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(Paulton, 2012)

Hopeful Strategies and Misfires to Control Opiate Trafficking In and Around Afghanistan John Cisar

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Abstract

¹ U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl with Golf Company, 2D Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6, takes a knee in a field of poppy during a halt in a security patrol in Musa Qal'eh, Helmand province, Afghanistan, April 16, 2012. Marines conducted the patrol to disrupt enemy tactics in the battle space (U.S. Marine Corps Photo by Lance Cpl. Chistopher M. Paulton/Released).

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Stopping the operations of the global Afghan opiate market require a combined and united world effort to eliminate trafficking in, production of, and demand for Afghan opium and heroin and the application of Afghan lessons learned to include regional and local police reform and implementation of a strong anticorruption system in the strategic plan. This paper discusses the challenges of fighting opium trafficking across the region, alternative crop selection and poppy eradication, opiate demand reduction and treatment strategies in and around Afghanistan. The Coalition forces failed to address police reform and to establish an anticorruption system resulting in an ineffective counternarcotics program which produced record poppy yields. American policy has not yet addressed the problems associated with the U.S. force reduction in Afghanistan nor has it effectively taped a full collaborative drug fighting partnership with Iran and Pakistan.

Keywords: Afghanistan, Taliban, Iran, Pakistan, drug trafficking, opium, heroin, demand reduction, drug crop eradication, alternative crops, corruption, police, lessons learned

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Around the world, approximately 16.5 million people use illicit opiates annually which generated a US\$68 billion global opiate market in 2009 (UNODC, 2011, p. 3). Each year Afghan heroin kills approximately 100,000 people worldwide (Peterson, 2007, p. 225). Afghanistan exports over 350 tons of heroin per year. Faced with poor alternative crops, many Afghan farmers choose to grow poppies to feed their families. The prevalence of this cheap opium and heroin has led to a sharp rise in the level of opiate consumption in Afghanistan and its neighboring countries during this past decade (UNODC, 2011, p. 3). This region leads the world in the percentage of the population who use and abuse heroin and other opiates, but many regional countries have poor or lack effective demand reduction programs. American and its coalition forces failed to revamp the regional and local police forces which are needed to provide the protection and security required to win the hearts and minds of Afghans. The United States also neglected to form a process to deal with corruption at the national, provincial, and local levels. Forgetting the misery caused by opiates, western nations seemed to have tired of the Afghan war on narcotics. With the steep American reductions in forces and resources in Afghanistan, the opportunity to correct past missteps might have slipped by. Stopping the operations of the global Afghan opiate market and the misery produced by it will require a combined and united world effort to eliminate trafficking in, production of, and demand for Afghan opium and heroin and the application of new lessons learned by the strategic misfires in Afghanistan.

Literature Review

Disrupting Trafficking Routes

All of Afghanistan's 90 percent contribution to the world's opiates supply is trafficked through the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan or Central Asia (see Figure 1). In 2009, Afghanistan exported some 365 tons of heroin of which 160 tons was trafficked to Pakistan, 115 tons to Iran and 90 tons to Central Asian countries (UNODC, 2011, p. 28). Pakistan is the world's highest-volume transit corridor for opiates and the traffickers exploit the country's porous borders. An estimated 40 percent of the world's heroin supply traverses Pakistan en route to the world through the country's seaports, airports, postal routes and coastal areas (INL, 2014, p. 256). Pakistan's Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) leads the country's counternarcotics effort and receives significant foreign assistance from United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and bilateral partners. The ANF is one of the region's best-funded, best-equipped, and best-trained law enforcement agencies, but they remained thinly deployed across the country and have been prohibited from operating in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) (p. 256). Corruption, poor internal coordination among governmental agencies, and distrust of international cooperation has greatly diminished the effectiveness of Pakistan's drug interdiction programs.

Iran is a significant market and transit zone for opiates and hashish produced in Afghanistan. Approximately 35 percent of the heroin trafficked from Afghanistan journeys through Iran, both for domestic consumption and further export to international market (p. 205). Although Iran's interdiction efforts along its border with Afghanistan and Pakistan are extensive, joint investigations with international law enforcement partners remain rare. Iranian officials have expressed interest in pursuing greater international cooperation to reduce drug trafficking and UNODC has facilitated cooperative initiatives between Iran and its neighbors. However, the

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United States has no bilateral agreement with Iran on drug control issues as they do with other regional countries (p. 205).

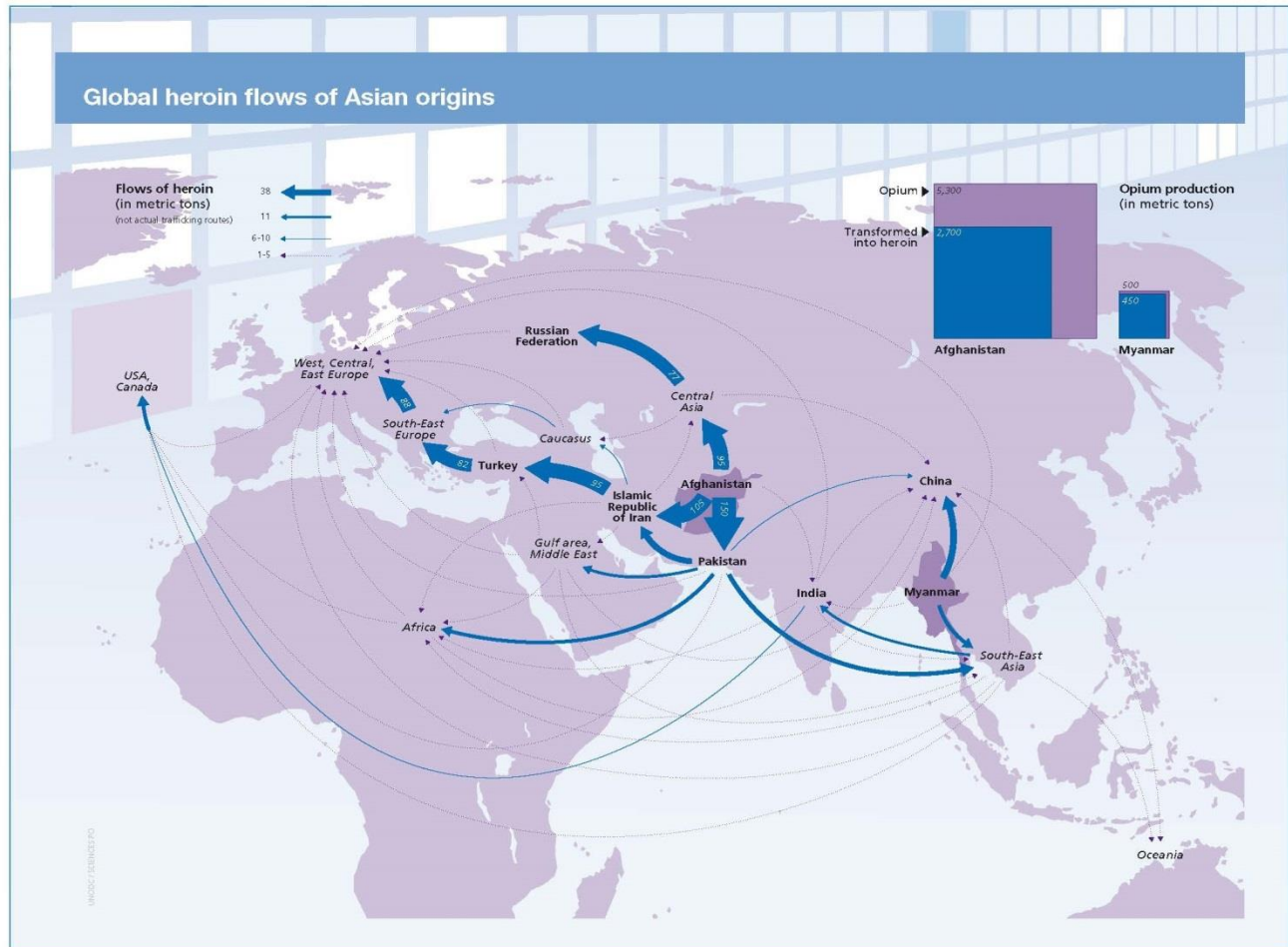


Figure 1 Global heroin flows of Asian origins. From “*Global heroin flows of Asian origins*” by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Studies and Threat Analysis Section, 2010.

The United Nations estimates about 25 percent of the heroin and 15 percent of the opium produced in Afghanistan is smuggled through Central Asia, with 85 percent of that amount passing through Tajikistan (p. 292). With significant financial support from the United States, the Tajik Drug Control Agency (DCA) established a vetted unit in June 2013. This DCA vetted unit is the first such unit in Central Asia and is designed to pursue high-level drug traffickers. In August, the vetted unit achieved its first operational success (p. 292). Corruption continues to hinder the success of counter-narcotics programs in Tajikistan and the political will to tackle drug trafficking remains weak due to almost 30 percent of the nation’s GDP emanates from opium trafficking (p. 294).

Although Afghanistan has no formal extradition or mutual legal assistance arrangements with the U. S., the Afghan government has committed to fight the drug problem and has been cooperative with the United States. Afghanistan is a signatory to the 1988 UN Drug Convention, and the 2005 Afghan Counter Narcotics Law allows for the extradition of drug offenders to

Hopeful Strategies and Misfires to Control Opiate Trafficking In and Around Afghanistan requesting countries under the 1988 UN Drug Convention (p. 90). Several narcotics traffickers have been identified, arrested, and extradited to America for prosecution under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (KDA) to include two major Afghan drug traffickers: Bashir Noorzai and Baz Mohammad (Peterson, 2007, p. 237). The Kingpin Act (21 U.S.C.A. §§ 1901–1908) prohibits all trade and transactions between the traffickers and U.S. companies and individuals. The President identifies foreign individuals and entities as Significant Foreign Narcotics Traffickers, or ‘kingpins’. Entities that violate the Act face fines up to US\$10 million and the officers, directors, or agents of an entity who knowingly participate in a violation of the Kingpin Act are subject to criminal penalties of up to 30 years in imprisonment and/or a US\$5 million fine (White House, 2009). The United States used the Kingpin Act to successfully combat drug trafficking in the Americas. Afghanistan is also the center of global heroin manufacture and has about 300-500 laboratories that process approximately 380-400 tons of heroin per year. These heroin labs are mainly located where there is limited law enforcement capacity (UNODC, 2011, p. 5). Processing a large portion of the raw opium crop into heroin and morphine base by drug labs inside Afghanistan, allows its bulk to be reduced by a factor of 10 to 1, and thus facilitates its movement to markets throughout the world (White House, 2014). The most important precursor chemical in this process is acetic anhydride which requires 1 liter processed with 7 kilograms of dry opium to produce 1 kilogram of brown heroin (UNODC, 2011, p. 151). Only a tiny fraction of the legitimate acetic anhydride global trade needs to be diverted to satisfy the Afghan lab’s requirements (p. 5). A reverse of the outbound heroin routes accomplish the movement of these chemical into Afghanistan.

Regional countries need improved cooperation and collaboration among themselves and the greater world community to fight and reduce the trafficking of drugs and chemicals across their common borders with Afghanistan. Corruption which is significant in the region also reduces the effectiveness of each nation’s interdiction efforts and must be routed out for increased law enforcement performance.

Drug Crop Eradication and Alternatives

Afghanistan significantly leads the world in the cultivation of opium poppies. U.S. backed crop-control programs have successfully reduced illicit opium cultivation in Guatemala, Pakistan, Thailand, and Turkey (White House, 2014). American policymakers learned that eradication can often harm the farmers more than it harms the drug lords. Responding to the effects of poppy eradication, 24 percent of the farmers reported that they were not able to pay back their crop planting loans and 21 percent said that they could not feed the family (Peterson, 2007, p. 223). In fact, the drug producers and traffickers often benefit from eradication because they have significant stockpiles of poppy that they can sell at increased prices to meet demand. Because of these facts, the U.S. Government no longer funds or supports large-scale eradication of poppy fields (Curtis, 2013, p. 8). Without adequate emphasis on alternative work or crops for farmers, Afghans were robbed of their livelihoods (p. 7).

The unstable security environment in Afghanistan makes it difficult to establish alternatives to poppy cultivation (p. 11). Current alternative development assistance programs emphasize farming as the primary means for development since about 80 percent of Afghanistan’s 32 million people are engaged in farming. However, only 12 percent of the land in Afghanistan is arable, and of that, only half is under cultivation (p. 8). Opium has remained the predominant cash crop in Afghanistan because it is easy to grow, employs a significant

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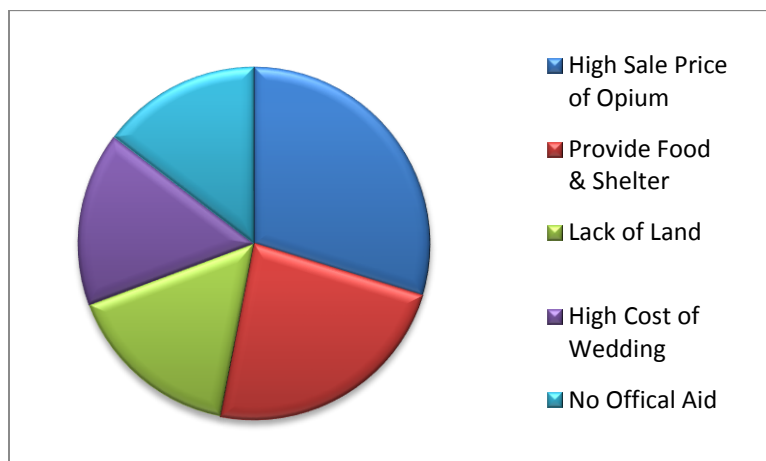


Figure 2 Reasons for Cultivating Opium

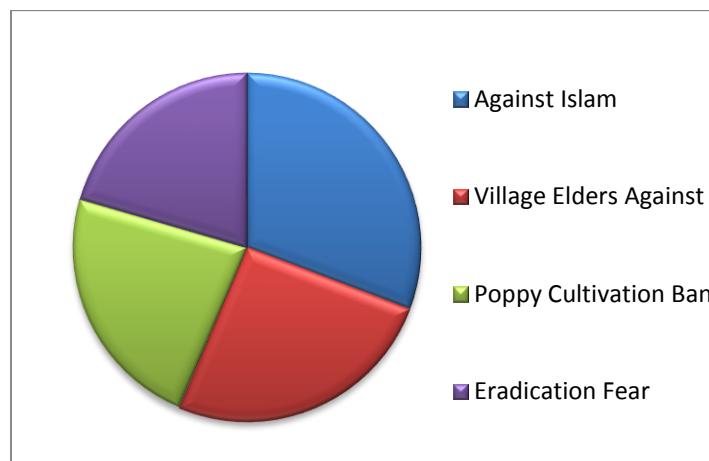


Figure 3 Reasons for Not Growing Poppies

Both figures created using data from "Two sides of the same coin: The link between illicit opium production and security in Afghanistan" by E. Peterson, 2007, *Washington University Journal of Law & Policy*, 25, p. 217.

Challenges to alternative crop development programs in Afghanistan are similar to those faced in South America which included isolated production sites, meager transportation infrastructure, poor soil conditions, security constraints, lack of territorial control that impedes the development of infrastructure, and absence of established markets and private sector investment (Veillette & Navarrete-Frías, 2005, p. 21). In addition, poor irrigation and decreased access to water is often a contributing factor in an Afghan farmer's decision to grow opium. The problem in Afghanistan is not necessarily a lack of water, but a lack of training in proper irrigation technique, failure to maintain existing irrigation systems, and inadequate investment in accompanying infrastructure (Curtis, 2013, p. 13).

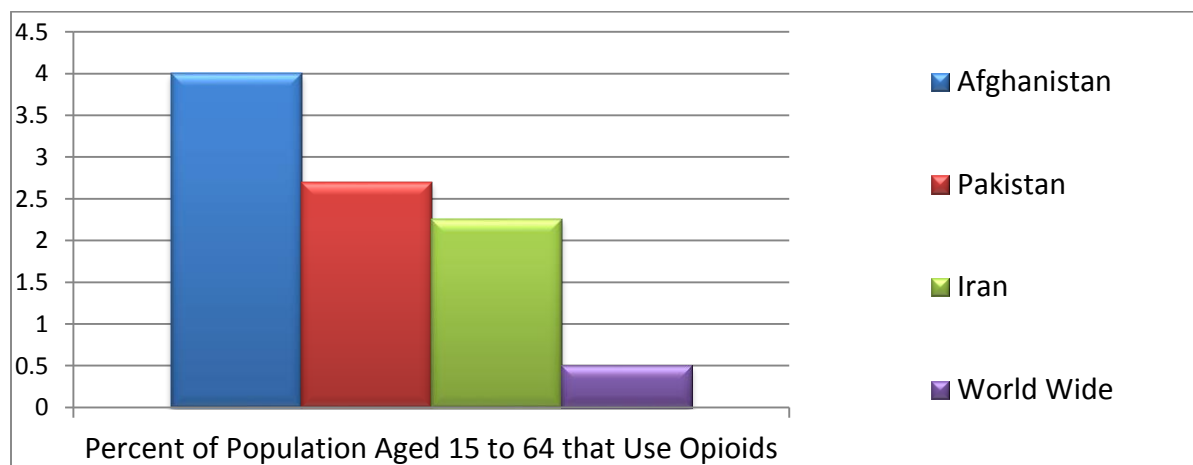
² In some ways, poppy and its derivatives of opium and heroin is the perfect crop for Afghanistan. Poppies grow well in the difficult Afghan climate and have a centuries old Afghan cultivation history. Harvesting is labor intensive providing a very high paying jobs, US\$10 per day, to unskilled workers (Hafvenstein, 2007, p. 258). It is lucrative to the farmers, earning them US\$173 per dry kilogram of opium in 2013 (Rosen & Katzman, 2014, p.21). The opium can be reduced 10 to 1 in bulk by processing to heroin and it is not hampered by the lack of a transportation infrastructure in Afghan regions which greatly complicates other crops movement to distant markets (White House, 2014). Opium can and is stockpiled for sale for a later date in plastic bags for a long time while pure brown heroin's shelf life is limited to around 2 years (UNODC, 2011, p. 28).

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Regardless of the crop, the lack of cultivatable land will pose a major obstacle to farm based alternative development programs. The type of alternative needed is high-value labor-intensive cash crop that economizes on scarce arable land and irrigation water (p. 8). Successful programs implemented in Pakistan, Lebanon, and elsewhere have demonstrated a marked reduction in opium production with the introduction of viable, long-term alternative plantings, such as garlic and onions (p. 11). A number of irrigation programs have started, but any investment in formal irrigation systems must ensure that the Afghan people have the technical knowledge, the financial means and the physical ability for the upkeep of the system (p. 13).

Demand Reduction

With access to and frequent contact with the tremendous amounts of drugs that are produced and trafficked through their countries, Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan are home to some of the world's highest heroin and opiates usage and addiction rates (see Figure 4). The United Nations estimated nearly one million drug users in Afghanistan which is approximately 4 percent of the population (INL, 2010, p. 1). One can contrast that 4 percent figure with the global frequency of opioid use estimated at 0.6-0.8 percent of the population aged 15-64 (UNODC, 2012, p. 7). This alarming prevalence of drug use is facilitated through the cheap availability of opium and heroin in a country that produces vast majority of the world's opiates. Additionally, opiate usage as medication and lack of public awareness on the harms contribute to high addiction rates³ (INL, 2010, p. 1). Only 1 percent of the Afghan population has access to treatment per year. Still, this is generally consistent with U.S. figures where only 1.8 percent of the population makes an effort to receive needed treatment services (p. 4). Many private clinics do not apply evidence-based practices and discharge clients after detoxification without follow-up, thereby resulting in high relapse rates (INL, 2014, p. 92). The relapse rates on non-American funded treatment centers approaches 100 percent (INL, 2010, p. 8). For residential or outpatient treatment, participation for less than 90 days has limited effectiveness and longer is needed for maintaining positive outcomes. Methadone maintenance requires a minimum of 12 months and some opioid- maintenance may take many years (NADA, 2012, p. 15).



³ Opium and its refinement heroin are some of the most addictive substances known. They trigger receptors in the brain's reward regions, those parts of the brain that teach us that food, sex and warmth are desirable so we'll survive. The drugs hijack that circuit and instead of the contextual enjoyment you get from a nice meal or sex, opiates activate that circuit directly to achieve a much more powerful effect. The brain eventually accommodates this drug use, leading to physical changes in the brain and dependence. Users no longer enjoy the drug, but require it. Lack of opiate use will now cause the addict to suffer physical illness or withdraws (Alexander, 2014).

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Figure 4 Opium Usage Rates in the Region. Graph created using data from multiple UNODC and INL sources referenced and credited in the Demand Reduction section.

UNODC survey of Pakistan showed about 2.7 percent of population of the aged 15 to 64 use opioids. Historically, this conservative Islamic country's public awareness about the harmful physiological properties of drugs and their destructive effects on society has been low (INL, 2014, p. 258). Pakistan's drug treatment capacities remained insufficient to meet demand, with fewer than 100 clinics operating. Very few public hospitals offered addiction treatment services, though the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa area did take steps to systematically integrate basic addiction counseling into its public health apparatus. Due to insufficient government funding, over 90 percent of Pakistan's detoxification centers were operated by NGOs (p. 258). These efforts should help reduce remission rates, which approach 80 percent (p. 259).

With 1.2 million opiate-dependent users, equivalent to 2.26 percent of the population aged 15- 64 years, Iran has one of the most severe opiate addiction problems in the world (UNODC, 2011, p.8). Iran's demand reduction and treatment programs are extensive, progressive, and include: opioid substitution treatment, voluntary counseling centers, prison treatment and rehabilitation, and school-based prevention campaigns. NGOs also administer a range of rehabilitation and detoxification centers (INL, 2014, p.205). By 2002, over half of the country's drug-control budget was dedicated to preventive public health and education campaigns (Afkhami, 2013). Official policy changed from one of punishing users to treatment and prevention. In fact, Iranian narcotics law forbids the arrested or prosecuted for drug possession or use of an addict voluntarily undergoing treatment. Additionally, Iran launched the largest prison methadone maintenance treatment (MMT) program in the world (Tanner, 2013). In areas where harm-reduction programs were established, addicts' life expectancies and psychological well-being were improved plus an overall reduction in the illicit consumption of opiates was observed (Afkhami, 2013). Iran's model for demand reduction, drug treatment and education programs should be used as an example for the rest of the region and world to use.

Misfires in Afghanistan

As previously written, the American poppy eradication program turned out to be a complete bust which hurt the poor farmers and share croppers the most. Additionally, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) coalition powers failed to address the Afghan police reform. The Americans trained some parts of the national police forces like the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan but no one developed a plan to transform the current jumble of ethnic militias into a professional, accountable police force (Hafvenstein, 2007, p. 246). The provincial and local police forces had little or no formal police academic and field training and many times were manned by thugs, criminals and soldiers of warlords and kingpins turned political leaders. The Afghan Ministry of the Interior which runs the Afghan police lacks an internal affairs type investigative unit or any remedy for civilians who abused by the police (p. 246). The ISAF chose to concentrate any police improvements at the national level, but the American officials estimate that the Karzai government controls only about 30 percent of the country, while the Taliban controls 10 percent, and tribes and local groups control the remainder of the 60 percent (Katzman, 2009, p. 13). Why would one expect countrywide results if one only supported a process that excludes 70 percent of the Afghanistan? In order to win the hearts and minds of Afghans, the government must provide protection and security. But the Afghan Army was not built to meet the security needs of the ordinary Afghan population. It could not protect them from assault, theft, rape or extortion nor could it investigate murder or trafficking

Hopeful Strategies and Misfires to Control Opiate Trafficking In and Around Afghanistan (Hafvenstein, 2007, p. 308). Only a professional police force can do that. Figure 5 shows a positive correlation of high security risk areas and large production of opiates. Promoting local governance is more compatible with Afghan traditions since they have always sought substantial regional autonomy and resisted strong governance from Kabul (Katzman, 2009, p. 14).

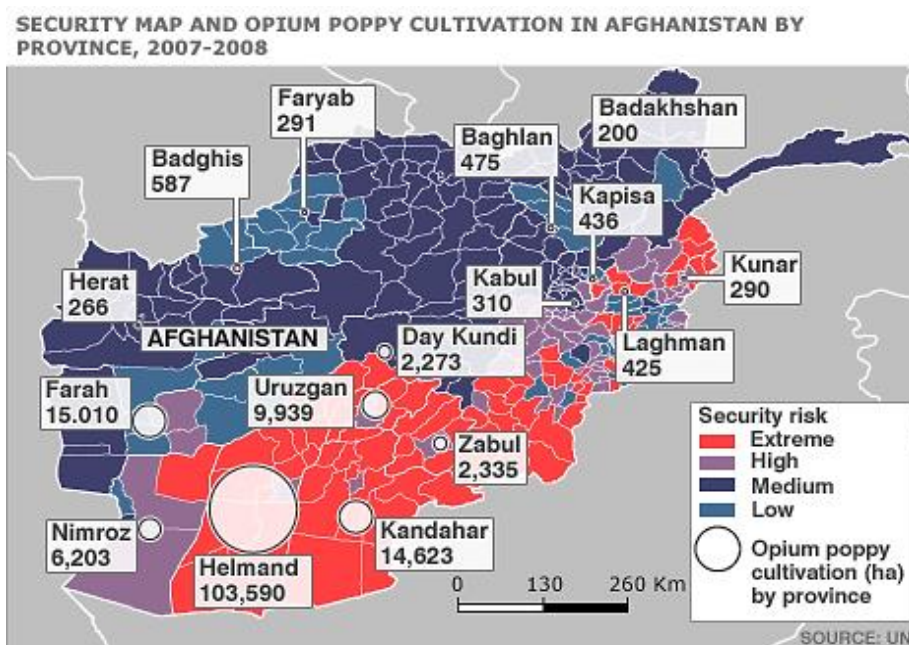


Figure 5 Security Map and Poppy Cultivation in Afghanistan by Province. From “Security map and opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan by province, 2007-2008” by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), 2008.

Despite the fact that the narcotics trade and corruption are inextricably linked, the United States does not have a comprehensive anti-corruption strategy even though Afghanistan is universally recognized as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. The narcotics trade is fueling that corruption (Sopko, 2014, p. 8). The American answer was only to establish three working groups on the subject of corruption (p. 10). The antiseptic for organized crime and trafficking is good governance⁴. It follows the rule of law and requires an impartial and incorruptible police force. But, that task is impossible when the corruption goes to the very people who control the police. Helmand Governor Sher Muhammad Akhundzada looms as a foreboding example. In June of 2005, Afghan counternarcotics officers and DEA agents raided Sher Muhammad’s mansion and discovered the largest single cache of opium found anywhere in Afghanistan. Those nine metric tons could produce over one ton of heroin (Hafvenstein, 2007, p. 312). Sher Muhammad has been described as a political ally, supporter and friend of Afghan President Hamid Karzai. The Governor presides over the province that has by far the greatest poppy production in Afghanistan and whose family transformed Helmand from a minor opium producer to the country’s leading supplier in the 1980s (p. 129). Yet, Karzai accepted Sher Muhammad’s excuse that he had confiscated the opium from drug traffickers and was only storing it until he could properly dispose of it (p. 312-313). Even Karzai’s brother was reported

⁴ Good governance has 8 major characteristics: participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable. It is inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized. Lack of Good Governance is regarded as one of the root causes of all evil within our societies (Yap, 2010, p. 2).

Hopeful Strategies and Misfires to Control Opiate Trafficking In and Around Afghanistan to be a major figure in the Kandahari drug economy (p. 229). The situation in Afghanistan is like leaving the fox to guard the hen house. With leaders, politicians, and government officials garnering millions of dollars through the drug trade, are the dismal results of the more than decade old counternarcotics effort surprising? Afghanistan is still the source of about 93 percent of the world's illicit opium supply leading UNODC to state, "leaving aside 19th Century China, no country in the world has ever produced narcotics on such a deadly scale" (Katzman, 2009, p. 22). In order to successfully fight drug production and trafficking, one must also tackle the accompanying government corruption head on.

Current State of U.S Government Policy in the Region

Unfortunately with the goal of removing the majority of combat troops in Afghanistan soon, American strategy has shifted to view the war on narcotics in Afghanistan is no longer a top priority. The latest DOD Report on Progress toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan refers to a counternarcotics strategy but states that as the drawdown proceeds "drugs-nexus targets have a lower priority" (Sopko, 2014, p. 7). The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has played a key role in training and mentoring elements of the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA), developing critical intelligence on counternarcotics, and spearheading interdiction operations. However, its presence has been cut by nearly 50 percent. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) reports that the U.S. State Department and DEA are negotiating further reductions, which could significantly diminish the DEA's ability to perform these crucial missions (p. 8). The current situation looks like America and other western governments have essentially given up on trying control and wean Afghans off of the opium growing economy. The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit recently reported concerns that tackling the illicit opium economy is not a high priority and stated "Policymakers seem to have lost all appetite for talking about the production and trade of opium in Afghanistan" (p. 8). This research unit further said "In fact, in western capitals there is almost an allergic reaction to the acronym CN [counternarcotics] with senior policymakers often avoiding the subject entirely" (p. 8).

Since 2006, DOD and State have provided about US\$900 million to train, equip, mentor, house, and sustain the CNPA and its 2,759 members (p. 12). Combating the opium trade requires a strong law enforcement presence, but the combat troop reduction threatens this. The DEA needs military support for security, intelligence, medical evacuation, and tactical air control for high-risk operations and without it, DEA will have little ability to extend its operations beyond Kabul (p. 12). In response, the DEA is closing a number of forward operating locations and reducing its footprint in others. These forward operating locations are being transitioned to the CNPA. Since DEA has augmented CNPA capabilities throughout Afghanistan, the SIGAR reports the pullback could have a serious negative impact on the CNPA's ability to do its job (p. 12). The CNPA provides the only real if somewhat meager Afghan counternarcotics law enforcement capability and any blow to them is a significant decrease in Afghan fight on opium.

Despite being the world's highest-volume transit corridor for opiates and cannabis (INL, 2014, p. 256), Pakistan's cooperation in fighting drug trafficking with the United States and the rest of world at best can be described as anemic. Utilization of the 1931 Extradition Treaty between the United States and the United Kingdom (adopted by Pakistan upon independence) has been problematic in recent years. Similarly, Pakistan rarely acts on mutual legal assistance requests from the United States (p. 257). Since 2008, U.S. supply-reduction assistance has mainly funded poppy reduction programs and ANF interdiction activities, but the ANF's seizures

Hopeful Strategies and Misfires to Control Opiate Trafficking In and Around Afghanistan and arrests have been lower than expected. In 2013, bilateral cooperation on interdiction programs suffered from diminished information sharing and access by U.S. government personnel to U.S.-funded facilities operated by ANF and other Pakistani law enforcement (p. 259). America supplies Pakistan billions of U.S. dollars in military, economic, and other aid (Klapper, 2013). That aid money should be leveraged to increase efforts in Pakistani opium interdiction and cooperation with U.S. and international law enforcement.

While Iran is the second major drug trafficking route for Afghan opiates, the United States has no bilateral drug agreements on drug trafficking or control. In fact, official American relations with Iran have been dismal. Iranian officials have expressed public interest in pursuing greater international cooperation to reduce drug trafficking in the region (INL, 2014, p. 205). Since the fall of the Taliban, Iran has provided over a billion dollars to build roads and schools and to provide electricity and shops to Afghan cities and villages near the Iranian border. As one of the top financial donors to Afghanistan, Iran is essentially supporting the American policy of attempting to pacify the region through economic development (Katzman, 2009, p. 48). With a common enemy and menace of illegal drug and abuse, cooperation on the law enforcement level in fighting opiate trafficking and drug abuse may be a good avenue to start a dialog with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Resulting Situation in Afghanistan

According to the United Nations, Afghanistan cultivated some 209,000 hectares of opium poppy in 2013 which is an all-time record high. Most cultivation is concentrated in the south and southwestern provinces associated with the greatest insecurity (Rosen & Katzman, 2014, p. 3). The U.N. also estimated the Afghan Taliban generated US\$150 million from the opiate trade while Afghan drug traffickers, warlords, criminal, and other groups earned US\$2.2 billion of income from the drug trade (UNODC, 2011, p. 8). As the U.S. transitions counternarcotics operations to the Afghans, the SIGAR reports heroin seizures were down 77 percent and opium seizures were down 57 percent from the previous year (p. 9). In testimony before Congress, John Sopko stated “It is particularly important that we continue to mentor and assist the Afghan institutions responsible for countering the narcotics trade. They are the key to reversing cultivation and production trends that endanger every single thing we have tried to accomplish” (2014, p. 14). The U.S. government has spent at least US\$7 billion in counternarcotics assistance to Afghanistan since reconstruction and stability operations started in 2002 (Rosen & Katzman, 2014, p. 1). With recorded opium profits fueling Taliban and other Islamic extremist groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan and great regional insecurity, terror and criminal groups can act with impunity in the 70 percent of the Afghan country not in control by the central government. The situation looks like we are back to square one before the U.S. led invasion and that our US\$7 billion dollars was wasted save one thing. The Taliban and other terror groups are better funded now. Maybe that US\$7 billion dollars paid for teaching moments and lessons learned that America can apply to our drug production and trafficking problems at home and on both sides of our borders.

Conclusion

Each country in this region must put aside the mistrust and politics that have hindered coordinated efforts so far and combine with the world to stop the almost 350 tons of heroin emanating from Afghanistan each year. Additionally, the Afghan government needs to promote suitable alternative crops such as almonds, pomegranates, and garlic for farmers to grow that can

Hopeful Strategies and Misfires to Control Opiate Trafficking In and Around Afghanistan sustain an income to feed their families and support their villages. In order to reduce demand, governments need to follow Iran's lead and change their focus from punishing users to effectively treating them and preventing addiction. Countries need to reform not only their national police, but most importantly their regional and local police forces into professional forces with real field training. Strong anti-corruption measures and programs must be established at all levels. These are an essential part of the foundation of good governance which provides protection and security to all citizens that is the key to winning the hearts and minds of the people. With the American draw down in Afghanistan, the world as a whole, including the U.S., must focus on the counternarcotics efforts in the region and not turn their backs on the opium problem. Otherwise, any hard fought gains of the past twelve years will be lost. Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other regional countries in partnership with the United States and other nations require a comprehensive and collaborative strategy in order to abolish the cultivation, export and use of Afghan opium and heroin thereby reducing the toll opiate abuse takes on their citizens.

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