

Evaluation Report

Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme

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Name of Project	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Programme
Project Area	Afghanistan
Name of Donor	Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP), Government of Italy, UNICEF & USAID
Name of Implementing Agency	International Organisation for Migration
Evaluation Commissioning Agency	International Organisation for Migration
Evaluation Duration	11 June – 10 July 2006

Executive Summary

From March 2004 to June 2006, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) was one of the UNDP/Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme's (ANBP) Implementing Partners for the reintegration phase of the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) of the Afghan Military Forces (AMF). The the IOM's DDR project was funded by the ANBP, Government of Italy, USAID and UNICEF.

The reintegration methodology had the following three main projects and a number of additional components: Small Business Start-up, Agricultural Assistance, and Vocational Training/On-the-Job Training as well as Employment Assistance Centres, Micro Finance, Literacy Courses and Former Child Soldiers and Vulnerable Youth Group. The main conclusions and lessons learned can be summarised as follows:

Strengths:

- No direct cash assistance in business and agricultural start-up.
- Former combatants were asked to come up with their own business ideas.
- The caseworker approach was appropriate for dealing with irregular caseload influxes and ensured a positive rapport between the Project and former combatants.
- A high level of flexibility in dealing with crises and with the unexpectedly large size of caseloads.
- A pool of well-trained and conscientious caseworkers ready to deal with the caseload sensitively.
- The three quotation system for procurement, which ensured a high level of ownership, accountability and transparency.
- Up to 50% of small businesses and agricultural start-up projects visited showed signs of viability, and to some extent, sustainability.
- Adequate income from small businesses and agricultural start-up projects for basic needs and covering the costs of education and health.
- Indications of saving money to re-invest in small businesses.

- Good donor visibility with small businesses when necessary budgetary provisions made.
- Adequate duration, hands-on practice opportunity and targeted subject selection at vocational training courses.
- Good follow up employment creation projects for vocational training participants at the Mazar-i Sharif Reintegration Unit.
- The use of on-the-job training as a training and employment creation approach.
- Encouraging work undertaken by employment assistance centres in the identification and referral of local employment opportunities.
- Establishment of literacy courses accessible to the general public at the Herat Reintegration Unit.
- Good attempt at linking the reintegration assistance with long-term sustainability for small businesses through a micro-credit scheme at the Herat Reintegration Unit.
- Strong, flexible and well-managed performance of the Project from Summer 2005 onwards ensured the Organization became a highly valued implementing partner for the donor.

Weaknesses:

- The grant amount was too small to ensure the establishment of viable businesses in urban areas.
- The lack of a well thought-out database system at some reintegration units.
- The inadequate length of business training courses at some reintegration units, particularly for illiterate former combatants.
- The inadequate procurement of materials and equipment on behalf of former combatants during the pilot phase in at the Mazar-i Sharif Reintegration Unit.
- The illiteracy of former combatants was a major detrimental factor in the start-up phase of small businesses.
- The insistence on too many tranches for small business start-up during the pilot phase at the Mazar-i Sharif Reintegration Unit.

- The Donor's decision not to provide livestock to landless or displaced former combatants based on the negative experience with this approach during the pilot phase at the Mazar-i Sharif Reintegration Unit.
- The 'cut-and-paste' style of monitoring reporting.
- The use of grocery/general stores as a 'default' type of small business for former combatants without previous business experience or skills.
- The saturation of the market with the over-concentration on small businesses in a particular sector.
- Assisting former combatants to become a partner in an existing business may not have necessarily resulted in a genuine partnership.
- Over 10% of small businesses and agricultural start-up projects visited have already failed, while 40% of them were in a critical state and in need of further assistance.
- On the side of donors, the lack of follow up mechanisms in terms of micro credit for the small businesses created, and the general lack of a proper exit strategy.
- The overall inappropriateness of employment assistance centres to the economic context.
- The lack of capacity building and involvement of local authorities in the planning and implementation of literacy courses.
- The absence of any psycho-social element in the reintegration of child soldiers.

The following conclusions and lessons learned for the IOM's Management in Afghanistan:

- The project suffered from detrimental organisational environment owing to frequent changes in the Chief of Mission.
- There was a need for a clear organisational structure for the DDR Programme from the very beginning.
- There was a need for a Programme Manager and a clear identification of roles and responsibilities for international staff right from the beginning.

- There was inadequate harmonisation of working practice for the DDR Programme from March 2004 to Summer 2005.
- International staff appointed need to have a development background with specific expertise in reintegration projects.
- Programme changes can be achieved in a short period of time during the implementation process that will result in a drastic overall improvement in performance.

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Preamble

An evaluation of the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme in Afghanistan (hereinafter called the 'Project') was carried out by Dr Alpaslan Özerdem (hereinafter called the 'Consultant') from June 11 until July 10, 2006 which was commissioned by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (hereinafter called 'the Organization'). A mission to the Project area was undertaken by the Consultant from June 11 to July 2, 2006. A timetable of the evaluation can be found in Annex I.

The main aim of the evaluation was to assess the effectiveness, outcome and impact of the three reintegration projects and their additional components, their adherence to donor requirements and relevance to the reconstruction process in Afghanistan.

During his mission in Afghanistan the Consultant conducted interviews with Project staff, representatives of Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP), international and national NGOs operating in the Project area, service providers and beneficiary former combatants. A breakdown of interviewee groups can be found in Annex II.

In addition to a desk-based study of all relevant Project documents and reports, the Consultant collected most information through semi-structured interviews (91 former combatants, 22 IOM international and national staff, and 8 donor and implementing partner representatives) as well as from observations during field visits. A detailed explanation of evaluation methodology can be found in Annex III.

All comments, conclusions and recommendations in this Evaluation Report reflect the opinions of the Consultant only. The Terms of Reference for the Evaluation can be found in Annex IV.

Dr Alpaslan Özerdem
York, July 2006

Background

1. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) was one of the Implementing Partners (IPs) of the UNDP's Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) for the Reintegration component of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) of former combatants (FCs) in Afghanistan.
2. The ANBP's DDR process for the Afghan Military Forces (AMF) was initiated in 2003 and completed at the end of June 2006. In total, 62,044 members of the AMF were demobilised, and, 60,645 FCs had been referred to the personal reintegration option.
3. IOM's DDR Programme has reintegrated around 15,000 FCs, nearly 30% of the total caseload, through the Organization's three Reintegration Units (RU): North (Mazar-i Sharif), West (Herat), and Central and Southeast (Kabul).
4. The project in the North Region is funded by ANBP in two phases with a total budget of \$ 7.9 million. The North RU which was based in Mazar-i Sharif covered the provinces of Balkh, Faryab, Jawzjan, Samangan and Saripul. The Project in the North Region started during the ANBP's pilot phase in March 2004, while the main phase started in January 2005 and was completed in June 2006. The total number of FCs is 7,542 – pilot phase: 1,705 FCs and main phase: 5,837 FCs.
5. The following services were offered by the Mazar-i Sharif RU: small grant assistance for small business start-up; business training and counselling; agricultural and/or livestock start-up or restart; vocational training courses (VTCs); on-the-job training (OJT); and literacy courses. 50% of FCs opted for the agricultural option, while 40% asked for a small business grant and 10% participated in the VTCs and OJT.

6. For the implementation of the agricultural option, the Mazar-i Sharif RU contracted an international NGO, German Agro Action (GAA), and carried out the implementation of the small business component directly. Two national NGOs, Helping Afghan Farmers Organization (HAFO) and Mandish Rehabilitation Committee (MRC), were contracted to develop all activities concerned with VTCs. In agreement with the ANBP and after GAA's contract expired in October 2005, the Organization carried out the implementation of the agricultural component until the end of the Project. The VTCs were established in Balkh, Faryab and Jawzjan, covering the subjects of mechanics, carpentry, tailoring and metal-works.
7. The Project in the West Region was funded by the Government of Italy (GoI) with a budget of \$ 3.7 million. The West RU which is based in Herat covered the provinces of Badghis, Ghor, Herat, Farah and Shindand. The Project started in October 15, 2004 and will be completed in October 2006. The total number of FCs assisted in the West Region is 2,266.
8. The following services were offered by the Herat RU: small grant assistance for small business start-up; business training and counselling; VTCs; OJT and literacy courses. 90% of FCs opted for the small business option while the remaining 10% participated in VTCs and OJT. Two national NGOs, AREA and SDF were contracted to develop all activities for VTCs in Badghis, Ghor, Herat and Shindand, while the Organization implemented the small business option directly. The VTC subjects were masonry, small engine/generator repair, motorcycle repair, tailoring, carpentry, and welding.
9. Due to some problems with one of ANBP's IPs in Herat, ANBP requested the Organization to take over and deliver agricultural services to 512 FCs in Ghor and Herat. Funded by the ANBP with a budget \$ 0.5 million this project was implemented between March and June 2006.
10. The Project in the Central and Southeast Region was funded by ANBP with a total budget of \$ 5.4 million. The Central and Southeast RU which is based in Kabul covered the provinces of Ghazni, Kabul, Kapisa, Khost, Logar, Paktia,

Parwan and Wardak. With a total number of 4,949 FCs the Project was implemented between January 2005 and April 2006. The Kabul RU offered only the services of small grant assistance for small business start-up and business training and counselling.

11. The Organization has also started implementing a number of pilot projects in order to sustain reintegration activities of FCs such as Employment Assistance Centres (EACs), Micro-Credit and Reintegration of Child Combatants and Vulnerable Children in the Communities.
12. The main objective of EAC is to contribute to the social and economic reintegration of FCs who are skilled and/or who have graduated from the VTCs and are looking for jobs and employment. Their aim was to provide FCs with timely and unbiased information, counselling and employment referral services, with a view to identify and match their socio-economic needs and concerns; the project was financed by DDR/USAID. Two EACs were established as pilot projects in Mazar-i Sharif RU in July 2005 and Herat RU in November 2005.
13. The micro credit pilot project was set up in Herat in October 2006 with DDR/USAID funding with the objective of providing additional financial assistance to businesses established by the Project.
14. The project focussed on reintegration of child combatants aimed to assist underage FCs and war-affected youth to re-start education or learn new skills that would help them financially to support themselves and their families, as well as providing an alternative to military life. There is also a component aimed at strengthening community support systems by allowing the participation of the immediate family members and community leaders through dialogue and consultations. This project has just been initiated and assists 700 former child soldiers and other war-affected vulnerable youth in two western provinces of Afghanistan: Baghdis and Ghor. The project is funded by UNICEF and GOI.

Scope of Evaluation

15. **Objective 1:** To evaluate the effectiveness, outcome and impact of the three reintegration projects and their additional components, their adherence to donor requirements and their relevance to the process of reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Part 1: Programme specific – effectiveness, outcome and impact: their relevance to the needs of FCs and how successful they were in meeting those needs: What has been the output of those reintegration projects? How have these projects changed the reintegration prospects of FCs in terms of their employability and access to meaningful livelihoods?

- To analyze the reintegration package and methodology, and its effectiveness in reintegration of FCs: types of project, implementation process, organisational structures and processes, coordination among partners, etc.
- To evaluate the performance of beneficiaries: How successful were FCs in starting new businesses and finding employment after VTCs? What is the current and projected long-term sustainability of such businesses/employment?

Part 2: Adherence to donor requirements - how successful they were in meeting those benchmarks set by donors.

- To assess whether reintegration projects are fulfilling donors' requirements
- To evaluate the outcome and impact of the EACs, Micro Finance and UNICEF projects.

Part 3: Reintegration & Reconstruction

- To explore the ways in which IOM's DDR projects contribute to the overall reconstruction process in Afghanistan.

Objective 2: To assess the IOM's performance in DDR projects

- To assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of IOM's monitoring and controlling mechanisms and procedures along with coordination between offices.
- To assess the strategies and actions taken to ensure donor visibility.
- To analyze IOM's cooperation and coordination with the Project's donors, government and local authorities.

Findings

Small Grant Assistance for Small Business Start-up & Business Training and Counselling

16. The provision of small grant assistance of \$ 700 for small business start-up consisted of four main phases: business training, assessment of project proposal, delivery of assistance and monitoring. The entire process based on the procurement and delivery of equipment and materials for the initiation of a new business or the strengthening of an existing one. There was no cash provision, apart from paying rent for shop premises in some cases.
17. The main complaint from FCs regarding small business start-up was the size of assistance available. The majority of FCs thought that \$ 700 was too small in size to establish a viable business. This was particularly the case for those FCs living in urban areas, especially Kabul, as they had to budget for much larger overhead costs such as higher rents.
18. It was implemented through a caseworker approach in which a caseworker dealt with a FC from the beginning to the end of small business establishment. Each caseworker could work through all stages of the process. Having a pool of trained caseworkers who could undertake tasks in all stages of the process meant a high level of flexibility for the Organization. This approach was also particularly effective in the establishment of a productive rapport and confidence between FC and caseworker.
19. Having been registered as a beneficiary after their referral to the Organization by ANBP, each FC enrolled on the small business option went through a business training and counselling process. The duration of this training varied among the three RUs: Kabul – one to three days; Mazar-i Sharif – five days; Herat – initially 10 days then five days. Considering that up to 80% of FCs who benefited from this option, were illiterate, the short duration of business

training at some RUs should be considered as a point of concern. Although, the majority of FCs interviewed confirmed their satisfaction with the business training process, those FCs assisted by the Herat RU seemed to have benefited from it more as they showed a greater understanding of how to run a small business.

20. The quality of database systems and record-keeping on FCs showed variations among the three RUs. The Herat RU had the most detailed and functional database system. One of the main problems with the evaluation methodology was to find the location of FCs at the addresses provided by them. This was particularly a major problem with at the Mazar-i Sharif RU. The addresses taken during the registration phase were not sufficiently detailed to find FCs easily. As there is no proper address system in the country, the information should have included detailed directions.
21. The IOM staff pointed out two main reasons for carrying out a short duration of business training: first, it was thought that a longer period of training would have meant a greater burden of travel and accommodation expenses for those FCs who lived far away from their RU. The second reason related to the way FCs were sent by ANBP in an ad-hoc manner, causing large influxes during certain periods. It is clear that the second reason was out of the Organization's control, but with the first one, the provision of business training in various provincial centres and small financial assistance for those travelling from remote areas could have ensured a longer period of this training. The duration of business training was particularly important as this was the main opportunity for most FCs to receive counselling and finalize their initial business ideas. A considerable number of FCs pointed out that the main benefit of business training for them was to explore their ideas with trainers and receive advice on the viability and sustainability of these ventures.
22. In the case of illiterate FCs, caseworkers wrote project proposals on their behalf and in some cases they were helped by literate FCs. This process was dealt with diligently by caseworkers as almost all FCs pointed out their satisfaction with the assistance they received from their caseworkers.

23. The most contentious and difficult phase in the small business provision was the assessment of the project proposals. During the Pilot Phase at the Mazar-i Sharif RU, it was the Project staff who decided on the sources of materials and equipment on the basis of their initial market research. Materials and equipment were delivered to FCs at their business premises. However, the Herat and Kabul RUs used the three quotations system in which the Organization chose the cheapest option among three quotations provided for each item of materials and equipment. Based on the positive feedback received on the three quotation system, the Mazar-i Sharif RU switched to this system in their main phase.
24. The main difficulty with the three quotation system was with illiterate FCs as they found it difficult to find and verify quotations according to the guidelines provided by the Organization. On the other hand, this system provided a high level of transparency and accountability. Almost all FCs interviewed expressed their satisfaction with this system as they knew exactly how much was spent on their businesses. The system also provided greater ownership of the process and allowed FCs to gain experience in how to source and procure the best available items for their businesses.
25. It was also in this phase that FCs had to deal with the legal papers relating to their businesses. As was the case with the three quotation system, illiterate FCs found the preparation of these papers much more difficult than the literate ones. Some FCs complained that they had to visit their RU for over 20 times in order to sort out their quotations and legal papers. In some cases there were considerable delays in the establishment of businesses. Some FCs had to wait for over two months, although this was the case for only a minority of cases. Most FCs started their business within 20 days of the completion of their business training.
26. The main issue in the delivery phase was the number of tranches for the provision of equipment and materials. During the Pilot Phase at the Mazar-i Sharif RU there were over three to four tranches in some cases. Dividing the

assistance over too many tranches like this meant that the assistance provided was not more than \$ 200 at each tranche which in turn had a detrimental impact on the viability of businesses. The method of many tranches seem to have been used to keep FCs busy over a long period of time and they could be under close supervision by the Project staff. However, this approach did not have any meaningful benefit in ensuring the long-term sustainability of businesses. Those FCs who received their assistance over one or a maximum of two tranches felt that they could use the budget available for their business establishment more effectively.

27. The Project maintained good monitoring and record keeping of small businesses. It was encouraging to note that caseworkers carried out necessary monitoring visits between tranches. However, some monitoring reports give the impression of a 'cut-and-paste' approach as they repeat similar comments about all cases. It is good that monitoring reports allow a qualitative assessment of businesses with open-ended questions on their challenges and successes. However, it seems that writing reports in English may have been difficult for some national staff, resulting in the 'cut-and-paste' issue identified above.

General Observations and Recommendations on Small Business Option

28. It is encouraging that FCs were allowed to come up with their own business ideas. However, some of them could have benefited from closer mentoring/counselling on their business ideas. Possible weaknesses with their ideas could then have been detected at a much earlier stage. However, this would have required a business training period of a minimum five days and over.

29. It is surprising to see that the number of FCs who opted for VTCs are much smaller than those FCs who chose the small business option. It seems that a good proportion of FCs were choosing VTCs in the early stages of the DDR process, however, they must have thought that the easiest and quickest access

to their reintegration assistance would be through the small business option rather than participating in a VTC. This may have been the main reason why a large proportion of FCs have chosen the small business option at the time of their registration with ANBP. However, it is clear that this ran contrary to the very simple fact that not everybody has what it takes to be a business person or entrepreneur.

30. Running a business seemed to have been considered as the most suitable option for those who have no other skills. The Organization was unable to address this issue since FCs were referred to them by ANBP, having already made their choice of reintegration package. However, it is likely that a longer period of business training would have helped to eliminate those cases without any real interest in, or the requisite aptitude for, running a business. They could then have been referred back to ANBP to explore different options.
31. The three most important factors in the viability and sustainability of businesses were: whether FC had any previous business experience, whether the business existed before the assistance, and whether the FC had any personal savings to invest in the business.
32. It is unrealistic to expect that businesses would be viable and sustainable with such a relatively small initial capital sum for their establishment. On the other hand, it was encouraging to see that almost 50% of cases visited were showing signs of viability, although 10% of them had already failed. The remaining 40% of cases were in a critical state and in need of further assistance. In other words, the Organization has achieved a remarkable result with a high level of viable businesses, despite the relatively small initial capital. However, without further assistance the long-term sustainability of these businesses remains uncertain and they face considerable risks.
33. Their long-term sustainability is closely related to the overall economic environment in the country. For example, last year most businesses were enjoying a more conducive economic environment than this year. If the

current economic situation continues to deteriorate there may be a rapid increase in the number of failing cases.

34. Grocery/general stores seem to be the 'default' type of small business for all those FCs who have had no previous business experience or skills. FCs could/should have been encouraged to opt for other types of shops but the size of initial budget seems to be the determining factor. Most of the failing or critical cases were grocery stores and there may be a number of reasons for this. First, there are already many small size grocery shops in the country, since opening a grocery shop is seen as the easiest way of creating a means of livelihood in a time of high unemployment. Consequently, those FCs who opened up a grocery shop have simply added to an already saturated market. Secondly, some stock may have been consumed by FCs' families. Finally, most grocery shops sell their goods on credit, creating financial turnover and cash-flow problems. The location of a grocery shop would also play a significant role in its viability, but overall they seem to be the weakest type of small business.
35. The saturation of the market with the concentration of businesses in a particular sector, area or type of shop was not only impacting grocery shops. For example, 40 out of 150 'windows & doors' businesses in the Enjil *nahia* of Herat were those resulting from the reintegration assistance. They have already started to experience the results of this market saturation with most of them complaining about a major reduction in their profits. A more careful overview of business types and locations at each RU could have avoided the saturation problem to some extent.
36. Assisting FCs to become a partner in an existing business was a common pattern of reintegration support. This seemed to be particularly necessary from most FCs as the chances of opening a viable business with a budget of \$ 700 were rather slim. However, the visits to most of these cases failed to find FCs present at the business premises. There were always reasons given as to why the FC was not present, such as being away buying stock in rural areas or resting at home, etc. Whilst, these reasons may be true, being realistic, it is

also likely that many of them may already have left those partnerships, following completion of all tranches. Whether or not such a case may be considered as a failed business it is open to debate, but this possibility needs to be considered in determining the number of meaningful business opportunities created by the Project.

37. Overall, the small business option has provided opportunities for steady income and meaningful employment for at least half of those FCs who benefited from it. Most FCs pointed out that they would be highly reluctant to give up their business and join an armed group again.
38. The income derived from their businesses was enabling most FCs not only to cover basic needs but also other expenses such as the education of their children and health. Depending on their businesses, FCs claimed their monthly profits to be between US\$100 to 350. Again this claim may be true but it is also possible that what they declare is actually much less than their real profit, because claiming a low profit level may have been thought to be a way of attracting further assistance from the Organization. Although the Consultant clearly explained his external identity and the purpose of the evaluation, this would not necessarily have prevented FCs from claiming a lower range of profit. Actually, it is interesting to note that some FCs have indeed acknowledged this, once a more trustful rapport was established with them.
39. In some cases FCs have already started to save money from their earnings and to re-invest in their businesses. It was particularly encouraging to see that some FCs have already expanded their businesses or started supportive activities such as selling gas in addition to their grocery shop or employing people for tailoring while they continue with their normal businesses.
40. As regards donor visibility, this was only the case with the small business projects implemented by the Herat RU. There was a specific request from the GoI that budgetary allocation be made to enable the placing a metal sign with information on the funding and implementation of the project at the entrance of business premises. The majority of businesses visited had such a sign above

their doors. It was interesting to note that a majority of those FCs showed a good level satisfaction for having such donor visibility associated with their business premises.

Other Reintegration Options: Agricultural Assistance, VTCs and OJT

41. All agricultural cases that have shown a good indication of success at the Mazar-i Sharif RU were from the main phase and new caseload. After its disastrous experience with GAA in the provision of agricultural assistance and delivery of livestock, it was a critical decision that the Organization decided to run these projects directly. Those FCs who benefited from the GAA assistance concentrated their complaints in three main areas: first, they faced long delays in the delivery of assistance; second, they had concerns about the real value of livestock, seeds, fertiliser, and other materials and equipment delivered to them, as the process prevented their direct involvement in procurement and decision making; and finally, they were dissatisfied with the quality of livestock and other packages they were given, citing experiences such as their unhealthy state and inappropriateness for local climatic conditions.

42. The main failure of the Organization during this process seems to have been with the lack of monitoring of GAA's activities. This resulted in problems which emerged during the early days of the implementation being neglected and subsequently the response came too late for most FCs to benefit from this option. It was in response to the negative experience with the livestock option, that as of Summer 2005, the ANBP asked to the Organization and all the other implementing partners in Afghanistan to terminate this particular option completely. This knee-jerk reaction meant that some well-deserving cases for receipt livestock were unable to access such assistance. For example, a group of Pashtun villagers in Balkh Province, who had been displaced from their homes in a neighbouring province and had settled in a village, more than 100km away from their land and livelihoods, were forced to take the agricultural assistance option. However, the provision of seeds and fertilizers had no meaningful livelihood impact for those FCs because they were quite

unable to cultivate their land from such a distance. They claimed that they had used the seeds and fertilizers provided, but that due to drought and diseases they had lost their entire crop. However, a more plausible explanation would appear to be that they perhaps never used their assistance for cultivation but instead had sold it for cash, as the Organization had not verified their use. Those FCs pointed out that the provision of livestock would have been much more appropriate for their needs and realities of displacement, but this was not possible because of the ANBP's insistence on this issue.

43. The ANBP's decision on livestock was later revised with the Organization's request and for some special cases – disabled or elderly FCs – it was possible to provide livestock during the main phase and new caseload of the Mazar-i Sharif RU. In addition to this improvement, those agricultural assistance projects implemented directly by the Organization showed two main characteristics: an appropriate assistance for agricultural needs and the provision of good mentoring and advice in addition to material assistance. Such a package of agricultural assistance has provided a better prospect of effectiveness and sustainability.
44. It was interesting to note that those FCs who benefited from the agricultural option in the Mazar-i Sharif RU have maintained their war-time social relationships with other FCs and their immediate commanders. With group applications, the main line of cohesion seems to be a commander and his combatants. Although this may allow FCs to work cooperatively for their economic benefits, it may also be considered to run counter to the main objective of the ANBP's DDR strategy which is to weaken the links between FCs and their former commanders. This phenomenon was peculiar to the agricultural option, since to a large extent, small business and VTC options are reliant on the individual participation of FCs rather than the formation of beneficiary groups.
45. Less than 10% of the Organization's caseload opted for VTCs and OJT options. This is a surprising finding given the overall shortage of skilled people in the country. The primary reason for this might be related to the lack

of business-creation opportunities at the end of their VTCs. It is also possible that most FCs might have been more attracted to the small business option because of the possibility of cashing-in their equipment and goods if their business does not succeed, while the direct cash benefit of VTC was obviously limited. This was an important issue that should have been considered by the ANBP's strategy, with further comparable incentives being provided for those FCs who wanted to undertake a VTC.

46. At the Mazar-i Sharif RU two cycles of six-month VTCs were organized by HAFO on behalf of the Organization. At each cycle HAFO was told to expect around 100 FCs but the number of FCs who actually registered to take their VTCs were half of this expected number. It seems that after their registration and making an initial choice with their reintegration option with the ANBP, more FCs switched from the VTC to small business option. The VTCs provided showed a good balance of theory and practice, allowing participants to practice their chosen vocational skills as much as possible. The Organization has managed to form productive relationships with its implementing partners.

47. The VTC participants appear to have found an appropriate employment after their training either as an employee or as a self-employed person. The provision of tool-kits was significant in achieving this objective. The organisation of employment projects targeting those VTC participants is a good example of how to link training with employment. The USAID funded 'desks & chairs' project which was coordinated by the Organization is a praiseworthy undertaking. Those FCs who studied metal work were the only group of VTC participants who complained about their employment opportunities as they would need to invest a much larger capital to buy their most basic equipment and materials. Some expressed their regret that they had not chosen a different VTC subject.

48. The OJT option is probably one of the most suitable employment opportunity options provided to FCs. As it deals with the demand side of employment by providing assistance to employers as well as the supply side by training FCs, it

is a much more productive and targeted approach. Almost all FCs who benefited from the OJT option and their employers expressed their satisfaction with this scheme, as it seemed to make real sense for their employment/employee needs. The provision of a six-month, hands-on training experience with an income to both employer and employee with the provision of a tool-kit to FC at the end is a simple but highly effective idea.

IOM's Management

49. The overall mission environment for the Project was one of the most significant detrimental factors faced during the implementation process. There were a number of reasons for this. First, the frequent change of Chiefs of Mission (CoM) was not helpful in ensuring institutional continuity in the running of the mission. It seems that each CoM has brought his/her way of working, with principles, practices and preferences for various programmes. This was one of the detrimental factors raised by donors in their relationship with the Organization. The mission in general and the Project specifically could have benefited from greater organisational stability which could be in part, have been ensured by having fewer CoMs over the last couple of years.

50. The mission should have introduced a clear organisational structure for roles and responsibilities from the beginning of the Project. When the Consultant convened a workshop for the harmonisation of relationships and working practices between its three RUs in May 2005, one of the main challenges faced was the lack of leadership for the Project. The absence of a Programme Manager until Summer 2005 had a decisive impact on the development of different methodologies and implementation practices for the three RUs. Those differences were so obvious that the Organization was almost running three separate reintegration projects until this date. In addition to the absence of a Programme Manager, the lack of a clear managerial structure among international staff at the RU level added to the confusion in carrying out duties and taking responsibilities for problems.

51. During the above mentioned workshop the Consultant was particularly surprised at the unwillingness of some members of staff to cooperate with others and conform to a team-work structure. The Organization would benefit from a more careful recruitment policy for its staff. It is important that practitioners with a development background are given priority in recruitment for reintegration projects.
52. It was encouraging to see that the Action Plan decided at the end of the above mentioned workshop was implemented by the CoM at the time, and the Project had its first Programme Manager appointed in Summer 2005. This was clearly a critical turning point for the successful implementation of the Project. It is clear that the Programme Manager has managed to transform the Project from a process of chaotic implementation, to one characterisation by successful programmes of the mission. This turning point was underlined by all donor representatives and the Organisation's own staff. In addition to the appointment of a Programme Manager, the Project also benefited from a clear harmonisation and synchronisation of the implementation process.
53. As a result of the harmonisation of working practices among the three RUs that was achieved from Summer 2005 onwards, the management of the Project began to benefit from a high level of flexibility. Thereafter it became much easier to exchange staff between RUs, if and when this was necessary. It was this high degree of flexibility which, in turn, enabled the Organization to deal effectively with a number of crises as these emerged. As a result of problems inherited from the Pilot Phase of the Mazar-i Sharif RU, the Programme Manager was called upon to resolve a number of difficult situations and the organisational flexibility seems to have played a significant role in this process. It is also important to reiterate that the caseworker approach has been critical in further strengthening this flexibility.
54. It was owing to this flexibility that, when the ANBP had a problem with one of its other IPs in the implementation of agricultural options in the province of Ghor, the Organization was asked to take over the process for 512 angry and frustrated FCs. Most of them were waiting for their assistance for over a year

and the Project had only three months (March-June 2006) to implement it in a region which still faces high security risks. With its high flexibility and a large pool of well trained staff, the Project has successfully completed this project to the great relief of its donor.

55. In terms of adhering to donor requirements, as far as the ANBP is concerned there were three distinctive periods: the initiation of the Project in Mazar-i Sharif and all problems experienced with the implementation of agricultural projects, when the Project was far from meeting the donor's expectations. During the second period it seems the Project began to learn from its mistakes and improve its practice, which brought stabilization to the relationship with the ANBP. Finally, the Project began to perform above the expectations of the donor from November 2005 onwards.

56. It is interesting to note that, although the Organization began with a less than desirable record in the eyes of its donor, it has completed the process as one of the favourite IPs. Therefore, it was not surprising to see that as of July 2006, the ANBP has decided to work with the Organization for the implementation of a 10-month reintegration project for around 6,000 AMF officers who had been waiting to be incorporated in the new army but then had been directed towards the DDR option.

Employment Assistance Centres

57. EACs as a mechanism to strengthen employment opportunities are not the best possible approach in a country like Afghanistan. The main cause of the problem is not the lack of linkages between employers and employees, but the lack of employment opportunities in general consequently the implementation of EACs gives the impression of transferring a western-centric methodology to an unsuitable environment. This methodology has been tried in similar post-conflict environments with high unemployment rates such as Kosovo and the overall performance has been poor.

58. Unless there are radical improvements in dealing with the challenges faced by the supply side of the employment cycle in Afghanistan, the impact of initiatives like EACs is bound to be limited. Nevertheless, the EACs in Mazar-i Sharif and Herat have managed to identify and register a satisfactory number of employment opportunities. However, in addition to a lack of employment possibilities in their respective areas, both EACs found it difficult to convince potential employers, particularly local companies, to consider FCs as potential employees.
59. In Mazar-i Sharif these opportunities were mainly with international organisations – as of June 2006, 594 FCs were registered, 458 of them have been placed in employment and 249 of them were employed at the time. Out of 594 FCs registered with an EAC, 370 had benefited from the Organization’s reintegration options and these were primarily VTC and OJT participants. Meanwhile, in Herat the employment opportunities were mainly with local companies. As of June 2006, out of 530 EAC-registered FCs, only 126 of them were employed, although the EAC had made over 465 referrals.
60. The main reasons for a low retention were identified as: reluctance on the part of FCs to work in low paid jobs. They often considered the local market rate of \$3 a day for an unskilled labourer as too low, or found their work too hard and, in some cases, too far from their homes. Some of these reasons may be well justified at a personal level for most FCs, but such a low retention rate may also indicate that the FCs in question were perhaps not sufficiently in need of that particular income. Otherwise, considering the importance of being a ‘breadwinner’ for a man in Afghan society it would be hard to believe that an FC without any other source of income would choose to refuse an employment opportunity. Obviously, there may be some special cases of FCs who have no interest in holding regular employment but in general, the refusal of employment opportunities provided by EACs may point to the strong possibility of other means of income.
61. It should also be noted that the International Labour Office (ILO), in cooperation with an INGO and the Ministry of Labour, is working on a nation-

wide employment assistance project. One of the main reasons for creating EACs was the fact that ILO's EAC either refused or were unable to cater for FCs. ILO's EAC set up is such that can only assist skilled persons. The 80% of employment are with international NGOs. In other words, the early indications of this initiative are not encouraging; but the Organization's EACs would only be duplicating such a mechanism. It is important that the Organization would avoid the creation of parallel systems, which is critical for a more targeted utilisation of resources for the long-term recovery of Afghanistan.

Literacy Courses (LCs)

62. Considering that illiteracy is one of the most important challenges faced by the country, and up to 80% of FCs are illiterate the initiative of literacy courses – particularly those organised by the Herat RU, should be noted as timely and necessary. As of June 2006, there have been 39 LCs for 1081 male and 21 LCs for 557 female participants. Each LC lasts 12 months – 4 months for each of three levels. If requested by 5 FCs a LC can be established and it is open to community in general.

63. It is important to note that LCs have met with a huge demand from the public in general and this is a good sign for the recovery of post-conflict Afghan society. It was an appropriate decision to keep LCs open to the public, as this would play a significant role for the social reintegration of FCs. To see that the reintegration of FCs can also provide a tangible benefit to their immediate communities would strengthen the mutual trust and social capital between them. This is in fact a good example of how the reintegration process can be community based rather than dealing solely with FCs as individuals. It was also good that the Project tried to bring a progressive approach to the structure and content of its LCs. For example, it tried to make the content more specific to the needs of adult students by using examples from their immediate environment. Instead of following strictly the literacy course book provided by the Department of Literacy, the Project tried to adopt a more learner friendly approach.

64. These are all praiseworthy achievements, but it should also be noted that the involvement of the Department of Literacy in this process was very limited. It was towards the end of the project that they were encouraged to take a more active role, and in many respects, this was too little too late. It would have been much more beneficial for the Department and LCs in general if the Project had a stronger component of capacity building. This would have ensured a better transfer of know-how and experience gained from the Project's involvement in LCs.

65. A greater involvement of the Department of Literacy could have also reduced the Project cost to a certain extent, as the most expensive item in the budget was the monitoring of LCs. A greater involvement of this local authority and communities in general in checking and control mechanisms would have been beneficial for the Project directly. More importantly, this would have avoided the creation of parallel systems and duplication.

Reintegration of Child Soldiers

66. It is not clear how the reintegration approach for 'child soldiers' differentiates from mainstream DDR approaches. It seems that the desire to be seen to be doing something for child soldiers was more significant for the donor than coming up with a targeted plan for the specific needs of this particular caseload. Overall, in the context of Afghanistan the notion of categorizing young men between the ages of 14 and 18 as 'child soldiers' is a problematic one. Being labelled 'child soldiers' may be considered an insult by the very target group the project is intended to benefit since unfortunately, although there are many children, childhoods are rather short in Afghanistan.

67. Having categorized them as a special group one would expect that there would be a strong psycho-social element incorporated into their reintegration process, but the pilot project for 22 child FCs implemented by the Organization consisted of only VTC and LC provisions.

68. The new UNICEF initiative for the reintegration of 700 war-affected youth is good at involving the Ministry of Social Affairs in the process right from the beginning. The Organization is well-placed to play an active role in this process with its experience of the reintegration of child soldiers and reintegration of FCs in general. However, it is important to note that the selection phase of this project is likely to be contentious and open to manipulation as it seems that the way the project was conceptualised and structured is vulnerable to manipulation. For the sake of the good reputation of the Organization in the area, it will be necessary to take extra care in the implementation of this project.

Micro-Credit Programme

69. The project was initiated with USAID funding of \$ 100,000 in October 2005. As a pilot project, it targeted 600 FCs, working in a 20 km radius of the Herat RU. There are three Loan Officers (LO) and each LO works with 15-20 groups and in each group there are around 15-20 FCs. In each group there is a team leader, secretary and cashier. The local Mullah acts as the area leader, with responsibility of confirming that all applicants are from his area and are trustworthy. All new loan decisions are made with the agreement of all FCs in that group. There are three levels of credit: 4,000-10,000 Afs with 2% pm IR & payment over 3 months; 10,000-30,000 Afs with 1.5% pm IR & payment over 24 weeks. 30,000-50,000 Afs with 1% pm IR & payment twice a month. As of June 2006, there are 31 groups and the scheme has dispersed 5 million Afs (\$100,000) and re-collected around 2 million Afs.

70. As it was initiated as a pilot project, this micro-credit scheme has a very limited coverage area. This may have helped to keep the running costs of the scheme to a minimum - the team uses motorbikes to access FCs, but it assists those FCs who are in the city centre with much larger business opportunities than those who are in rural parts of Herat and other provinces covered by the

Herat RU. The scheme has been successful in dispersing and re-collecting credits, but this may be due to the fact most of its target group had already been doing well with their business and were seeking extra cash for expansion rather than to strengthen struggling businesses.

71. However, more fundamentally, it does not make much sense that this project was initiated as a pilot project without much prospect of funding for the continuation of the project. The assurances had been given by the USAID that if the pilot project proved successful, it would provide a substantial amount of funding for the continuation of the project. However, it seems that the donor's interest in DDR changed with the arrival of new Head and all DDR funding stopped within one month. Consequently, having raised expectations among FCs in the area, the next critical question will be how to hand-over this scheme to a local organisation. In other words, although the scheme itself proved to be successful it now faces its biggest litmus test, that of long-term sustainability.

72. On the other hand, this micro-credit scheme is an excellent example of a good exit strategy for DDR programmes in general. The international community's record in linking the reintegration assistance with long-term sustainability is rather poor around the world, and this pilot project in Herat provides a glimmer of hope. One of the most common concerns and requests raised by FCs during this evaluation was the need for further assistance as they could only initiate their business with a limited capital of \$700 and they needed further assistance for strengthening and expansion. In an environment like this the provision of a micro-credit scheme can be a well-targeted approach, playing a significant role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of small businesses created by the Project.

Linking Reintegration with Reconstruction

73. The direct contribution of reintegration projects to the reconstruction of Afghanistan cannot be considered in isolation from the ANBP's overall DDR

strategy. The way in which the whole process was both conceptualised and implemented has resulted in a number of shortcomings. First of all, the strategy has had hardly any element of capacity building. Although there were structures of involvement for local actors as far as the institutional rhetoric is concerned, in reality the DDR process was very much an externally planned and implemented process. Therefore it is not surprising to see that the ANBP found it difficult to come up with any credible exit strategy for the process. There are hardly any national structures that have been created and strengthened during the implementation process, which could now take the baton from the ANBP and continue working on the challenges of long-term reintegration.

74. Secondly, the process paid hardly any attention to the understanding and sensitisation of the overall reintegration environment. The entire process suffered from a limited understanding of how the reconstruction of Afghanistan could benefit from the DDR process. Therefore, it would be unrealistic to claim that the reintegration process actually has had any significant and targeted impact on the reconstruction process. However, if the argument is perceived from a trickle-down perspective, so that each business created or each FC trained is seen as a direct contribution to the reconstruction process, then it would be possible to claim that the Project may have had positive impacts on Afghanistan's reconstruction process.

75. To assess the impact of reintegration on the reconstruction process is particularly difficult as the ANBP has not set clear long-term goals, or socio-economic objectives and how they would be measured. More importantly, the DDR process suffered from a lack of overall vision concerning how different IPs and their work would be able to contribute to this process. Therefore, it is not possible to determine what was, or could have been, the specific role of the Organization as an IP in the wider framework of reintegration and how the Project has or has not contributed towards this.

76. Moreover, the weakest part of the ANBP's DDR strategy seems to be the reintegration phase and this is highly ironic considering that the ANBP was

created under the auspices of UNDP – the UN’s development agency. If it is evaluated on what the UNDP claims should be the principles that underpin a reintegration process, and the objectives it should strive to achieve such as local ownership, capacity building, greater integration with local economic mechanisms, and wider community involvement, the DDR strategy in Afghanistan appears to have failed on almost all counts.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Small Business Option

77. The methodology adopted for the small business option, which was based on a caseworker system, worked effectively, providing a great level of flexibility in responding to ad-hoc caseloads influxes.
78. The methodology was right to adopt a non-cash provision policy which played a critical role for the motivation of FCs in taking small business creation seriously.
79. The methodology was also effective for being process-centred rather than goal-oriented only. This meant that the project implementation process with the preparation of three quotations, and sourcing of goods and equipment acted as an important preparatory work for business life.
80. The Project needed a more effective database system that started with its initiation. The addresses kept in the database needed to be more specific and include detailed directions.
81. The Project ensured a commendable rapid response duration of 20 days for small business projects.

82. The business training duration of one or two days was too short. Although there were budgetary constraints imposed by the donor and the receiving of caseloads in an ad-hoc manner made preparatory work difficult, nevertheless the Project should have strived for a better performance with this. A longer period of business training could have given the opportunity for a greater scope with counselling and business guidance.
83. In order to avoid causing inconvenience by asking FCs to travel to RUs during the business training, the Project could have explored options for providing these courses in provincial centres. As was the case with Herat RU with the funding from GoI, the provision of assistance with the cost of travel during the business training could have made it possible to extend the duration of the courses run by the Kabul RU. A longer period of business training was particularly necessary considering that a great majority of FCs were illiterate.
84. The three-quotation system was bound to be a challenging process for FCs, particularly for those who lacked basic literacy skills, but the Project was effective in dealing with those cases and made sure that those FCs could receive the extra support they needed and the caseworker system played a significant role in this.
85. The assistance for the creation of small business is more effective when it is not divided into too many tranches. The initial approach taken by the Mazar-i Sharif RU in dividing the assistance over four or more tranches was not suited to business realities.
86. The monitoring forms should have a combination of multiple-choice and open ended questions in order to avoid 'cut-and-paste' replies by caseworkers. The multiple-choice questions can try to establish how much profit is made, how much stock is in the shop, how many orders have been taken for forthcoming months, etc. The open ended questions would be fewer and more qualitative, based on the caseworker's observations.

87. Grocery/general stores as a default type of shop for those FCs without any skills should be avoided as these businesses were simply adding to an already saturated market. The saturation of the market resulting from the provision of small business assistance in certain sectors can be avoided by a more careful coordination of activities at the Project level.
88. Assisting FCs to become partners in existing business is a good response to the small size of funding available, but it was not possible to verify whether these partnerships, were genuine and on-going.
89. At least 40% of the small businesses created would require further assistance with strengthening and expansion. Without a micro-credit or loan system that to support these businesses over the next three-to-five years, their current viability is likely to be drastically reduced.

Agricultural, VTC and OJT Options

90. The agricultural packages should be as inclusive as possible. The prohibition on the provision of a particular item such as livestock, based on previous experiences, cannot be a wise solution for the realities of the agricultural environment.
91. The agricultural support should not be limited to the provision of seeds, fertilizers, and other necessary equipment and materials. The Project was right to provide a package of training, advice and counselling during the main phase and new caseload at the Mazar-i Sharif RU.
92. The formation of beneficiary groups may be counter-productive against the DDR strategy's main objective which was the break down of relationships between commanders and their combatants.

93. The VTC option is only effective in the provision of skills. If they are to prove successful in the provision of employment the package will need to include more than just the provision of a tool-kit at the end.
94. Owing to its small caseload for VTCs the Project did not encounter any major problems and adopted a number of effective strategies, like creating production opportunities for the graduates of those VTCs. It is through such commendable work that the Organization has established mutually beneficial relationships between its service providers and beneficiaries.
95. There could have been more scope to widen the scale of the OJT option. This is one of the most effective ways of addressing the employment needs of FCs and, due to its direct contribution to the supply side a prominent place within reintegration packages could have been beneficial for all parties concerned.

IOM's Management

96. The Organization should ensure a more stable institutional environment by not changing its CoM too frequently.
97. The programmes such as DDR require a clear organisational structure concerning roles and responsibilities for all international and national staff.
98. It is critical that the Organization ensures a harmonisation and synchronisation of working practices among its different field offices.
99. The recruitment process for staff for reintegration programmes should place a premium on those with a development background and expertise.
100. The Organization's response to the need to create a Programme Manager post needed to be quicker. With the arrival of a Programme Manager the Project experienced a major positive turning point, which played a

significant role in the way the Organization completed the process as one of the donor's favourite IP.

Other Programme Elements

101. EACs do not constitute the most suitable assistance method for the realities of Afghanistan. Given there are already similar undertakings by other international and national agencies, the Organization should stop running this component when its donor funding comes to an end in October 2006.
102. The Project was right to deal with the challenge of illiteracy. However, LCs needed to have a much stronger capacity building component and to ensure the involvement of the Department of Literacy in their planning and implementation.
103. The effective reintegration of child soldiers requires a strong psycho-social element in the programme, but the way the donor has dealt with this issue does not seem to provide a meaningful approach to the challenge. The selection of beneficiaries for the new UNICEF programme for war-affected youth is likely to be contentious, requiring extra care and attention.
104. The micro credit initiative was a praiseworthy undertaking for the provision of linkages between initial reintegration assistance and long-term sustainability. However, its size and scope are very limited and unless the donor community pays further attention to this, it is likely to remain as a pilot project. Nevertheless, it is still important that the Organization ensures a smooth hand-over for this important initiative to a suitable local organisation in Herat.

Annex 1: Timetable

June																				July				
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3-10		
Kabul																								
			Mazar-i Sharif																					
								Kabul																
										Herat														
															Kabul									
																Bamyan								
																		Kabul						
																					UK			

Annex II: Breakdown of Interviewee Groups

Number of Interviews (according to regions): 121

	Kabul	Mazar-i Sherif	Herat
FCs	27	32	32
IOM	9	5	8
Donor	2	2	3
Int./Local NGOs		1	
Total	38	40	43

Interviews with programme beneficiaries

	North	West	Central/Southeast
Agriculture	12		
Small Business	17	29	27
VTCs + OJT	3	3	
Total	32	32	27

Annex III: Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation employed a qualitative methodology in which interviews and observation were the main data gathering techniques. From 11 June to 1 July, 121 interviews were carried-out, 91 of which were with former combatants.

Interviews with former combatants were conducted through a ‘conversational’ approach and based on open-ended questions. The duration of these interviews varied from 15 to 45 minutes, depending on the type of business, willingness of former combatants, and how busy they were at the time of the interview. One of the main challenges with these beneficiary interviews was the problem of locating former combatants. Although the visits sometimes started with a list of 15-20 beneficiaries, only half of them were found at their business premises. This was particularly the case with the Mazar-i Sharif RU.

There were a number of reasons for this. First, as there is not a proper address system in the country, the information for addresses needed to be in terms of detailed directions, otherwise the challenge of finding FCs was too difficult to overcome. Secondly, it seemed that FCs may have given false names and addresses especially during the pilot phase of the Project at the Mazar-i Sharif RU. This is not surprising considering that FCs did not have much trust in the continuation of the DDR process at the time. However, it may have also been a result of fake registration, which is believed to be a common phenomenon with the DDR process in general. Some former combatants may have also been known by their ‘nicknames’ that had not been placed on their records.

Having selected a list of possible FC interviewees based on their location, type of business, date of project completion, number of tranches, and background of FCs, the interviews were carried out at the location of their business premises, farms or wherever they could be located – at their home, local café or mosque garden. It

was not always possible to ensure privacy for interviews as those visits always attracted the attention of neighbours, friends and passer-bys.

For security reasons it was not possible to visit projects in all provinces. The situation was particularly restrictive at the Mazar-I Sharif and Herat RUs. Most projects visited were in urban areas. Although this bias was addressed by visiting as many projects in rural areas as possible, it remained as a bias to a large extent.

Most interviewee FCs were willing to participate in the evaluation, but it should be noted that there was also a certain level of tiredness due to answering similar questions at previous monitoring and evaluation phases. The conversational approach was useful to overcome this interview fatigue to a certain extent.

In some cases it was felt that the interviewees were trying to show their gratitude and hospitality by giving what they perceived to be positive answers to questions. In order to overcome this particular bias, a selection of probing questions from different perspectives was employed. A clear explanation of the Consultant's role as an external evaluator also helped to reduce the risk of this sort of bias.

On the other hand, FC interviewees seemed to be stating their income deliberately low in order to increase their chance of receiving further assistance from the Organization. Post-visit conversations with national staff were used to identify some of these cases and the triangulation of answers with the observation of the business premises were also effective in forming a more balanced opinion on the viability and sustainability of businesses.

The interviews with the Organization's national staff were usually carried out individually but sometimes as groups in order to share the experiences of as many national staff as possible. Those interviews like the ones with international staff and donor representatives were around 45 minutes. The focus group interviews with national staff were around two hours.

A great majority of FC interviews were with those who had benefited from the small business option, as all VTCs were already completed at the time of the

evaluation or they had been in provinces that were not accessible due to a deteriorating security environment.

It was not possible to interview any representatives from the Italian Embassy as the donor of the DDR programme at the Herat RU either.

All interviews with the Organization's national and international staff, and donor representatives were carried out in English. All FCs were interviewed with the help of national staff as translators. It should be noted that this may have affected the way FCs answered interview questions. Efforts were made to reduce the risk of this bias by posing questions from different angles for triangulation.

Annex IV: Terms of Reference

Evaluation of “Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme” (DDR)

1. Evaluation Rationale

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been contracted by the UNDP’s Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) and Italian Government to implement the Reintegration component of DDR Programme in North, West, Central and Southeast Regions of Afghanistan. Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) is mandated through the United Nation's Development Programme. It aims to reintegrate personnel from the Afghan Military Forces (AMF) back into society after over twenty years of armed conflict. This is in accordance with the wishes of the International Community, the Government of Afghanistan and as set out in the Bonn Agreement. In October 2003, ANBP commenced several pilot projects which rolled into a national programme in May 2004. The programme disarmed, demobilized and provided funded personal reintegration options for all AMF personnel that voluntarily chose to participate. When the UN programme closed to new personnel in July 05, 63,380 former officers and soldiers of the AMF voluntarily disarmed. 62,044 proceeded to demobilize and 60,645 choose a personal Reintegration option. The UN programme concludes in June 06.

IOM is one of ANBP’s major implementing partner for the reintegration part of the programme. IOM was assigned to assist reintegration of 30% of the total caseload under three different reintegration projects for former combatants (FCs) in three different geographical areas:

1) **North region:** The project in the North Region is funded by ANBP in two phases with the total budget of 7.9 million USD. IOM Mazar-i-Sharif Reintegration Unit (RU), based in IOM’s Mazar-i-Sharif office, covers the provinces of Balkh, Samangan, Faryab, Jawzjan, and Saripul. The project started during the UNDP/ANBP’s pilot phase in March 2004. The main phase of the project started in January 2005 and will continue until the end of June 2006. The total number of registered FCs is 7542 (pilot phase: 1705 FCs; main phase: 5837 FCs).

The Mazar-i-Sharif RU offers to the FCs the following services:

- Small grant assistance for small business start-up,
- Business training and counselling,
- Agricultural and/or livestock start-up or restart,
- Vocational training,

- On the job training,
- Literacy courses

The IOM Mazar-i-Sharif RU has so far assisted a total of 7058 FCs with different reintegration options. Out of this number 3711 FCs (50%) opted for (re)-starting agriculture and/or livestock activities, 2677 FCs (40%) decided to start or expand their small businesses while 670 FCs (about 10%) opted for participating in the vocational and on-the-job training courses.

The Mazar-i-Sharif RU is directly implementing the small business component of the programme and it has selected an international NGO, German Agro Action (GAA) for the implementation of all the activities concerned with agriculture and livestock (re-)start-up. Two local NGOs, Helping Afghan Farmers Organization (HAFO) and Mandish Rehabilitation Committee (MRC), have been selected to develop all activities concerned with Vocational training courses. In agreement with the ANBP and after GAA's contract expired in October 2005, IOM started direct implementation of agricultural component of the project.

The following training courses were established in Balkh, Jawzjan and Faryab provinces:

- Mechanic,
- Carpenter,
- Tailor,
- Metalworker.

In the case of small business and agriculture/livestock, the RU unit delivers the materials, equipment, as well as livestock directly to FCs. Small business training is provided to all FCs selecting small business component of the project during five days. It includes the preparation of the business plan.

2) West region: This project is funded by the Italian Government in the total amount of 3 million EUROS (3.7 million USD). IOM Herat RU covers the provinces of Herat, Shindand, Badghis, Ghor and Farah. The programme started in October 15th, 2004 and was recently extended until the end of October 2006. The total number of FCs registered is 2266.

The Herat RU offers to the FCS the following services:

- Small grant assistance for small business start-up,
- Business training and counselling,
- Vocational training
- On the job training,

- Literacy courses.

The current number of FCs assisted under this project is 2226. Out of this number 2024 FCs (about 90%) opted for the small business grants for starting and re-starting their businesses and 202 FCs (10%) for vocational and on-the-job training assistance. Prior to the approval of the grants, former combatants receive a 10 days business training during which the business plan is prepared. Vocational training schemes are provided by two local NGOs, AREA and SDF, both of which are IOM's implementing partners. 198 FCs, 48 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and 48 disabled persons have enrolled in the vocational training schemes, established in Herat, Shindan, Farah, Badghis and Ghor where they receive training in the following courses:

- masonry,
- small engine/ generator repair,
- motorcycle repair,
- tailoring,
- carpentry,
- welding.

One hour of literacy courses is provided during the vocational training.

Due to some problems with one of ANBP's implementing partners in Herat, UNDP/ANBP requested IOM to take over the caseload and deliver agricultural services to 512 FCs in Ghor and Herat. This project is funded by UNDP/ANBP in total amount of 0.5 million USD. The project started in March 2006 and is due to be completed by the end of June 2006.

3) Central and Southeast regions: This project is funded by ANBP in total amount of 5.4 million USD. IOM Kabul RU covers the provinces of Kabul, Parwan, Kapisa, Wardak, Ghazni, Khost, Logar and Paktia. This project started in January 2005 and is due to be completed at the end of April 2006. The total number of registered FCs is 4949.

The Kabul RU offers to the FCs the following services:

- Small grant assistance for small business start-up/expansion,
- Business training and counselling.

A total of 4814 FCs have been assisted so far. Prior to the approval of the small business a five days training is held, during which former combatants prepare their business plan.

In addition to these existing projects, IOM has developed and started implementing a number of pilot projects in order to sustain reintegration activities of former combatants. These projects were added outside of the original framework of the DDR programme, in response to needs that were not being met. These projects are as follows:

Employment Assistance Centres. This project is designed to contribute to the social and economic reintegration of former combatants who are skilled and/or who have graduated from the vocational training centres and are looking for jobs and employment. The project of setting up Employment Assistance Services (EAC) where former combatants are provided with timely and unbiased information, counselling and employment referral services, with a view to identify and match the socio-economic needs and concerns of the former combatants is financed by DDR/USAID.

Through this project, IOM aims to provide viable socio-economic opportunities for former combatants. In this respect, building linkages among all stakeholders involved will serve to amplify the positive impact of reintegration projects within, and beyond, the assisted communities. Furthermore, associating the local economic fabric to returnee reintegration initiatives will contribute to the revitalization of Afghanistan's labour market and encourage the insertion of former combatants in local communities. Two EACs were set up as a pilot projects in Mazar-i-Sharif (July 2005) and Herat (November 2005) offices.

Micro credit. There are almost 10.000 FCs who received business training and business support grants under the IOM reintegration programme. Most of these FCs have viable projects and need additional capital assistance to sustain their businesses. In fact some of these businesses employ at least two or three workers per shop. Through its micro credit and savings scheme project, IOM can constantly assist these businesses and at the same time achieve a more sustainable civilian reintegration. The micro credit pilot project is set up in Herat in October 2006 with DDR/USAID funding.

Reintegration of Child Combatants and Vulnerable Children in the Communities. The overall goal of the project is to provide reintegration projects that will allow former underage soldiers and war-affected youth to restart education or learn a new skill that will help them financially support themselves and their families, as well as provide an alternative to military life. There is also a component of strengthening of community support systems by allowing the participation of the immediate family members and community leaders through dialogue, consultations and, perhaps, workshops. This projects plans to assist 730 former child soldiers in two western provinces of Afghanistan: Ghor and Badghis. The project is funded by UNICEF and the Italian Government.

2. Objectives of the Evaluation:

The main objective of the evaluation is to **evaluate the effectiveness, outcome and impact of the three reintegration projects and their additional components, their**

adherence to donor requirements and their relevance to the reconstruction process of Afghanistan.

The reintegration methodology will be closely analyzed. The evaluation will also examine IOM's implementation strategy as well as its overall performance in fulfilling the outputs described in the project documents.

More specifically, the purpose of the evaluation exercise will be:

- To analyze reintegration methodology used to assist FCs under DDR Programme;
- To analyze the design of the reintegration package provided to FCs and its effectiveness in contributing to their successful reintegration;
- To assess the flexibility of the reintegration package for returnees with varying demographic profiles;
- To evaluate the beneficiaries' performance with small business start up and other reintegration options offered through reintegration projects;
- To assess whether reintegration projects are fulfilling donors requirements;
- To evaluate the outcome and impact of the EACs, Micro Finance and UNICEF projects on vulnerable FCs' target groups requiring further support.
- To explore the ways in which IOM's DDR Projects contributes to the overall DDR Programme in Afghanistan;

IOM's Management:

- To assess the performance and achievements attained in the implementation of the project based on initial purposes and outputs as described in the project proposals;
- To analyze strength and weaknesses of the IOM project's strategy and draw lessons to prepare for similar DDR projects in the future;
- To assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of IOM's monitoring and controlling mechanisms and procedures along with coordination between offices;
- To assess the strategies and actions taken to ensure donor visibility;
- To analyze IOM's cooperation and coordination with projects' donors, government and local authorities

- To assess the role and function of the Implementing Partner’s coordination meetings and the flexibility and involvement of donors in the implementation process.

3. Methodology

The evaluation will require visits to Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat in Afghanistan, interviews with beneficiaries, IOM staff and donor representatives as well as local government representatives, and review of project related documents and statistical data.

Sources of information will include:

- Project documents and progress reports;
- Interviews conducted with programme beneficiaries around Afghanistan;
- Interviews with donor representatives;
- Interviews with government counterparts in Afghanistan;
- Interviews with involved IOM staff in Afghanistan
- Any other relevant IOM documentation that could be made available by IOM

The possibility of financing and conducting a small survey among beneficiaries in order to collect data on the reintegration component will be examined as an alternative to focus group discussions and interviews. In that perspective, budget allocation for the survey and for the overall evaluation exercise will be monitored closely by IOM Kabul.

4. Evaluation team and implementation arrangements

The evaluation team should consist of a consultant with a profound background in international programme evaluation in post conflict environment and experience in field-based research. Knowledge of DDR programmes and reintegration activities in general is crucial. Familiarity with Afghanistan is an asset. The consultant/consultant firm should also have excellent analytical and English-language drafting skills.

The Chief of Mission and DDR Programme Manager in Afghanistan will manage the evaluation exercise with the technical assistance of relevant departments at IOM Headquarters. IOM Kabul will agree on the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, coordinate the recruitment of the consultant, guarantee the availability of necessary documentation and information, coordinate the arrangement of necessary interviews and travels, comment on the draft report and endorse the final report.

5. Indicative timetable

It is estimated that 25 working days will be sufficient for completing the exercise. A tentative schedule could be as follows:

Initial and final briefings in Kabul:	2 days
Review of relevant documents and statistics:	2 days
Field visits and interviews in Afghanistan:	15 days
Preparation of draft report:	4 days
Preparation of final report:	2 days

The final report reflecting the expected outputs as described in the ToRs should be made available no later than 10th July 2006.