced eradication programmes in the early 2000s:

*Pushed 50,000 families into severe economic difficulties with only 25 per cent of eligible families receiving technical assistance. As a result, malnutrition and illegal income-generating activities, such as prostitution, have increased [...] with significant negative impact on the entire department of Cochabamba and the country as a whole.*⁷¹

This situation generated: 'widespread protest and blockades, met by increasingly violent military and police actions.'⁷²

An estimated 260,000 households (1.2 million people) faced starvation and death by treatable disease during opium cultivation bans and eradication exercises in Burma in the mid-2000s.⁷³ In Laos PDR, external

pressure to achieve zero cultivation by 2005 led the government to abandon a socio-economic strategy for one of rapid cultivation reductions, with a 45 per cent decrease in cultivation between 2003 and 2004. This was achieved with devastating socio-economic impacts on indigenous communities,⁷⁴ including starvation and forced migration: 'Young girls end up in brothels and the men end up exploited as illegal immigrant labourers in neighbouring Thailand.'⁷⁵

Forced eradication including by military actors has catalysed acute political tensions between state and periphery stemming from threats to cultivator livelihoods, and embedded local, national and regional level conflicts in cultivation areas as communities forge alliances with insurgent, rebel and criminal groups for security and the protection of livelihoods. According to Ricardo Soberón, the former drug Czar of Peru: 'Forced eradication might be the catalyst that fuels violence and social conflict among the rural Quechua and mestizo peoples, who still suffer the trauma of the 1980's and 1990's armed conflict. Criminal groups could take advantage of this situation to provoke conflict between the rural population, the government and the armed forces.'⁷⁶

As set out in a 2001 review by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP, the forerunner of the UNODC):⁷⁷

Where law enforcement, including crop eradication, is not accompanied by development measures, experience demonstrates that it will induce fierce resistance from farmers and their organizations and frequently result in the diversion of illicit crops to new areas [...] a predominantly "stick", or punitive, approach has proven ineffectual since the possibilities for displacing illicit crop cultivation to other territories are very extensive.

Forced eradication fuels corruption within the security sector and among local political elites

This situation is manifest in the gross disproportionality in drug-related sentencing, for example, in Bolivia, where the maximum penalty for drug trafficking is 25 years, as opposed to 20 years for murder, and Colombia, with a maximum 30 years penalty for drug trafficking, while the maximum sentence for rape is 20 years. Matching trends of counter narcotics policing in the Global North,⁹⁰ it is low-level criminals, women and the poor that are most frequently subject to lengthy and punitive criminal justice proceedings in drugs related offences, reinforcing pre-existing structures of exclusion and state violence (Box 17).

Compounding the environment of rights abuses are related problems of protracted pre-trial detentions, prison overcrowding and sentencing processes that include referral for forced abstinence based drug treatment

programmes.⁹¹ In the Golden Triangle countries, an estimated 350,000 dependent drug users were held in drug detention centres.⁹² Moreover, robust domestic drug legislation is an impediment to access to essential medicines due to the climate of restriction and fear around the dispensing of medical opioids, with Latin America accounting for just 1 per cent of opioid analgesics consumption,⁹³ while repression and stigmatisation of drug use contributes to unsafe drug administration practices and the spread of disease in a region where an estimated 1.5 million people are HIV positive.⁹⁴

For 'front line' drug war countries in the Global South, the cost of law enforcement detracts from spending on health and development. As set out by Keefer, Loayza and Soares:

Box 17: Legislation and Incarceration

Between 2006-2011 the female prison population in Latin America almost doubled, increasing from 40,000 to more than 74,000 inmates. The vast majority of incarcerated women are in prison for drug-related offenses. Estimates range from: 75-80 per cent in Ecuador; 30-60 per cent in México; 64 per cent in Costa Rica; 60 per cent in Brazil; 70 per cent in Argentina; 90 per cent+ of Argentina's foreign female prison population is incarcerated for drugs.

Source C. Youngers (2014) *Behind the Staggering Rise in Women's Imprisonment in Latin America*

<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/behind-staggering-rise-womens-imprisonment-latin-america>

The U.S. government has [...] intruded into the complex social settings of dozens of countries around the globe by pressuring foreign governments to adopt laws and policies of its liking. In the process, the U.S.-led war on drugs has severely aggravated the political and economic problems of drug-source nations and increased financing for terrorist groups. Counter narcotics strategy thus conflicts with sound foreign policy goals, namely the encouragement of free markets, democracy, and peace.

Source: *CATO Handbook for 108th Congress*

<http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/serials/files/cato-handbook-policymakers/2003/9/hb108-56.pdf>

*The Uribe government in Colombia committed the country to increasing defense expenditures from 3.6 per cent of GDP in 2003 to 6 per cent by 2006, increasing security forces from 250,000 (150,000 military plus 100,000 police) to 850,000 over four years. In contrast, public expenditures on health in Colombia were around 5 per cent of the GDP in 2000.*⁹⁵

By 2014, it was estimated that spending on Colombia's drug war outstripped social spending at a ratio of 3:1. This is in the context of the most recent human development survey data for Colombia (2010) demonstrating: '7.6 per cent of the population are multidimensionally poor while an additional 10.2 per cent are near multidimensional poverty. The breadth of deprivation (intensity) in Colombia, which is the average of deprivation scores experienced by people in multidimensional poverty, is 42.2 per cent.'⁹⁶

Similarly in Honduras, where a 2010 report by the Honduran Commission of Human Rights cites approximately 220,000 young people (10 per cent of the population aged 5-17) having no access to the education system, military and police expenditures are one of the highest in the world at 17 per cent of GDP. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the most recent survey data for Honduras (2011/2012) demonstrates: '20.7 per cent of the population are multidimensionally poor while an additional 28.6 per cent are near multidimensional poverty. The breadth of deprivation (intensity) in Honduras, which is the average of deprivation scores experienced by people in multidimensional poverty, is 47.4 per cent.'⁹⁷

The North is complicit in wide scale, systematic human rights abuses in the name of drug control, while exporting the costs of its source focused 'drug war' to poorer countries. This has deleterious implications for spending on development and poverty reduction:

*The opportunity cost of these resources for developing countries, be it in terms of investments in health, education, or infrastructure, is almost surely larger than in richer countries and represents a substantial cost of the prohibition strategy that is generally neglected.*⁹⁸

The impacts of militarised drug 'war' and the lack of success in reducing drug volumes and drug related violence has forged consensus across Latin American countries on the need for new approaches.⁹⁹ Governments from the left and the right of the political spectrum have found common cause in their rejection of US led strategies, with high level criticism of the drug war first collectively articulated by the Latin American Commission on Drugs and Democracy whose membership includes César Gaviria, Ernesto Zedillo and Fernando Henrique Cardoso former presidents of Colombia, Mexico and Brazil respectively.¹⁰⁰ The Commission's 2009 report, 'Drugs and Democracy: Toward a Paradigm Shift'¹⁰¹ opened with the statement that:

Confronted with a situation that is growing worse by the day, it is imperative to rectify the "war on drugs" strategy pursued in the region over the past 30 years. Prohibitionist policies based on the eradication of production and on the disruption of drug flows as well as on the criminalization of consumption have not yielded the expected results. We are farther than ever from the announced goal of eradicating drugs.

According to the report, this requires 'in-depth revision of current drug policies' that 'have consumed over the years vast economic resources and implied the sacrifice of countless human lives.'¹⁰²

The work of the Latin American Commission gave traction to drug policy debate in the region. At the 2012 heads of state summit in Cartagena, Colombia, of the main regional

body the OAS, there was repudiation of the high social and economic costs of the drug war. The summit mandated a Scenario Team to produce an analytical report looking at 'current trends, best practices, and policy challenges' in drug policy and 'Scenarios for the Drug Problem in the Americas, 2013-2025'.¹⁰³ The purpose of the reports is: 'to assist the hemisphere's leaders to find a better way to address these challenges [...] open up a path to a new hemispheric dialogue on how to act.'¹⁰⁴ Observing lessons learned from the Latin American experience, a 2014 report by the West Africa Commission on Drugs called on national governments and other stakeholders in the region to: 'Avoid militarisation of drug policy and related counter-trafficking measures, of the kind that some Latin American countries have applied at great cost without reducing supply'.¹⁰⁵ This is in the context of a 65 per cent increase in defence spending in Africa over the last decade to counter 'transnational threats.'¹⁰⁶

The gravity of the situation and the accumulation of pressure for policy change from some countries within Latin America have led the United Nations to bring forward the 2019 General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem to 2016. Amid broad acknowledgement of the limitations and counterproductive impacts of forced eradication of drug crops, it can be expected that the advantages of development based strategies will be re-emphasised as a sustainable and rights based response to drug production and an alternative to militarised interdiction. However, AD is neither a new strategy nor a viable solution to ongoing supply issues in the current prohibitionist framework.

3 THE PROMISE OF ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Cultivation in Context: The international drug control regime has systematically overlooked the inequalities of global trade structures and related disparities in wealth and power between North and South. During negotiation of the early treaty system, drug cultivating countries lobbied unsuccessfully for compensation for losses incurred by the prohibition of prime agricultural commodities. No international strategy or equivalent of the Marshall Plan was designed to transition rural economies of the 'Third World' to economic alternatives, and there was no negotiation of preferential tariff or commodity regimes to support alternative agricultures. This was despite a high level of reliance on the employment and income generated by the export of opium poppy, coca and their derivatives in countries such as India, Turkey, China and Peru.

The Second World War saw the collapse of the illicit trade in opioids as a result of border restrictions, surveillance and disruption of shipping routes. Opium poppy cultivation and heroin processing in China, the world's largest supply source was decimated by the Maoist revolution, while military defeat of countries such as Japan - a key player in the South East Asian heroin trade, brought renegades into the post war control regime. Criminal organisations that sustained transnational illicit traffic such as the Mafia in Italy and the US National Crime Syndicate were infiltrated and broken up by Italian and US authorities.¹⁰⁷ Global conflict consequently created an environment favourable to the curtailment of the trade in the post war period.

The resurgence of the opioid economy and related poppy cultivation is linked to the war time strategies of Allied powers - such as the decision to liberate Sicilian and Corsican mafia figures in exchange for intelligence support to the Allied advance in Southern Europe,

and subsequent anti-communist containment efforts focused on South East Asia that included French and American logistical assistance to opium cultivators displaced from China into the Golden Triangle countries (Thailand, Burma and Laos). Revenues from opium and a revived heroin trade financed the anti-Maoist / anti-communist insurgency led by the Kuomintang (KMT) during the 1940s and 1950s, while trafficking networks were re-established through mafia control of the labour movement and ports such as Marseille and New York.¹⁰⁸

The 1980s and 1990s saw growth of the international drug trade, and related transformation of cultivation activities. In addition to the expansion of opium cultivation there was a sharp increase in coca cultivation in the Andean region and cannabis cultivation driven largely by Morocco. This was influenced by rising demand for cocaine in the United States and cannabis in Europe, linked to cultural shifts, and trends away from the misuse of synthetic and prescription drugs that had been prevalent in illicit markets in the 1960s. In the case of cocaine, US market growth was spurred by an escalation of eradication and interdiction efforts against Colombian and Mexican cannabis, while European markets looked to new supply sources following eradication efforts in Turkey and declines in Lebanese cannabis cultivation as a result of civil war in that country.

On the supply side, cultivation increases ran parallel with economic crisis and the application of neoliberal inspired Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) that compounded and created new patterns of inequality, poverty and exclusion in source countries. This had deleterious impacts on rural households and for workers previously employed in state industries. In Bolivia, cultivation shifted from large elite *hacienda* estates to small farmers supplementing lost incomes, while in Morocco, Chouvy sets out that:

*The economic crisis that unfolded [...] in the late 1970s and early 1980s hit especially hard in the Rif Mountains, where the mechanisation of agriculture was never satisfactorily developed and where emigration opportunities proved insufficient to compensate for the lack of employment [...] During the 1980s and 1990s, cannabis cultivation expanded outside of the traditional growing area of the Senhaja country, into the Ghomara and Jebalas regions and also to the east of the province of Al Hoceima.*¹⁰⁹

By the early 2000s, UNODC estimated that 96,000 families, equivalent to 804,000 people or 6.5 per cent of Moroccan agricultural households (2.5 per cent of the total population) were engaged in cannabis cultivation.¹¹⁰ Contextualising the situation in Latin America and the Andean coca cultivating regions, O' Donnell (1993) observed:

*The social situation of Latin America is a scandal. In 1990, about 46 per cent of Latin Americans lived in poverty. Close to half of these are indigents who lack the means to satisfy very basic human needs. Today there are more poor people than in the early 1970s: a total, in 1990, of 195 million, 76 million more than in 1970. These appalling numbers include 93 million indigents, 28 million more than in 1970. The problem is not just poverty. Equally important is the sharp increase of inequality in most of the region [...] The rich are richer, the poor and indigent have increased, and the middle sectors have split between those who have successfully navigated economic crises and stabilization plans and those who have fallen into poverty or are lingering close to the poverty line.*¹¹¹

While SAPs enabled economic growth that averaged 3.2 per cent in the first half of the 1990s, this was not pro-poor growth. Average per capita incomes remained below the level of the 1970s; there was a trend of rising

unemployment, an increase in informal sector employment from 25 per cent the Economically Active Population (EAP) in 1980 to 32 per cent by 1990, and a decline in average real wages. In this context, engagement in coca cultivation, processing and transportation activities became an important source of livelihoods support. In Bolivia, the numbers employed in coca during the searing economic adjustment of the 1980s and early 1990s was estimated at between 74,000 to 500,000 or around a tenth of an EAP of 1.8 million.¹¹² In Peru, the figure was estimated to be 200,000 households or just over 1 million adults and children.¹¹³

The UNODC estimated some 240,000 households in Burma's Shan State were involved in poppy cultivation in the mid-2000s.¹¹⁴ In Afghanistan, where the opium economy forms: 'a well-linked market in terms of credit, purchase, transport and processing', an estimated 5.6 jobs are generated in the rural non-farm economy for each hectare of opium poppy cultivated (Box 18).¹¹⁵

The advantages of engagement in drug crop production under conditions of scarcity, displacement, state neglect, economic and geographic isolation and livelihoods insecurity including in situations of conflict are well documented. These conditions drive people into remote hinterlands and inaccessible areas that are characterised by poor and fragile agro-economies unsuitable for licit agricultural products. Coca, opium poppy and also cannabis cultivation is a rational livelihoods option as they are non-perishable, high value to weight products. Even low levels of cultivation provides an economic safety net for the land, food and cash poor, with guaranteed markets, relatively stable prices, cash payment and ease of access to seeds.

Cultivation thrives on marginal terrain, in poor soil, at altitude, without any or sophisticated irrigation or inputs such as pesticides, or the need for the storage, credit, transportation

Box 18: Employment and Remuneration in Afghanistan's Opium Economy

Based on UNODC's estimate that 131,000 hectares of opium poppy were cultivated in the 2003-04 growing season, the crop would have generated approximately 46 million labour days of which potentially one third would have been for hired labour. Where a household has more than one male able to follow the staggered weeding and harvesting seasons, the off-farm income generated from opium poppy can last up to five months, and it is usually higher than the on-farm income they can earn as a sharecropper.

D. Mansfield and A. Paine (2005)
Alternative Livelihoods: Substance or Slogan? Ibid.

and market facilities required by perishable agricultural crops. Coca for example can be harvested four to six times a year after an eighteen month growing period, contrasting with the three years normally required for a coffee bean harvest. The labour intensive nature of planting weeding and harvesting these crops provides an important source of employment for displaced and itinerant communities.

The economic advantages associated with cultivation differ according to a farmer's assets.¹¹⁶ In the case of opium: 'For the relatively few large landowners, opium poppy represents a high-value crop that can accrue even greater value if it is sold after the harvest season when prices rise [...] a landowner can accrue up to two thirds of the final opium yield (despite contributing only 20 per cent of the total costs of production) and purchase opium in advance at rates considerably below the harvest price. This can lead to the generation of windfall profits.' By contrast, for the itinerant land poor:

*Opium poppy is not just a source of income: it provides opportunities to access land on a sharecropping or tenancy basis as well as drawing on the labour supply of the household. It provides access to both on-farm income and, in the typical mixed cropping system practised in Afghanistan (even amongst poppy growers), the means of producing food crops for household consumption. In this way, opium can define the “creditworthiness” of the land poor. Without it, access to basic food items, agricultural inputs and funds for health care becomes severely constrained.*¹¹⁷

Drug crops play multiple and diverse roles in livelihood strategies. No other crop provides the same range of benefits in marginal conditions. Counter narcotics strategies or development interventions that address only one of these functions: ‘such as access to income, credit or food security, with a licit alternative will not be sufficient to eliminate [drug crops] on a sustainable basis.’¹¹⁸

The conditions of insecurity and lack of economic opportunity that enable drug cultivation to flourish in source countries are characteristics shared by a number of post conflict states in Central America, Central Asia, West and East Africa and the Balkans that emerged as trafficking hubs in the 1990s and 2000s. Social displacement, loss of livelihoods, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the profusion of war time smuggling routes creates an environment propitious for production and trafficking activities, in particular by young men experienced in the use of violence: ‘who may find that the only marketable skills they possess are the skills of war, and their only productive asset, a gun.’¹¹⁹ Exacerbating the vulnerability of these regions to drug trade displacement are legacies of inadequate post-conflict DDR (Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration of ex combatants) and SSR (Security Sector Reform) processes, and post conflict reconstruction and market liberalisation interventions modelled on the ‘liberal peace’.¹²⁰

Box 19: Cannabis Cultivation in Morocco

The Rif is one of the most unsuitable regions for intensive agricultural production: a rugged relief of steep slopes and poor soils, combined with heavy but irregular rainfall compounded by a lack of irrigation infrastructures, make most crops other than cannabis not worth the labour invested.

Up to half cannabis growers’ income is provided by cannabis production, however, as is always the case when illicit crops are concerned, cannabis growers receive far less income than might be expected. The annual per capita income generated by cannabis production has been estimated at US\$267, compared to the GDP per capita of about US\$1,260 in Morocco in 2002.

P. Chouvy (2005) *ibid.*

While drug crop cultivation is an essential livelihoods support mechanism for the resource poor, it locks cultivators into marginalisation and insecurity. Illicit drug economies do not address the structural drivers of exclusion or promote improvement in housing, education or land and food distribution. Drug crop cultivation can be less financially advantageous compared to cultivation of cash crops (Box 19) and forward and backward linkages into the legal economy are limited.¹²¹ Cultivators are persistently vulnerable to the violence of state eradication campaigns or criminal, insurgent and state actors involved in production and trafficking activities. Drug crop cultivation has corrosive environmental impacts associated with the clearing of areas for planting and mono-cropping, and this further exacerbates fragile agricultural conditions.

Drugs and Development: Over the last twenty years the international community has belatedly recognised the development dimensions of drug crop cultivation and - to a far lesser extent,

drug production and trafficking activities. Drug issues and narratives have been: ‘framed into a more development-sensitive rational’.¹²² This was influenced by exogenous factors, in particular a paradigm shift in the 1990s toward international commitments to ‘social development’, promoted through poverty reduction, employment creation, education, health care and social integration as outlined in the 1995 Copenhagen Declaration and 2000 UN General Assembly on Social Development that established the goal of halving poverty by 2015. These new development commitments were to be realised through rights based and participatory approaches, which became the narrative *de rigueur* of the decade.

This shift was underpinned by, and encouraged, a more sophisticated interrogation of poverty after the high point of the Washington Consensus in the 1980s and the recognition that economic growth has no inherently pro-poor outcome, that poverty is a drag on economic development and also acknowledgement of the burdens imposed on the Global South by heavy debt¹²³ and poor coordination of donor activity.¹²⁴ There was heightened appreciation of inequality and the complexity of poverty, reframed as ‘multidimensional’ poverty, recognising social deficits in areas beyond cash poverty, for example in relation to citizenship, assets, infrastructure and security. International Financial Institutions (IFIs), donors and NGOs refined their interventions in order to deliver targeted, domestically ‘owned’, pro-poor initiatives for example through Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)¹²⁵ and improved their methodologies for identifying and measuring the causes and consequences of exclusion by engaging the poor and the poorest of the poor as stakeholders in ‘inclusive development.’

Following from international initiatives such as the UN Beijing Platform (Fourth World Conference on Women) in 1995, this decade also saw heightened understanding of the gendered

impacts of insecurity and poverty, and the drag on development caused by the exclusion of women.¹²⁶ Alongside gender sensitivity in development and security programmes,¹²⁷ there was growing awareness of the need for conflict sensitivity in humanitarian operations and foreign aid, with the influential ‘Do No Harm Handbook’¹²⁸ drawing attention to the distributional impacts on power and intergroup relations of aid, which was postulated as a conflict resource.

These emerging global norms were influenced by the changed international priorities of the post-Cold War era, and the devastating intra-state conflicts that locked eight out of ten of the poorest countries in a cyclical ‘conflict trap’¹²⁹ of war and poverty. UN debate around these issues, extending to how the international community should prevent, manage and reduce these violent conflicts,¹³⁰ was influenced by the concept of Human Security that was first introduced into the UN system in the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report. This was defined by four characteristics (universal, people-centred, interdependent and early prevention) and seven interconnected elements (economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political). The security referential was no longer conceived narrowly as the state, but of individuals with rights.

This context provided a favourable institutional environment for discussion and promotion of AD within UNODC, and at a time when militarised enforcement was demonstrating limited progress in reducing supply and many counterproductive impacts. AD was officially endorsed in the landmark 1998 UNODC ‘Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development’, which defined AD as:

A process to prevent and eliminate the illicit cultivation of plants containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances through

specifically designed rural development measures in the context of sustained national economic growth and sustainable development efforts in countries taking action against drugs, recognizing the particular socio-cultural characteristics of the target communities and groups, within the framework of a comprehensive and permanent solution to the problem of illicit drugs.

AD approaches have undergone substantial change, moving from early crop substitution programmes and ‘micro level’ niche interventions in cultivation areas, to broader ‘macro’ strategies of rural development and Alternative Livelihoods creation including indirectly through trade, tariff and market liberalisation strategies¹³¹ that aim to promote growth in the formal economic sector. The institutionalisation of AD has been supported by resolutions that include 8/9 (2005) from the Commission on Narcotic Drugs calling on the UNODC to strengthen its capacity in AD, a UN General Assembly resolution (2005) reaffirming the role of AD in drug control and resolution 2006/33 of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) recognising the importance of mainstreaming AD into national and regional rural development plans, including through ‘Development Oriented Drug Control’ (DODC).¹³²

The recognition afforded to AD and of the insecurity and exclusion that drives cultivation should be welcomed from an international regime that has historically prioritised enforcement. However, there are serious concerns. Implementation of ‘development responses’ runs parallel with ongoing militarisation of enforcement. This is counterproductive if, as discussed in the previous section, militarisation has regressive impacts on development prospects. Supply responses are becoming less not more coherent. More problematic is the shift in the security and development discourse and framework during the post 9/11 period of the ‘war on terror’. Development interventions

have been re-oriented away from the poorest countries,¹³³ to work co-operatively with military forces in ‘weak, fragile and failing’ states,¹³⁴ through inter-agency missions to prevent ‘transnational threats’ to the Global North, including from drugs.¹³⁵ In terms of counter-narcotics policy, this ‘securitisation of development’¹³⁶ re-legitimises the role of the security sector and defence assistance in source reduction strategies, relegating ‘AD’ to a military stabilisation and consolidation strategy. Other core problems with advocating for an enhanced role for development responses is the disjuncture between states (and regions) over the definition of AD and of development more broadly, how it can be achieved, measured, and its utility as a tool of supply reduction, as outlined below.

The Holistic Approach: The policy and academic literature on Alternative Development in drug control highlights the importance of the Royal Highlands Project (RHP). This is attributed with reducing opium cultivation among hill tribe communities displaced from Southern China and Tibet into the North of Thailand, from 245 mt in 1965 to 4mt in 2000.¹³⁷ An initiative of Thailand’s King Bhumibol Adulyadej first launched in 1969 (Box 20), the RHP received technical and financial support from donors that included the UN Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC)¹³⁸ and the German government.

The RHP embraced the concept of ‘Alternative Development’,¹³⁹ which drew on Schumacher’s *Small is Beautiful* (1953)¹⁴⁰ to critique the neo-classical orientation of mainstream development approaches and the primacy placed on technological transfer, productivity outputs and export-oriented agriculture. Schumacher’s advocacy of Buddhist Economics, with an emphasis on spiritual well-being, simplicity and localised production influenced a holistic and participatory strategy of broad based rural development by the RHP. ‘People centred approaches’ of consultation identified broad citizenship deficits particularly among

Hmong cultivating communities, manifest in a lack of self-sufficiency in rice production, lack of access to official documents and state services such as health, education and infrastructure, and inaccessibility of markets and credit.¹⁴¹

Starting with the UNFDAC supported Crop Replacement and Community Development (CRCD) Project in 1973 that identified marketable substitute crops, the RHP moved on to a second stage, the Thai/UN Highland Agricultural Marketing and Production Project in 1980. A follow on to the CRCD, this invested in activities that had generated alternative, non-opium livelihoods.

The success of the RHP is attributed to four factors. The figure of the King and his role in the initiative provided for continuity in policy and donor relations over decades enabling long term project planning. The monarch commanded the domestic legitimacy and authority to address the complex and contentious issue of illegal cultivation by minority groups and his direct engagement is attributed with building cultivator trust in the initiative. Secondly, the RHP was a social contract. It recognised the economic stress caused to farmers as they transitioned to licit income streams by providing welfare services and alternative farm and non-farm employment. In exchange cultivating communities agreed a voluntary crop eradication schedule. Third, law enforcement was deployed only when non-opium livelihoods were in place, and finally, there was recognition of the role played by opium in indigenous medical practice and ritual. Authorities distinguished small amounts of cultivation for personal use and commercial cultivation.

The Thai experience provided an ‘ideal type’ of AD, which ameliorated critical analysis of the RHP as a platform for Thai nationalism that eroded hill tribe autonomy and identity.¹⁴²

Box 20: King Bhumibol 10th of January 1969 at the Faculty of Agriculture, Chiang Mai University

One of the reasons underlying the creation of the project was humanitarianism; the desire that these people living in remote areas should become self-supporting and more prosperous. Another reason [...] was to solve the problem of heroin [...] A further reason is that the hill tribes are people who use agricultural methods which, if left unchecked, could bring the country to ruin. In other words they cut down trees and practice ‘slash and burn’ methods which are totally wrong. If we help them it is tantamount to the country in general having a better standard of living and security.

http://www.hrdi.or.th/en/who_we_are/page/Thailand-Royal-Project

The concept of holistic and participatory AD permeated other UNFDAC initiatives in the Mekong region (Lao PDR, Burma and Vietnam) but UNFDAC was underfunded and there was marginal institutional support for AD. In the 1990s the approach regained attention, feeding into the wider UN system development discourse.

Within Europe, Germany assumed a policy leadership role in developing the AD concept and agenda, initially within the EU and subsequently the UNODC.¹⁴³ The country advocated incorporation of drugs into the portfolio of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) activities in the late 1980s, articulating supply issues as: ‘a powerful entry point to rural development support, poverty and conflict reduction as well as addressing governance failures.’¹⁴⁴ Germany’s international cooperation arm GTZ¹⁴⁵ convened international conferences (1993 and 2002) with the UNDCP and these were important in shaping the technical guidelines for AD and

the GTZ concept of ‘Development-Oriented Drug Control’,¹⁴⁶ which aims to:

Reduce ‘the negative individual and societal consequences of drug cultivation, drug trafficking and drug consumption’ through development sensitive drug control interventions co-operatively implemented by development and drug control agencies, which ‘promote peace and security in a drugs environment and permanently reduce poverty and dependence on the illegal drug economy.

The 2002 Feldafing conference ‘The role of alternative development in drug and development cooperation’ brought together over a hundred experts including from USAID (US Agency for International Development), the UK’s DFID (Department for International Development) and Dutch DGIS (Directorate General for International Cooperation), UN agencies, the World Bank, the European Commission, OAS and representatives from non-governmental organisations. This agreed that successful alternative development strategies recognize illicit cultivation: ‘is closely related to poverty and a lack of economic development.’

The conference document ‘The Role of Alternative Development in Drug Control and Development Cooperation’¹⁴⁸ identified best practice in AD programme design and implementation as: fully participatory approaches in alliance with locally recognized, traditional/informal leaders; avoidance of imposed, ‘pre-conceived solutions, projects, decisions, ideas’; recognition of the multiple roles drug crops play in livelihoods strategies; the importance of gender, environmental and cultural sensitivity, and the need for sustainable, long-term strategies that: ‘promote education and training, crop diversification, and off-farm opportunities.’¹⁴⁹ Interpretation of AD broadened to Alternative Livelihoods (AL), generated through the mainstreaming of counter narcotics objectives into national development strategies (Box 21).¹⁵⁰

Within the EU, Germany steered AD and DODC into supply side strategies as these emerged in the 1990s. Unlike the US, there has been no EU military deployment in the drug ‘war’. European countries were slow to develop a common response to drug supply, with limited engagement channelled through the UNDCP / UNFDAC. This changed in the 1980s as HIV/

Box 21: AD and AL Approaches. Adapted from Mansfield and A. Paine (2005) *Alternative Livelihoods: Substance or Slogan?* Ibid.

	Alternative Development	Alternative Livelihoods
Characteristic Feature	Discrete area-based project approach	Mainstreaming of counter narcotics objectives into national development strategy and programming
Problem Analysis	Usually limited to presence of illicit drug crops within a specific area	Analysis of drivers of the opium economy
Agenda	Designed / implemented by national + international drug control organisations	Designed / implemented by development actors, coordination + technical support from drug control bodies
Implementation Method	Attempts to replace on-farm income generated by opium poppy and coca	Addresses factors that influence households’ drug crop cultivation
Impact Assessment	Reduction in hectares of illicit drug crop cultivation	Measured in human development terms and drug control indicators
Strengths	Previously the only way of delivering development assistance to marginalised illicit drug crop producing areas	Recognises overlap between development and drug control agendas; part of national development strategy

AIDS infection and the free movement of goods, capital, services and people following the 1986 Single European Act made coordination on drug issues imperative.¹⁵¹ Following a path strategically distinct from the supply side focus of the US, European countries prioritised demand side responses underpinned by public health concerns, harm reduction principles and evidence based policy,¹⁵² as emphasised in the ‘First European Action Plan to Combat Drugs’ (1990). EU engagement with source countries was set out in the European Action Plan of 1990-1994, evolving over nine documents to the current EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020. The framework promotes dialogue and collaborative North-South responses to drug supply; endorses UNODC / UNFDAC AD initiatives; rejects forced eradication and the conditioning of assistance; and emphasises rights based approaches.¹⁵³

Initial EU strategies to reduce cultivation focused on macro-level support for legal economic sectors, facilitated through trade preferences to the European Union under the Generalised System of Preferences, as granted to Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru in 1990, incorporating Venezuela and Central American countries in 1995. By the 2000s, this had evolved into a more comprehensive and nuanced position influenced by DODC / AL, as in the ‘EU Approach on Alternative Development’ (2006).¹⁵⁴ This document set out that illicit drug crop cultivation: ‘is concentrated in areas where conflict, insecurity and vulnerability prevail’, and that: ‘poor health, illiteracy and limited social and physical infrastructure reflect the low level of human development experienced by the population in these areas’. These conditions forge: ‘a strong European reluctance to making coca, poppy and cannabis farmers the key culprits in the drug chain’, with emphasis instead on interdiction of manufacturing facilities and trafficking networks. AD is embraced as a:

Long-term strategy, based on a comprehensive approach to rural development that seeks to place the foundations for sustainable development and independence from illicit drug cultivation in the long term.

Respect for human rights, empowerment, accountability, participation and non-discrimination of vulnerable groups is ‘integral’ to AD approaches in the declaratory statements of the EU. Forced eradication of drug crops is acknowledged ‘as an option’, but only to be pursued: ‘when ground conditions ensure that small-scale farmers have had access to alternative livelihoods for a sufficient time period’. The 2006 document emphasised the mainstreaming of illicit drug cultivation objectives into national poverty reduction strategies, conflict prevention efforts and development programmes in line with the DODC approach.

While Germany has gone further than other countries in integrating consideration of the drug trade into its development agenda, the concept of DODC / AL has traction within other development agencies, including the UK’s DFID and its work in Afghanistan, in the activities of Australia’s AusAID,¹⁵⁵ in the World Bank and the UNODC. In source countries, AL approaches were integrated into the cultivation reduction strategies of national governments in PDR Laos under the Palaveck Alternative Development Project, Myanmar and also Afghanistan, where the Counter Narcotics Strategy of former President Hamid Karzai (2004-14) established AL as one of eight goals, with development assistance to opium cultivating areas undertaken in the framework of the National Development Programmes.

The position of the OAS on AD/AL converges with the EU. The 1986 Inter-American Program of Action of Rio de Janeiro against the Illicit Use and Production of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Traffic¹⁵⁷ set out that drug control policies in the region should

be consistent with human rights, culturally and environmentally sensitive, that they should improve standards of living and quality of life, and be included in the socioeconomic development policies of member states (Box 22).

Box 22: Inter-American Program of Action of Rio de Janeiro, OAS, 1986

The prevention of drug abuse and the campaign against trafficking in drugs are interrelated with socioeconomic development, and each can influence the other. Adoption of this Program of Action reflects recognition by the inter-American community of the importance of that interrelationship

http://www.cicad.oas.org/Main/Template.asp?File=/main/aboutcicad/basicdocuments/rio_eng.asp

Following the principles established by the Rio programme, the 1996 OAS Anti-Drug Strategy of the Hemisphere was considered a landmark document¹⁵⁸ for its emphasis on shared responsibilities between ‘producer’ and ‘consumer’ countries, its stress on national sovereignty in drug policy and attention to the socio-economic dimensions of the drug trade. AD was promoted in the Anti-Drug Strategy of the Hemisphere as:

*an important component for generating and promoting lawful, viable and sustainable economic options that will make it possible to overcome the factors that give rise to the phenomenon, and lead to a reduction in the supply of illicit drugs.*¹⁵⁹

The Strategy called on donors, NGOs and other international actors to work with the OAS to ensure best practice, civil society participation and the incorporation of lessons learned in AD programmes, which should be: ‘designed to reduce, eliminate and prevent cultivation of coca, poppy and cannabis,

using a holistic approach to improve the overall social and economic situation of the population involved.’¹⁶⁰

The elision of EU, OAS and the UNODC interpretations of ‘AD’ reflects consensus on the importance of integrating development concerns, development agencies and best development practice into cultivation and supply reduction efforts. Development is understood as a participatory, inclusive process, sensitive to gender, cultural traditions and human rights norms with measurable impacts on poverty and exclusion. This interpretation is not universally shared within the drug control regime.

The US Approach: The US has historically acknowledged the costs to cultivating countries of the prohibition model. Complementing the militarisation of efforts to enforce zero cultivation of illicit drug crops, strategies and programmes have been designed to mitigate the economic impacts of cultivation losses. For example, Turkey, a country of concern to the US in the early 1970s was one of the first supply states to receive US financial assistance in exchange for compliance on eradication of opium poppy crops. As outlined by an official from the US development agency USAID:

*The approach was a policy dialogue with the government, technical assistance, and balance of payments loan to compensate for the foreign exchange loss resulting from the eradication of poppy cultivation [...] We provided trucks and vehicles to enable them to survey the area and arrange for alternative crops, new seeds, technical assistance, etc. The issue was if you are going to lose foreign exchange [...] when you eradicate, we will compensate you over a period of time for that foreign exchange loss. It was up to the Turkish government to deal with the problem faced by their farmers.*¹⁶¹

US strategy took the form of compensating the state for the financial losses incurred by the zero-tolerance approach to illicit drug cultivation, including by creating new opportunities for trade. In the 1980s and the 1990s this took the form of access to the US market for the Andean export sector. The Andean Trade Preferences Act (1991) gave over 5,000 types of products from Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru duty-free treatment in the US with the objective of promoting: 'economic growth in the Andean region and to encourage a shift away from dependence on illegal drugs by supporting legitimate economic activities.'¹⁶² The Act was renewed and modified in 2002 under the Andean Trade Promotion and Drug Eradication Act.¹⁶³ Cultivators were not directly targeted, benefitting instead from the 'trickle down' of opportunities to be generated in the national economy. Compensation agreements were conditional on acceptance of compliance with US drug policy and agreement with market liberalisation strategies in the national economy, and they ran parallel with a ramping up of enforcement pressures. The Andean Trade Preferences Act for example was one element of President George Bush's 1989 Andean Strategy that provided:

*more than a quarter of a billion dollars for next year in military and law enforcement assistance for the three Andean nations of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. This will be the first part of a 5-year, \$2 billion program to counter the producers, the traffickers, and the smugglers.*¹⁶⁴

The emphasis on market liberalisation as an insulator of communities from the pull of illicit cultivation has become embedded in US development-side responses, for example in Afghanistan, where the US goal is to:

support Afghanistan's transition to a more liberalized, licit, market-based economy

*[...] Continued US commitment to a multi-year program of political engagement, economic development, security sector assistance, and improvements to Afghanistan's governance, rule of law, and service delivery.*¹⁶⁵

US strategy in South and Central Asia, a region: 'home to some of the world's most dangerous threats - weapons of mass destruction, violent extremism, terrorism, and narcotics' is to utilise:

regional and bilateral foreign assistance to capitalize upon emerging opportunities and counteract imminent threats through a three-pronged strategy that aims to: 1) build regional stability through counter-terrorism and conflict resolution; 2) integrate South and Central Asia through energy, infrastructure, trade, and communication projects; and 3) build the foundations of lasting democracy by supporting education, economic growth, and responsive and transparent democratic institutions.

Emphasis on the role of the private sector in transforming economic opportunity has been a consistent feature of the US approach, both in cultivating states, and also neighbouring countries vulnerable to spill over impacts. For example, in Tajikistan, one of the poorest countries of the world and which shares a 1,300km with Afghanistan, USAID strategy for tackling lucrative transit routes and the country's role as a hub for trafficking of Afghan drugs to Europe and Asia includes to:

*strengthen the GOT's [Government of Tajikistan] capacity to undertake further structural reforms, eliminate corruption, reduce regulatory barriers, and improve the investment climate. Programs also will work to improve the business environment by strengthening property rights, improving economic policymaking, building agricultural production, and reforming trade and customs practices.*¹⁶⁶

Although the US has prioritised national level, intergovernmental strategies to transform national economies, USAID has historically been engaged in local level crop substitution and AD projects, spurred by the 1981 Foreign Assistance Act (the Gilman Amendment). This mandates USAID to: ‘give priority consideration to programs which would help reduce illicit narcotics cultivation by stimulating broader development opportunities.’ USAID concentrated its activities in niche interventions in Pakistan, Thailand, Bolivia and Peru with the aim of supporting socioeconomic development in areas where national authorities were able to enforce cultivation bans (Box 23).¹⁶⁷

These projects focused on training and technical assistance to identify and promote substitute crops and alternative income streams in cultivating areas, provide infrastructure and connection to state services and markets. Incorporation of cultivators was conditioned on prior eradication of drug crops and the commitment on the part of national governments to: ‘ensure sound

economic policies and sustain alternative development and crop substitution, which in the medium term will help replace the income, employment and foreign exchange’ generated by the illicit economy.¹⁶⁸

In the 2000s these localised AD interventions have been influenced by security considerations in line with multiagency responses to ‘combined threats’. Their role has increasingly been one of securing stability after counter terrorist / insurgency military operations. For example, in the case of Colombia, the National Development Plan 2002-2006 ‘Toward a Communal State’ and National Territorial Consolidation Plan (2004-2010):¹⁶⁹

The Defense Ministry, in close consultation with the US Embassy, chose fifteen priority zones, each one consisting of a few ungoverned municipalities (counties), for “consolidation” of state presence. The zones were chosen according to frequency of armed group activity, unmet need for basic social services, and either presence of coca cultivation or use as a “corridor” for trafficking drugs or arms.

Box 23: USAID Alternative Development Projects

Tribal Areas Development Project 1982-87 (Pakistan): construction of basic infrastructure to facilitate increased Government presence and increased irrigated agricultural production

Northwest Frontier Area Development Project 1983-89 (Pakistan): infrastructure building, agricultural and livestock development, and vocational training to provide alternative sources of income and employment to rural inhabitants affected by the 1979 cultivation ban

Agricultural Development in the Coca Zones Project 1975-80 and Chapare Regional Development Project 1983-88 (Bolivia): support for identification and marketing of alternative crops

Alto Huallaga Special Project 1981-1987 (Peru): support to natural resource exploitation, infrastructure development and livelihoods improvements

Mae Chaem Watershed Development Programme 1980-87 (Thailand) registering and bringing new land into production; improving irrigation; training, research, credit, and marketing services; establishing woodlots and road construction

The former FARC stronghold of the Serranía de La Macarena¹⁷⁰ region was a pilot for the consolidation strategy under the La Macarena Integral Consolidation Program (*Plan de Consolidación Integral de la Macarena*, PCIM). Following US Southern Command backed deployment of the Colombian military, guerrillas were evicted from the region and coca eradicated, securing the environment for military delivery of quick impact projects. As security conditions and civilian trust improved, delivery of social services and development was to be transitioned to civilian officials, creating a ‘consolidated’ zone and allowing the military to re-start similar operations in other regions.¹⁷¹ USAID projects were synchronized with the military and security strategy of the Colombian government, including in the targeting of municipalities in the country’s agricultural frontier and drug trafficking corridors.

The Consolidation initiative received an estimated US\$500 million–\$1 billion of US funds between 2007 and 2012, including an annual US\$227 million USAID contracts for projects in Consolidation zones.¹⁷² La Macarena was transformed into a ‘showcase’ for combined military and development responses and posited as a model for Afghanistan.¹⁷³

The examples of the EU, US and OAS demonstrate divergent understandings of the linkages between drugs, development and security, and priority and sequencing between the development and security elements of this construct. Development narratives have changed substantially over the last two decades, with security aspects assuming increased primacy in the context of transnational security threats and the intertwining of external interventions to promote peace, security and development.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, the permutations of AD are becoming increasingly complicated as a result of the growing influence of other countries within the international drug control system, specifically Russia and its

‘AD’ approach of forced eradication and rapid industrialisation,¹⁷⁵ and China’s programme of crop substitution through subsidies to Chinese entrepreneurs in Burma and Laos.¹⁷⁶

4. THE PROBLEM OF ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

It is claimed well designed and coherently implemented AD programmes can make a significant contribution to reductions in drug crop cultivation,¹⁷⁷ including through support to licit agricultural activities, alternative livelihoods programmes and interventions that ameliorate the conditions of exclusion and marginalisation that drive drug crop farming. AD initiatives have proliferated and this makes it difficult to determine the utility and effectiveness of the broad panoply of ‘development’ oriented programmes as a tool for supply reduction.

The official metric for determining ‘success’ in AD programmes is reductions in drug crop cultivation based on the UNODC’s institutional imperative to uphold the treaty system. The preoccupation of the UNODC as an institution and in its reports, are issues of treaty adherence, national legislation, and eradication and seizure data. These have been driven by a short-term approach set by the 1961 Single Convention, by the targets established after these deadlines were passed, and by the system of annual and quarterly reporting and US de-certification. They do not incorporate human development indicators or measures of socio-economic progress such as literacy, access to potable water or land titling. For AD, operating in an institutional culture that stresses enforcement has meant that: ‘Achievements in building better links with local people, growers, and ex-growers were not seen as successes in their own right but just tactics to be used in meeting drug control objectives.’¹⁷⁸

Current metrics are an inadequate basis on which to judge development-oriented counter narcotics strategies and they are a disincentive to their effective implementation. The reporting system creates pressures on countries to achieve demonstrable declines, forcing *ad hoc* responses to evidence of rising cultivation levels. Yet reliable estimates of cultivation levels:

*are difficult to obtain due to the political and geographic inaccessibility of source areas. Inadequate data on the level of opium and coca cultivation, yields, alkaloid content, harvesting efficiency and conversion factors has resulted in a wide disparity in the measurement of worldwide cocaine and heroin production.*¹⁷⁹

As demonstrated in Box 24, the challenge of determining cultivation levels, including due to the practices of inter-planting with other crops, has led to disparities in estimates between national and international agencies.

There are a range of variables influencing cultivation that make it implausible to establish programme impact. Can a discernible

decline in cultivation levels in a community be attributed to a ‘micro’ level local irrigation project or to improvements in the ‘macro’ environment generated by national level economic liberalisation or changes in the security situation? Even in the case of Thailand, it can be argued that cultivation declines in the North of the country owed less to the interventions of donors and the Royal Highlands Project than the impact of a national economic boom that generated an average annual 6.5 per cent growth rate of real GDP between 1951 and 2001. As outlined in a 2005 report by the Independent Evaluation Unit of the UNODC:

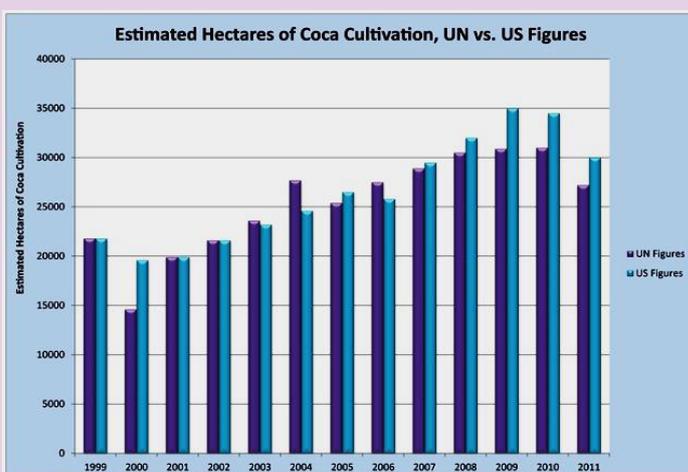
*There is little empirical evidence that the rural development components of AD on their own reduce the amount of drug crops cultivated. Agriculture, economic and social interventions are not seen to overcome the incentive pressure exerted by the market conditions of the illicit drug trade. Where reduction in drug cropping occurs it seems other factors, including general economic growth, policing, etc., can be identified as contributors to the change that takes place.*¹⁸⁰

Without better understanding and mapping of standalone, overlapping and indirect influences on cultivation levels, it is unfeasible to effect generic recommendations from unique experiences, or identify potentially counter-productive impacts on the marginalised and excluded. Rather: ‘the principal aim of evaluating drug policies is seen as part of the response to ‘implementation failure’, not to employ impact evaluation to prepare the ground for policy change.’¹⁸¹

Despite the intellectual progress of concepts such as Development Oriented Drug Control, performance measures are in-

Box 24: Disparities in Cultivation Estimates

Source: K.Ledebur and C. Youngers (2012) *Bolivian Drug Control Efforts: Genuine Progress, Daunting Challenges*. Andean Information Network



stitutionalised around the drug, and not the circumstances of individuals engaged in its production:

*Specialized AD agencies do not, like mainstream development institutions, have as their ultimate objective medium-term and long-term development. Their action in the field will therefore be of a more partial and limited nature.*¹⁸²

The implication of ‘partial’ and ‘limited’ is that AD is isolated from best practice in development and that the complexities of change in fragile agro-economies are underestimated, as highlighted by the 2005 thematic evaluation of alternative development by UNODC auditors: ‘alternative development donors and practitioners still underestimate the socio-cultural, economic, political and environmental milieu in which alternative development operates, which invites unrealistic expectations and projects set to fail.’¹⁸³

With the objective of AD being cultivation reduction, information gathering and programme methodologies prioritise data gathering in relation to crops, planting and harvesting not long term quantitative and qualitative information about the conditions influencing household decisions around cultivation.¹⁸⁴ Inadequate assessment and analysis of development impacts in the design, implementation and evaluation of AD programmes means their potential to do harm is overlooked. Rather than alleviating the poverty, marginalisation and insecurity that are factors of drug crop cultivation, AD programmes may create new forms of exclusion and inequality.

‘Micro-Level’ Limitations: In case studies that include Afghanistan, Bolivia, Peru and Colombia, niche interventions targeting cultivating communities have benefitted farmers that are: a) easy to reach; b) not dependent on coca or opium poppy for livelihoods, and c) favourably

positioned to transition to alternative income streams due to resource advantages such as ownership of land.

While this enables short term reductions in cultivation levels and ‘quick impact’ results, these cultivation falls are not sustainable; they further marginalise the most insecure and vulnerable such as itinerant labourers and the landless, while the provision of mechanical, chemical and infrastructure support to landowning farmers who are already connected to the legal economy inflates the value of land and household income. This generates or reinforces existing patterns of rural inequality and exclusion, in turn increasing the likelihood that those at the very bottom of the cultivation chain will seek out new areas and restart planting in order to sustain livelihoods. In their analysis of the ‘Miracle’ of San Martin in Peru, Van Dun et al¹⁸⁵ conclude that:

The experience of Upper Huallaga shows, like many other AD projects, severe limitations in these programmes’ goals of reducing coca-production and achieving the broader aims of sustainable development [these projects] reach relatively few farmers, with “beneficiaries” accounting for less than one quarter of the farmers in the region.

AD experts: ‘visited the small community of Cedro because their appearance in other communities had met with resistance [...]. No trouble occurred in Cedro because these peasants never cultivated large quantities of coca. As the peasants had never been totally dependent on coca cultivation, and because, by launching the Alternative Development project, they would receive a fixed amount of money monthly, they eagerly cooperated.’¹⁸⁶ In relation to Afghanistan, Mansfield and Pain found:

Priority has not been given to those areas where dependency on cultivation is greatest and agricultural development potential at its most limited [...] There is a danger that the

*relatively wealthy, both in terms of assets and households who are least dependent on opium poppy, have gained preferential access to the benefits of project assistance - which seems to satisfy neither pro-poor nor counter narcotics objectives.*¹⁸⁷

In Afghanistan, AD initiatives embedded corrupt and predatory behaviour, in particular by tasking village *shuras* with distributing assistance. These consultation committees: ‘generally shared inputs such as cash for work, seeds and fertiliser in accordance with traditional rules - giving priority to those who own land or water within the community.’¹⁸⁸

Although it is recognised that citizen voice is crucial to coherent programme design and sustainable success in development interventions,¹⁸⁹ drug crop cultivators are not universally accepted as stakeholders in AD programmes. Nor are they easy to reach in conditions of conflict and geographic isolation. While there may be best practice guidelines from regional bodies and the UNODC emphasising negotiated change and people centred, iterative processes of programme design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, this is infrequently implemented. These citizen empowerment approaches that are crucial for development are being further crowded out by the securitisation of AD projects and military prioritisation of operations in line with consolidation strategies. The criminalisation of cultivation activities under the 1961 Single Convention and domestic legislation that flows from the treaty is an impediment to effective engagement between cultivators and drug control / development agencies. As set out in the 2005 UNODC Thematic Review:

Alternative development requires an appropriate policy/legal framework, one that allows growers of illicit crops to be treated first as candidates for development rather than as criminals.

Punitive legal frameworks prohibiting drug crop cultivation builds cultivator distrust and fear of outside actors coming into communities dependent on illicit economic activities. Conversely there is concern among some donors and national governments, the United States and Colombia included, that partnership with cultivators is condoning, rewarding and encouraging continued supply. This perpetuates top down AD design and implementation by outside ‘experts’ unfamiliar with the region,¹⁹⁰ resulting in projects that ignore or fail to address the multiple motivations for drug crop production and which exacerbate cultivator hostility. With reference to USAID activities in the Chapare region of Bolivia in the early 2000s, Farthing outlines that:

Recognized development practice calls for the fullest possible involvement of the local populations, organizations and governments in program design, implementation and evaluation [...] In the Chapare, however, USAID has consistently refused to work directly with the campesino (small indigenous farmer) unions representing the coca producers, which have played the role of local government since colonization in the 1960s. Instead, USAID/Bolivia has generated considerable campesino suspicion by creating alternative organizational structures, or associations, whose leadership and promoters are paid for their participation.

Cultivator resentment was reinforced by: ‘Bolivian professionals earning in a month what *campesinos* earn in a year accompanied by US supervisors paid four times more again, racing back and forth in new jeeps from Chapare to their offices in one of Cochabamba’s most luxurious office buildings.’¹⁹¹ In the context of integrated peace and security operations in drug cultivating countries such as Afghanistan, direct ‘in field’ engagement by development agencies has been marginalised due to security concerns. This has resulted in a ‘defensive bunkering’¹⁹² of an increasingly

risk averse development community, with aid workers and NGOs in fortified compounds as military forces secure areas and initiate quick impact activities.

AD programmes continue to exclude local knowledge in the development of alternative options, they undermine municipal institutions and they erode cultivator confidence in national authorities and donor agencies. In the case of Bolivia:

*The US refusal to recognize the growers' representatives mean that agreements reached between the unions and the Bolivian government during periods of intense conflict have repeatedly gone unfulfilled because the US embassy withheld its stamp of approval. This inability of the government to honor agreements, many of which relate to coca growers' demands concerning alternative development funds, has significantly contributed to political instability, increasingly violent conflict, and the decisions of individual growers to replant coca.*¹⁹³

The difficulties of engaging cultivators as stakeholders has led to strategies that do not accord with local traditions or constructs of community, most particularly where AD programmes conceptualise farmers as profit maximising individuals.

Technical guidelines for best practice in AD, including by the UNODC and EU stress the negative impacts of conditionality in assistance, particularly in a context where cultivation levels cannot be accurately determined and farmers are subject to external pressures that they cannot control such as potential failure of licit crops and price variations in cash crops. Nevertheless, conditionality has remained a cornerstone of US programmes. In relation to Afghanistan, Mansfield and Pain argue that:

Such practice sees development assistance as compensation rather than a means by which

*to promote equitable growth and empower the poor. This view requires that regardless of development impact and its differentiation by socioeconomic group and dependency on opium poppy cultivation, where a community fails to achieve the levels of reductions in opium poppy cultivation required by the authorities, assistance can be suspended and opium poppy destroyed.*¹⁹⁴

The persistence of conditionality demonstrates lack of consensus within the drug control regime, lack of agreement on best practice, and core differences in the priority of donors. Retaining conditions on AD perpetuates cultivator mistrust and patterns of conflict and localised violence. Indicative of this top down, non-negotiable approach is the statement by Marc Grossman, former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs with reference to Colombia (2002):

*I think people are starting to understand that they have to get out of the drug business. And that if they're prepared to get out of the drug business, we're prepared to help them do something different [...] and if they don't want to get out of the drug business, then the government of Colombia, with our assistance is prepared to spray those crops.*¹⁹⁵

While there are a variety of technical tools and best practice manuals to support and mainstream Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), including in relation to gender and the sensitivity of AD interventions to conflict contexts, these are rarely integrated in practice. The 2005 UNODC Thematic Review of AD found that the relationship between AD and conflict had been 'little studied' despite application in situations of violent conflict and civil war, while gender within AD projects had been addressed with: 'mixed results, dealing poorly with household gender roles and how they react to external pressure.'¹⁹⁶

The Andean review, which incorporated lessons learned from Asia reported difficulties

engaging women in AD projects due to: 'cultural traditions, lack of basic training, the incompatibility of working hours with efforts to act jointly with their husbands or an overload of responsibilities and tasks.'¹⁹⁷ Gender mainstreaming has made negligible progress despite guidelines produced by the UNODC¹⁹⁸ with government officials and project implementers demonstrating limited understanding of the concepts of gender, gender responsiveness or gender sensitivity.¹⁹⁹ The challenge of mainstreaming best practice approaches, including principles of DODC have been underestimated. They assume an environment motivated to address the causes of cultivation, a development skills base on the part of project implementers, and agreement on how cultivation factors should be addressed.

Micro-level AD programmes have been underfunded and poorly executed²⁰⁰ with the result that only 5 per cent of rural households cultivating opium poppy in Asia and 20 per cent of households cultivating coca in the Andean countries had received direct support from AD projects by 2008;²⁰¹ according to Renard: 'Alternative development programmes reach only a small portion of the entire population that desperately requires development assistance.'²⁰² The 2001 review of AD in the Andean region attributed the difficulty of engaging international funding to factors that include AD's distinctiveness from mainstream rural development and the 'marginal, isolated and violent nature of the intervention zones [...] which entails risks with which the traditional cooperation agencies are unfamiliar.'

The absence of mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating AD activities - a product of the UNODC's own reporting system - was identified as a further impediment to securing financial support from donors, with national governments reluctant to commit resources that could not be tracked and impacts evaluated.²⁰³ According to Youngers, development organisations and multilateral institutions such as the World Bank

do not contribute to alternative development initiatives primarily because they are perceived as being 'economically unviable.'²⁰⁴ Donors continue to direct counter narcotics funding along familiar institutional pathways - to specialised drugs agencies that focus on measurable, enforcement driven outputs of drug control such as seizures, arrests and eradication.

If the lesson learned from the Thai experience is that sustainable cultivation reductions require long term and large-scale political and financial commitment from international donors, this has not been reflected in modification of institutional funding streams.²⁰⁵ The 2008 Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) Conference Room Paper produced by the European Commission (EC), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), GTZ and the UNODC found that:

*The scale of illicit opium poppy cultivation in Asia as well as the generally stable coca cultivation level and the shift in the nature of donor funding towards budget support and sector strategies means Alternative Development projects are not - and cannot be - of sufficient scale to address the extent of illicit cultivation across the region.'*²⁰⁶

The lack of integration of UNODC best practice approaches demonstrates the limited traction of and commitment to development oriented responses within drug control policy, and the institution's inability to lead strategic change. There are also credibility issues around the models advocated as best practice in AD.²⁰⁷ A case in point is the San Martín 'miracle' in Peru, upheld by that country's government and the UNODC in its 'Guiding Principles on AD' as a paradigm to be followed. According to participants in the drafting of the Guiding Principles at two conferences in Thailand (2011) and in Peru (2012), the draft document produced in Thailand by a range of NGO and governmental actors, and which reflected:

'many of the lessons learned in more than 40 years of applying the concepts and practices of so-called Alternative Development'²⁰⁸ was modified by Peruvian authorities. San Martin was elevated as a model of 'spectacular development'²⁰⁹ despite its contestable results²¹⁰ and a lack of consultation with participants in the drafting process. There is evidence that the cultivation falls flagged as the success of the San Martin programme were achieved by coercive eradication and not AD, that AD funds were misdirected to non-cultivating farmers, that implemented projects damaged the environment and tied farmers into exploitative commercial relations and that many cultivators simply relocated, in turn accounting for the continued vibrancy of Peru's cocaine economy.

AD projects that aim to stimulate private sector participation in crop substitution and other forms of alternative livelihoods generation have been of questionable value, particularly when these have not been developed through cultivator participation in project design, where there has been poor and inadequate surveying of cultivator needs and in countries where the private sector is weak. Engagement of the private sector can generate new forms of insecurity for cultivators from large economic interests in contexts where commercial activities have links to the criminal economy, where private groups use violence to settle labour or localised conflicts and when the commercial activity relates to environmentally degrading mono crop projects such as rubber plantations in South East Asia.

AD has been linked to a number of 'white elephant' projects that lack linkages into rural economies and which are unsuitable for the agricultural conditions. A 2006 assessment of Colombia by the Centre for International Policy found a \$2.5 million USAID funded animal food concentrates processing plant in Putumayo closed after two years due to a lack of inputs. Farmers refused to sell yucca and corn to the facility as it offered: 'ridiculously low' prices

that did not take into account the costs of transportation.²¹¹ In Bolivia (2004):

*USAID's current programs in the Chapare emphasize commercial-scale agricultural and livestock production fuelled by private investment. Commercial agriculture in a landlocked country with weak road infrastructure and semi-subsistence peasants is a difficult proposition, and to date has produced few tangible rewards for most Chapare farmers.*²¹²

Infrastructure projects such as roads and irrigation that provide cultivating communities with access to markets, goods, have been dynamic spurs of improvements in rural livelihoods but these are one off capital projects with responsibility for upkeep subsequently falling to the state or local authorities.

Multiagency Responses: The skewing of AD to consolidation objectives has led to aid distribution determined by patterns of insurgency not cultivation or social exclusion. This represents a serious politicisation of AD projects in line with the 'end of impartiality' in foreign assistance strategies in the 2000s. In Colombia, Vargas Meza²¹³ found limited USAID / government of Colombia AD activities in areas subject to the greatest spraying of illicit crops such as Amazonia and Orinoco in the south of the country. USAID programmes were instead concentrated in areas of paramilitary demobilisation such as Catatumbo, the middle and lower Atrato, and Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. USAID: 'ran the risk of becoming part of the continuation of the war by other means', while its programmes: 'mainly played a preventive role, sacrificing a more direct influence in the coca-producing areas.'

In this approach, development initiatives fail to take into account the specific nature of regional problems and the socio-cultural characteristics of their inhabitants. Instead, the strategy uses uniform criteria for

*measuring progress such as the reduction of production of illicit crops, the number of legal employment opportunities created, the number of displaced persons who return, the number of ex-combatants who have been reintegrated adequately.*²¹⁴

The use of multiagency missions that combine security and stabilisation objectives, including through military delivery of welfare services run counter to lessons learned in AD, including in the 2005 Thematic Review, which emphasised that:

*Alternative development projects led by security and other non-development concerns were typically not sustainable—and might result in the spread or return of illicit crops or in the materialization of other adverse conditions, including less security.*²¹⁵

Although best practice approaches emphasise that eradication should begin only when viable alternatives are in place, multiagency missions work to a security imperative and have re-legitimised strategies of forced rather than negotiated eradication. As has been extensively documented, this increases the economic stress to cultivators, while military operations as a precursor to development initiatives fails to acknowledge the damage that is caused to the programme environment by the initial and frequently violent military incursion intended to make areas secure. The use of the military in quick impact projects leads to the delivery of short term, top down projects by actors usually distrusted and feared by local communities. The result is an imbalance between the strong use of coercion and weak provision of alternative livelihoods.

Multiagency operations are configured around security imperatives and hierarchical structures, not participatory processes that horizontally distribute power. In Colombia, community participation in AD was through the centralised government agencies and Intelligence Fusion

Centres (*Centros de Fusión de Inteligencia, CFI*). This: ‘makes it practically impossible for organised communities to participate, not as subordinate objects of coordination, but as subjects involved in developing and implementing a regional development plan.’²¹⁶ Moreover as detailed by Isacson²¹⁷ the experience of Colombia and Afghanistan is one of significant drag between military forces securing areas, and civilian actors stepping in to assume development activities.

The flexibility in resources and strategy associated with combined interventions is inimical to coherence in AD projects. For example, in Afghanistan 83 per cent of villages reported receiving external assistance in 2007, with 64 per cent receiving support from the national government, 21 per cent from the UN and 14 per cent from NGOs. Two years later, this had fallen to just 33 per cent of villages as finances were re-oriented to the military ‘surge’ against the Taliban and as short term cultivation reductions were read as sustainable declines.²¹⁸ The UK’s Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) found that in Afghanistan, the security led approach meant development funding was directed to areas where conflict not poverty was prevalent, causing: ‘considerable resentment in the more peaceful provinces.’²¹⁹

The environment for ‘jump starting’ development initiatives following from forced eradication is unfavourable to human security, the exercise of citizenship and redistribution of economic and political power necessary for development.²²⁰ Analysis of the impacts of a 95 per cent fall in opium poppy production in Nangarhar, Afghanistan following a ban imposed by local authorities in 2004-05 demonstrate a downturn in the licit economy due to the steep reduction in disposable income and fewer employment opportunities, reductions in expenditure on food and healthcare, the selling of assets including livestock and land, and a growing inability on the part of

households to meet loan repayment schedules. This in turn led to a: 'greater concentration of assets in the hands of the wealthy and those involved in illicit trade.'²²¹

In relation to progress in mainstreaming AD / AL into national development plans and donor support, GIZ (2006) found that: 'Coordination needs to be improved among international as well as national actors, and the drugs issue needs to be mainstreamed with respect to all relevant line ministries and international donor organisations.'²²² Afghanistan provided an entry point for maximising both development and counter narcotics impacts, however the experience of implementation demonstrates that 'Development Oriented Drug Control' is a complex proposition and that: 'The term itself, [...] is profoundly unsatisfactory, and allows much to masquerade under the label [...] the concept remains a virtual one as the results of this approach are yet to be seen.'²²³

AL was one of the eight pillars of the Afghan government's 2006 counter narcotics strategy. This confused means and ends. The approach made the generation of alternative development a discrete niche within drug strategy attracting its own funding, rather than: 'a goal to be achieved through the appropriate targeting and sequencing of eradication, interdiction and conventional development assistance.'²²⁴ There was no evidence these AD projects addressed: 'structural (such as agro-ecological, socioeconomic) or institutional (such as risk and uncertainty) factors that influenced farmers in their decision to cultivate opium poppy.'²²⁵

Separate from the eight pillars in the updated 2006 strategy, AL initiatives were channelled through the National Priority Programmes (NPP) that included the Microfinance Investment Support Facility in Afghanistan (MISFA), National Emergency Employment Programme (NEEP) and National Solidarity Programme (NSP). Delivery of projects under

the framework of these programmes was not integrated, with the result that:

*While households in a village may benefit from some improved infrastructure and employment provided by NEEP, they may not have established local decision-making bodies and received a block grant from NSP, or have improved access to credit through MISFA.'*²²⁶

Exacerbating the fragmentation of responses, programme areas that would be considered core to AL strategies such as the Programme for Skills and Market Linkages were not included in the NPP, while the use of the National Priority Programmes as a mechanism for achieving control objectives meant that it was: 'easier to overlook the kinds of "best practice" that are required to design and implement effective development programmes',²²⁷ including collation of household data and monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of these initiatives on the poor.

There was negligible assessment of how opium poppy cultivators might benefit or be disadvantaged by these interventions or what their responses might be (relocation, replanting etc). As a result, there was: 'no clear understanding of what influences households in their decision to move from illicit to licit livelihoods and how this differs by socioeconomic and gender group, as well as location' or capacity to anticipate: 'where opium poppy production will retreat to and persist when it is under pressure'.²²⁸ Absent data and information on the reasons for household cultivation, expensive donor funded AL and AD initiatives: 'reduced the livelihood concept to that of income, microeconomics and farmers as profit maximisers',²²⁹ to the neglect of engagement with the multifunctional role of opium poppy in livelihoods strategies. Further undermining coherence in programme delivery, donors and agencies worked through different implementing partners at regional and local level.

As with the previous experience in Colombia and Peru, AL interventions in Afghanistan did not directly target the land and resource poor most dependent on poppy cultivation, but on accessible regions that had agricultural potential or areas where the conflict had intensified. The focus on quality land with commercial farming potential compounded the marginalisation of the rural poor and it increased cultivator vulnerability and political discontent in those areas where alternative livelihood opportunities were scarce.²³⁰

The performance of development agencies in implementing 'development in a drugs environment' and principles of DODC proved inadequate, eroding confidence in strategies to integrate development and drug control objectives. After 2006 when the UK took control of the joint military and civilian Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), the country's Department for International Development (DFID) was engaged in the delivery of thirty two projects in Helmand intended to: support peace, security and political stability; promote economic stability, growth and jobs; and assist the state to deliver improved services within which counter narcotics was 'a very large - and a very ambitious - part of DFID's strategic focus'. A review by the UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact²³¹ (ICAI) of these livelihoods projects, which accounted for approximately 30 per cent of DFID's £190 million annual aid budget in Afghanistan, demonstrates the limitations of DODC. It found that:

The growth and livelihoods portfolio lacks strategic coherence. Weaknesses in design - particularly a lack of direct consultation with intended beneficiaries and unproven theories of change - have made it harder for DFID to meet and assess its intended targets.

The Enterprise and Employment Programme, the Growth Programme and the Rural Development Programme - all intended to

achieve reductions in opium poppy cultivation: 'did not sufficiently consult intended beneficiaries during the project design phase.' The programmes were 'complicated and ambitious' with 'multiple objectives targeted at multiple beneficiaries making them difficult and costly to design, manage, monitor and evaluate effectively and efficiently.'

Echoing Mansfield's criticism of the lack of appropriate methodologies, the ICAI found:

poorly designed monitoring methodologies and inappropriate indicators to be common features of our case study projects. The design of systems to measure intended results was poor and sometimes demonstrated a lack of understanding of what, if measured, would reliably reflect the performance of a project.

In relation to DFID's Rural Development programme: 'the proposed baseline survey and annual assessment [...] did not take place, which means no accurate assessment of intended job creation and income increases can take place' and: 'DFID had no mechanism for measuring the programme's impact on poverty or on the illicit cultivation of poppies in Helmand. Poverty data were neither collected before, during or after the programme.'

An Islamic loan initiative under the rubric of the Growth Programme had the potential to address the role of opium in securing access to credit. It aimed to contribute to a 'vibrant' and 'licit' economy but was found by ICAI to be: 'unrealistic and vague and lacked specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound indicators.' Ultimately the project was dropped: 'because the implementing partner was unable to sell the loan product to the targeted business community. The target market, small agribusinesses, was financially unsophisticated and could not understand the loan benefits.'²³² DFID neglected opportunities for synthesis and scale in individual projects, it failed to assess how these contributed to

strategic priorities, and based programmes on: 'incomplete and poorly articulated theories of change' which did not: 'provide evidence to show how assumptions about such linkages would be sustainable in the long term in Afghanistan; or, in some cases (job creation and insurgency, for example), sufficient evidence to justify the activity.'²³³

Indicative of the failure of DODC approaches to incorporate lessons learned from earlier AD initiatives, infrastructure projects such as road building were found to be severely degraded after only two years, raising questions as to sustainability, and there were no impact indicators to demonstrate how these contributed to economic growth, poverty reduction or declines in drug crop cultivation. More broadly, initiatives were found to be influenced by short-term opium reduction and security goals, rather than long term, integrated development strategies:

Aid has often been used as a direct part of military operations, particularly interventions aimed at reducing opium poppy growing and in the delivery of quick-impact projects aimed at winning the 'hearts and minds' of the local population.

This echoes Mansfield and Pain's observation that political pressures to achieve quick reductions in opium cultivation, 'combined with constraints on capacity in the field of drugs and development, have curtailed the move to the more idealised cross-sectoral approach supported by the "alternative livelihoods" model.' Results for the ICAI case study projects were largely reported directly by implementing partners without validation mechanisms to confirm accuracy; nearly sixty per cent of DIFD expenditures went to contractors, and the overall conclusion of the ICAI was that: 'we are unable to determine whether these case study projects are contributing, meaningfully, to growth and livelihoods in Afghanistan.' Going forward,

there are serious concerns relating to the drawback of foreign funding for Afghanistan following troop withdrawal, and the impact of curtailed donor support on livelihoods.

Free Markets and Macro Level Development: It is difficult to find any evidence 'macro-level' initiatives such as trade and tariff agreements that are intended to stimulate economic growth and which are classified as 'development' initiatives have anything other than regressive impact on livelihoods and cultivation levels. The US International Trade Commission found the impacts of the 1991 Andean Trade Preferences Act on coca production in Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador to have been: 'small and mostly indirect',²³⁴ while the volume of goods exported was less than 1.5 per cent of US imports. Although presented as an element of drug control, trade and tariff agreements have instead been more effective at locking source countries into market reforms than reducing dependence on drug crop cultivation.

Cultivators have little potential to capitalise on market and trade liberalisation processes. Lacking access to capital, collateral, credit or forms of identification, landless and itinerant rural communities are not positioned to benefit from the export opportunities that this type of EU and US agreement provides. The advantages instead accrue to existing private sector businesses and to financial and political interests that have access to markets, capital and infrastructure.

This scattergun approach to economic transformation exacerbates the structural conditions of cultivation, such as inequality in the distribution of land and other resources, while simultaneously providing investment and transportation openings for high level operators in the drug trade. The illicit drugs industry has been a principal beneficiary of the market integration promoted by North / South agreements through the freer move-

ment of capital, labour and goods. Moreover strategies of privatisation, deregulation and related ‘market openings’ in contexts of states and political systems eroded by drug trade penetration creates frameworks favourable to high level money laundering and the institutionalisation of criminal economic activity.

Looking at the record of the 1991 ATPA, which expired in 2013, it would be hoped that alternative, licit agricultural production supported by ‘micro’ AD projects would figure in the list of exports. This is not the case. Petroleum and petroleum related products have accounted for over 50 per cent of exports from the four Latin American countries since the ATPA was amended to the Andean Trade Programme and Drug Eradication Act (ATPDEA) in 2002 (Box 25). Other commodities exported to the US under preferential arrangements include coal, tin, gold and silver. The ATPA is unlikely to have even indirectly generated alternative livelihoods opportunities, in particular because oil is a capital rather than labour intense industry.

Explicit in the Andean Trade Preferences Act was that preferences: ‘were designed as a temporary bridge to a reciprocal trade

relationship under the Free Trade Area of the Americas, a hemisphere-wide free trade negotiation.’²³⁵ When FTA negotiations collapsed in 2003 amid opposition from a new generation of leftist Latin American leaders, the ATPA enabled the US to salvage bilateral trade agreements with Peru in 2009 and Colombia in 2012. These ‘level the playing field’ for the US by providing tariff free entry into Peru and Colombia for 80 per cent of US industrial, consumer and agricultural exports including grains, cotton and rice, and preferential access for US service suppliers.²³⁶

According to Oxfam America,²³⁷ the FTA forces Colombian agricultural products to compete without protection against US subsidized commodities. As a result:

Colombia’s 1.8 million small farmers would see their net agricultural income fall by over 16 per cent on average. The damage would be concentrated among nearly 400,000 small farmers, most of whom now earn less than the minimum wage but who would lose between 48 and 70 per cent of their income. If 400,000 small farmers, who on average have less than five years of formal education, lose their livelihoods, their employment options will be limited. They are likely to take up coca cultivation, engross the files of illegal armed groups, or migrate to urban areas to join some 5 million Colombians - over 10 per cent of Colombia’s total population - forcibly displaced from the countryside over the last 12 years, the great majority of whom live in extreme poverty.

A year after the introduction of the Colombian Trade Promotion Act: ‘mass displacements jumped an incredible 83 per cent in 2012, mostly in areas affected by the CTPA.’²³⁸ A

Box 25: Total US Imports from Original ATPA Countries: 2006-2010

M. Villarreal (2011) *Ibid.*

(US\$ billions)						Leading U.S. import items in 2010
Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
Bolivia	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.7	Crude petroleum oil, tin, silver
Colombia	9.2	9.3	13.1	11.2	15.7	Crude petroleum oil, gold, coal
Ecuador	7.0	6.1	9.0	5.2	7.3	Crude petroleum oil, bananas, crustaceans
Peru	5.9	5.2	5.8	4.2	5.2	Copper, petroleum oil (other than crude), gold
Total	22.5	20.9	28.5	21.2	28.9	

study of the Peru-US FTA warned of: 'financial gain of US\$ 575 millions in urban Peru, but losses of US\$ 158 in rural Peru. This situation highlights the need for pro-poor complementary policies that can secure the livelihoods of the poor.'²³⁹ (Box 26)

Box 26: FTAs and Development

In a setting and at a time when there is increasing need to address poverty and economic inequalities by combining policies of growth directly with key elements of equity it places us on the wrong side.

Remarks of Representative S. Levin for the event 'FTAs Between the US and Latin America: A Test of Globalization.' 2006. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

The Bolivian Experiment: As in other aspects of US drug policy, the 'reward' of preferential access to the US markets under the ATPA was conditional, but overtly on political and economic alignment with US policy not progress in supply reduction. This was demonstrated in 2008, when Bolivia embarked on a novel supply side strategy based on harm reduction principles.

Following his victory in the 2005 presidential election, former *cocalero* leader Evo Morales adopted a heterodox economic course, turning from the FTA to Venezuela's Bolivarian Alternative.²⁴⁰ Repudiation of US influence in Bolivia extended to narcotic drug policy, with the government formalising cultivation of coca up to a maximum of one *cato* per family (1600m, 50,000 acres of coca in the country) in 2007, institutionalised in the Constitution of 2009.²⁴¹ This formed part of the 'Coca Yes, Cocaine No' policy,²⁴² which was: 'specifically tailored to the country's political structures and actors.'²⁴³ Resurrecting arguments first articulated over a century ago at the beginnings of drug control

the Bolivian government stressed the country's unique cultural and historical relationship with the coca leaf, the distinction between coca and cocaine, and the incongruity of controls on the leaf, a mild stimulant with an equivalent potency of coffee.

This latter argument was supported by a 1995 report by the World Health Organisation and United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI),²⁴⁴ which while suppressed amid threats from the US that it would withdraw funding from the WHO (Box 27) set out that: 'the use of coca leaves appears to have no negative health effects and has positive therapeutic, sacred and social functions for indigenous Andean populations.'

The 'Coca Yes, Cocaine No' policy marked a 'nationalisation' of supply responses, with the government abandoning strategies of forced eradication followed under US guidance for a quarter of a century. A: 'more humane and ultimately, more effective strategy' based on participatory negotiation and community control of coca cultivation was developed: 'that involved farmers' tightly knit and powerful unions.'²⁴⁵

The Program to Support Community Coca Leaf Control (PACS) was designed and launched with EU funding, with \$13 million spent: 'on a consciousness-raising campaign to cooperatively limit coca production, strengthening state/union and inter-union coordination, and training coca control secretaries' between 2009 and 2013.²⁴⁶ The strategy respected the sacred nature of the coca leaf for indigenous communities and household reliance on the subsistence income provided by coca cultivation, a form of: 'savings account in case something goes wrong.'²⁴⁷

Technical aspects of the programme included the biometric registration of growers and the titling of 1.2 million acres of land, which in turn created new citizenship rights and responsibilities. This was combined with

Box 27: US Suppression of 1995 WHO Report

Statement of US representative at the WHO

“The United States Government had been surprised to note that the package seemed to make a case for the positive uses of cocaine, claiming that use of the coca leaf did not lead to noticeable damage to mental or physical health, that the positive health effects of coca leaf chewing might be transferable from traditional settings to other countries and cultures, and that coca production provided financial benefits to peasants...

[the US] took the view that the study on cocaine, evidence of WHO’s support for harm-reduction programmes and previous WHO association with organizations that supported the legalization of drugs, indicated that its programme on substance abuse was heading in the wrong direction [...] undermined the efforts of the international community to stamp out the illegal cultivation and production of coca, inter alia through international conventions.

The United States Government considered that, if WHO activities relating to drugs failed to reinforce proven drug control approaches, funds for the relevant programmes should be curtailed. In view of the gravity of the matter, he asked the Director-General for an assurance that WHO would dissociate itself from the conclusions of the study and that, in substance abuse activities, an approach would not be adopted that could be used to justify the continued production of coca.”

<http://transform-drugs.blogspot.co.uk/2009/06/report-they-didnt-want-you-to-see.html>

aggressive interdiction of cocaine paste and cocaine to limit seepage of licit coca cultivation into the criminal economy. The EU provided support on interdiction activities, with \$60m of EU funds made available for the programme period 2014-17. In an important challenge to the Treaty system, Bolivia withdrew from the 1961 Single Convention in 2012, re-acceding in 2013 with the support of a majority of countries when it achieved a reservation permitting coca chewing within its national territory.

The ‘2011-2015 Integral Development Plan with Coca’ built on the nationalisation strategy of 2006-2010, embedding principles that included: no conditioning of development assistance, prioritisation of investment in social services and economic development, and community leadership on design and delivery of development programmes based on principles of sustainability of livelihoods. The strategy was credited by the UNODC for a decline in coca cultivation (Box 28),²⁴⁸ with a 26 per cent fall in cultivation between 2010 and 2013. Levels of violence within cultivation areas such as Chapare fell as forced eradication was abandoned and the military and anti-drug police (UMOPAR) coordinated activities with the coca unions. Ledebur and Farthing conclude that:

Box 28: Coca Cultivation Reductions in Bolivia

Satellite images and surveys on the ground showed reductions in the two main areas of cultivation. Yungas de La Paz and the Cochabamba Tropics - which together make up 99 per cent of the coca cultivation area - had reductions of 7 and 12 per cent, going from 16,900 to 15,700, and from 8,100 to 7,100 hectares, respectively. The rest of the surveyed area, in the Norte de la Paz provinces, saw an even sharper decrease of 28 per cent, from 320 to 230 hectares.

UNODC 2014 Press Release. *Ibid.*

*Community coca control, for all its inevitable limitations, has proven more effective and cost efficient than forced eradication, and represents a sovereign, local initiative appropriate to its context. By permitting farmers to grow a small amount of the product they rely on for economic survival, combined with participatory monitoring, improved government services, economic development initiatives, and a reduction in violent repression, growers are in a better position to diversify their production base and limit their dependence on an illicit crop.*²⁴⁹

The Bolivian model marked a radical departure from the integrated / interagency counter narcotics approaches of the 2000s that emphasise forced eradication, conditionality in lending, and indirect support to alternative livelihoods through market liberalisation. In drug policy debates that have been dominated by demand side innovations, for example in harm reduction, decriminalisation and legalisation of drug use, Bolivia represents a unique attempt to indigenise supply side responses through harm reduction approaches. While marking a potential turning point in supply reduction strategies, the break with repressive, generic, template approaches is within a hostile environment, epitomised by the US decision to suspend Bolivia's trade preferences under the ATPA, impacting an estimated 25,000-50,000 jobs in the country's textile industry.²⁵⁰

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

In his Synthesis Report on the Post-2015 Development Agenda,²⁵¹ 'The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet', the UN Secretary General sees 2015 as: 'a unique opportunity for global leaders and people to end poverty, transform the world to better meet human needs and the necessities of

economic transformation, while protecting our environment, ensuring peace and realizing human rights.'

Drug policy, and particularly as this relates to supply issues in the Global South must be incorporated into this agenda of change. Current approaches based on the securitisation of drugs by both the law enforcement and development communities are incompatible with post 2015 ambitions of: 'a path to inclusive and shared prosperity in a peaceful and resilient world where human rights and the rule of law are upheld.' To meaningfully embark on 'transformation' at this 'historic crossroads', development actors and institutions must indeed: 'lead and act with courage [...] embrace change' by recognising drugs as a development issue. Excluded, marginalised and insecure communities reliant on drug crop cultivation and employment in drug production cannot be excluded from Moon's ambition of: 'Change in our societies. Change in the management of our economies. Change in our relationship with our one and only planet.'

Lobbying for greater commitment to, and resources for AD programmes, including in national and regional action plans and at the 2016 UNGASS, detracts from the serious and urgent need to critically reflect on the limitations of AD and the feasibility of development objectives within a prohibition oriented drug control framework. AD advocacy assumes benefits to drug control - and development - that are not proven, it is framed by a concept of 'development' that is unclear, contested and securitised and it neglects an accumulation of evidence that AD in its current form risks doing more harm than good. AD initiatives - national and niche, are a poorly funded, loosely 'owned', technically weak add-on to enforcement strategies and in this context the promotion of AD sits uncomfortably with wider post 2015 aspirations of 'sustainable development for all.'

AD neither delivers sustainable cultivation declines at the global level, nor does it realise development objectives - despite ambitions of refinement presented by Development Oriented Drug Control. National ownership and stakeholder engagement is recognised as crucial to the achievement of development goals. Yet drug control and AD within that, rests on adherence to external targets to be achieved through externally determined, generic strategies policed by military force and threat of economic sanction. Fundamental to the concept of development is citizen agency and the redistribution of political and economic power. These principles are not realised in AD, which skirts complex issues such as the impact on stakeholder engagement resulting from criminalisation; the implications for peace, development and human security of escalating militarisation; the balloon effect, and politically complex and sovereign issues such as land titling and citizenship.

In seeking to better integrate development and drug control objectives, AD and DODC embed source-focused responses, perpetuating systemic bias against 'organic' drug producers in the Global South and cycles of violence. Moreover in bringing the development community into drug policy, DODC and AD advocacy overlook criticism of the development 'industry' in relation to duplication, waste, inadequate 'reach' to the poor²⁵² and the 'securitisation of development' exemplified by, for example, the performance of UK's DFID in Afghanistan.

AD in all of its various iterations does not address the need for complex political change to achieve equitable and pro-poor outcomes. Rather AD emerges as a sticking plaster that diverts from the need for profound change in the international approach to both drugs and development. Continued donor support to the patchwork of AD initiatives in this context is a misuse of resources, most particularly at a time when countries of the Global North are

mired in economic austerity, and international human development goals are unmet.

Drug supply is a global health and development issue and should rightly be situated within the portfolio of revised and reformed development theory and practice. At the September 2014 launch of the Global Commission on Drug Policy report *Taking Control: Pathways to Drug Policies That Work*²⁵³ Louise Arbour, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights argued that the UNODC was not positioned to implement rights based approaches in drug policy as these relate to demand side issues, highlighting that: 'United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, it's interesting it's not called the UN Office of Drugs and Health'.

From a supply perspective, the UNODC is not an office for Drugs and Development. Pretension to such a role is problematic and should be resisted. It is inconceivable that an office whose remit currently includes corruption, firearms, HIV and AIDS, migrant smuggling, fraudulent medicines, maritime piracy, terrorism prevention, forest crime and money laundering is positioned to lead on development challenges in some of the most complex and violence prone regions of the world.

A transformative and courageous international approach in 2015 and 2016 would galvanise moves to re-allocate the 'drug' remit of the UNODC to health and development agencies, with a rationalised UNODC refocused on transnational crime. But this maximum framework for change has to question the type, role and strategies of development agencies and the utility, sensitivity and relevance of orthodox development recommendations that promote marketization, entrepreneurialism and global integration strategies in drug environments.

In the preface to the 2014 World Drug Report, UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov praised the 2014 High Level Review of the

international drug problem for providing an: ‘open, inclusive dialogue [...] on the most effective way to counter the world drug problem.’²⁵⁴ In the context outlined above, multinational dialogue - especially in the lead up to the 2016 UNGASS processes must at a minimum consider:

- *Balancing the debate* on harm reduction, rights and decriminalisation to incorporate consideration of these approaches to supply side aspects. There is substantive research and policy initiative on demand side issues, but a paucity of analysis and discussion of supply side alternatives. The vacuum of research on development oriented and rights based supply side options needs to be addressed, including through large scale, international fieldwork and conference events. More and better research and evaluation of AD as this relates to human security and development dimensions is required and the plurality of understanding around AD, including by increasingly influential players in international drug control such as Russia and China needs to be acknowledged and negotiated;
- *Expanding the space for national ownership of supply side issues* including through discussions to revise the 1961 Single Convention as this relates to cultivation. Unlike consumption issues, where reforms can be framed within a ‘sovereign’ discourse and the (limited) latitude provided by the 1961 Single Convention, supply questions impact both South and North, while the 1961 Convention and the coercive manner of its enforcement provides no space for pragmatism. This delimits national ownership and culturally appropriate interventions. The experience of Bolivia demonstrates the limited room for innovation and sovereignty within the control system and the 1961 Single Convention, which do not recognise the complexity and tensions of change

processes. The constraints on nationally owned responses in source countries and regions, including through the threat of economic sanction must be mitigated and avenues explored to rebalance the drug control model;

- *Scaling up capacity on development within the UNODC* for as long as it continues to involve itself in development initiatives, including to improve the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation (metrics) of AD projects and to ensure that AD programmes implement best practice and minimise the risk of harm; embracing a wider system review of UNODC metrics and reporting requirements away from the focus on enforcement (seizures, arrests, eradication) to incorporate human development / health and well-being / governance indicators;
- *Providing a forum for drug, security and development communities from around the world* to: share methodologies and lessons learned, and engage in ‘out of the box’ thinking on complex supply questions, including how these relate to structural inequalities, the role of the state, peacebuilding and multidimensional poverty; explore best practice in enforcement measured against development indicators such as violence reduction and community engagement; build a deep and broad network of participation and information exchange incorporating community stakeholders, NGOs and grassroots organisations.

Ultimately, as outlined by Barrett:

The war on drugs has been a systematic human rights onslaught. It has eroded and crowded out constitutional values democratic societies should defend. It has fuelled urban violence and hindered peaceful resolution of conflicts. It has been a consistent barrier to development

in producer nations. It has been a vector of disease and an economic catastrophe; billions poured down the sinkhole of tail-chasing drug enforcement at the expense of proven, life-saving harm reduction and treatment interventions²⁵⁵

Addressing the damage that the ongoing drug ‘war’ in the Global South has caused to governance, democracy, security, rights and livelihoods requires fundamental overhaul of guiding principles (prohibition), institutions (the UNODC), strategy (criminalisation) and the drug treaty framework, complemented on the development side by post 2015 approaches that meaningfully embrace citizen empowerment and the needs and agency of the poorest of the poor, including those reliant on illicit incomes from the drug trade.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With thanks to Dave Bewley-Taylor, Neil Cooper, Tom Kramer and Desmond Cohen for comments on an earlier version of this paper. Any errors of fact or interpretation remain with the author.

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