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Research and
Evaluation Unit

Research for a better Afghanistan

drugs
&
(dis)order 

Peace and illicit drugs at the margins:

A borderland view of Afghanistan's SDG 16



Dr Orzala Nemat
August 2021

Photograph of catapult used to smuggle
cannabis, opiates or methamphetamine across
the border with Iran.

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About Drugs & (dis)order

'Drugs & (dis)order: building sustainable peacetime economies in the aftermath of war' is a four-year Global Challenges Research Fund project generating new evidence on how to transform illicit drug economies into peace economies in Afghanistan, Colombia and Myanmar.

It is an international consortium of internationally recognised organisations with unrivalled expertise in drugs, conflict, health and development. Led by SOAS, University of London, project partners are: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), Alcis, Christian Aid, Kachinland Research Centre (KRC), London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), Organization for Sustainable Development and Research (OSDR), Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA), PositiveNegatives, Shan Herald Agency for News (SHAN), Universidad de los Andes, and Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

Project aims

1. To generate a new evidence base on drugs and illicit economies and their effects on armed conflict, public health and livelihoods. This will be done through comparative empirical research on borderland regions in Afghanistan, Colombia and Myanmar, which together produce the vast majority of global illicit heroin and cocaine.
2. To develop new programmatic approaches and policy reforms, that can contribute to the reduction of violence and more inclusive development and sustainable livelihoods in drugs affected contexts.
3. To build a global network of researchers and research institutions from Afghanistan, Colombia, Myanmar and the UK. This project focuses on drugs, but will widen the field of study to incorporate other illicit economies. This agenda will be driven forward through the establishment of a Research Consortium for the Transformation of Illicit Economies.

To find out more about Drugs & (dis)order visit the website: www.drugs-and-disorder.org and follow us on Twitter [@drugs_disorder](https://twitter.com/drugs_disorder).

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The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) is an independent research institute based in Kabul that was established in 2002 by the assistance of the international community in Afghanistan. AREU's mission is to inform and influence policy and practice by conducting high-quality, policy relevant, evidence-based research and actively disseminating the results and promote a culture of research and learning. Since 2020, AREU organization is registered with Ministry of Economy (MoEc) as a non-profit NGO. As the top think-tank in Afghanistan and number three in Central Asia according to the Global Go To Think Tank Index Report at the University of Pennsylvania, AREU achieves its mission by engaging with policy makers, civil society, researchers and academics to promote their use of AREU's research-based publications and its library, strengthening their research capacity and creating opportunities for analysis, reflection and debate. AREU is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of representatives of donor organizations, embassies, the United Nations and other multilateral agencies, Afghan civil society and independent experts.

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About the Author

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Nevertheless, the responsibility for any shortcomings and errors lay with me as the author of this paper.

The contents of this paper are related to the time period prior to the changes that took place during August 2021. AREU publishes this paper for the purpose of future research and analysis.

Introduction

Afghanistan is in the process of developing its national goals and targets in relation to the global sustainable development goals (SDGs). There are 17 SDGs which have been broken down into a total of 169 targets. But how are these globally agreed goals being addressed in Afghanistan? In what ways do they specifically address the particular political challenges that Afghanistan faces, and the geographical divisions of the country?

Of particular interest is SDG 16, which seeks to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. In its recent Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework 2012-25 (ANPDF II),¹ which claims alignment with the country's SDG targets, the government makes limited reference to ongoing peace talks with the Taliban, and proposes a peace support programme to pursue SDG 16. But as one commentator² has noted, while the ANPDF document argues that it will be responsive to citizen demands, it does not articulate what these are, let alone how deep-seated grievances can be addressed, particularly for those who live in the peripheries of the country.

In common with many policy documents, there is much about the ANPDF II that is aspirational; but it is also telling that it ignores many of the challenges the country currently faces. Notable amongst these is the almost total silence on the opium poppy economy which accounts for

a significant – albeit illegal – part of the Afghan economy. The document recommends the need for 'effective policies' but this is abstract and says nothing about how things might be changed.

Arguably the greatest challenges that the Afghanistan government faces come from its borderland provinces, where not only is the opium economy deeply entrenched, and where political opposition to the central state is also located. Are these to be seen as problems to be addressed by a security and counter-narcotics agenda, or rather are they places that are central to any peace building effort? If so, does the current Afghanistan SDG 16 (A-SDG 16) address these challenges and opportunities, and to what extent?

Drawing from long-term research on the drug economy and the more recent research of the Drugs & (dis)order project in three borderland provinces in Afghanistan – Badakhshan, Nangarhar and Nimroz – this briefing paper argues that the current A-SDG 16 fails both to identify the challenges that these borderlands pose to the achievement of SDG 16, and to recognise the opportunities that they might offer for peace building.³

The briefing proceeds by first outlining the key characteristics of these borderland provinces before investigating the framing and assumptions of the current draft A-SDG 16. It concludes that these borderlands should be seen as central to making progress towards A-SDG16, and suggests how the A-SDG16 might reframe its goals and means of assessing progress.

1 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, (2020) Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF II) 2021 – 2025. Kabul, Ministry of Finance.

2 Roberts, N., Payenda, K. and Urwin, E. (2020) Pledging in Geneva: How much aid, and for what? Lessons for Peace, Afghanistan. Policy Note, ODI, London.

3 This briefing paper is an updated and developed version of the viewpoint paper published by authors in International Journal of Drug Policy: Nemat, O., Pain, A. (2021) Measuring progress towards SDG16 in Afghanistan: Ignoring the elephant in the room, International Journal of Drug Policy, Volume 89.

Why a borderland view?

A borderland perspective on the framing of the SDGs questions the top-down and centralised approaches to state-building in Afghanistan that have long been dominant and, since 2001, simply assumed. All too often, the peripheries and more remote areas of the country have been seen as marginal to the process of state-building: at best, as areas to be incorporated and subjugated to the centre, and at worst as problems that over time will disappear. But Afghanistan's borderlands, in common with those of other landlocked countries, are more than a simple geographical place on the margins.

Far from being peripheral, these areas provide strong resistance to state building processes. They are economically and geopolitically important and are locations of innovation and political dynamism.⁴ They are centres of trade and the transit of licit and illicit goods, and people. They are a significant source of government revenue, both formal and informal. But they have often been left behind, deprived of social and political infrastructure, development and aid resources. The social contract between borderland communities and the central state has been very weak and the state has been extractive, and taken advantage of borderland resources but provided little in return.

The borderlands need instead to be seen as key points of engagement and intervention. Their economic and commercial importance should give them a stronger stake in national level politics in terms of representation and investment of resources. Taking a view from the borderlands rather than from Kabul could help us better shape and develop SDG targets for the country.

Borderlands remain significant as centres of poverty and deprivation. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, these three provinces are among the top recipients of humanitarian support, and key locations of internally displaced persons and providing services to returnees from neighbouring countries.⁵ They are also centres of drug production, processing, use and addiction, and are violent and conflict ridden places. Yet the political capital of their key political brokers, central to their identity, could be a critical resource in times of political transition. This needs to be drawn on in the current peace talks, and in the possible emergence of a political settlement with the Taliban.

4 Goodhand, J., Meehan, P., Bhatia, M., Ghiabi, M. and Sanin, F.G (2021) Critical policy frontiers: the drugs-development-peacebuilding trilemma. *International Journal of Drug Policy* 89 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2021.103115>

5 Reliefweb, (2021) Afghanistan Multi-Sectoral Dashboard for Humanitarian Response Services. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/AFG-Dashboard-for-Humanitarian-Response-Services-CY2020.pdf> (accessed on 12.03.2021) \

Borderland characteristics: Badakhshan, Nangarhar and Nimroz

The three Afghanistan provinces (Badakhshan, Nangarhar and Nimroz) that are the focus of the Drugs & (dis)order project, exemplify many of the key characteristics of borderlands.

Nangarhar is politically and economically important to the central state. Jalalabad city, the provincial capital, as well as the Torkham border crossing, are key hubs in relation to the country's long border with Pakistan and cross-border trade with Peshawar. Nangarhar is one of the five 'big' provinces, generating substantial customs revenue. It is also a centre for small, medium and large-scale trading activities. These trading activities are both licit and illicit and are central to the livelihoods of the local population.

The political leadership in Nangarhar is a mix of former regime representatives and local leaders including women and tribal leaders. Nangarhar's importance at the national political level is reflected in the number of parliamentary seats it holds: with 14 seats, it ranks second in terms of provincial political representation outside Kabul. Nangarhar is well represented in government ministries and key administrative positions. During the 2019 elections, the votes counted from Nangarhar, despite fraud allegations, were among the highest in the country,⁶ as were the levels of violence on election day.⁷ Nangarhar's security situation and the presence of different armed groups also reflects the geopolitical importance of the province and the influence of regional power rivalry.

Nimroz province, on the other hand, has long been isolated, with one of the lowest provincial budget allocations in the country. But recently its importance at the national level has been increasing for three reasons. First, its connectivity has improved thanks to the rebuilding, with Indian government support, of the Delaram–Zaranj highway that links Afghanistan's western and southern provinces. Second, the Kamal Khan Dam, a large water infrastructure project, has recently been inaugurated and is expected to improve the province's agricultural economy. Third, border control from both sides is not as strict as other border points between Iran and Pakistan in other provinces. This has made it relatively easy for smugglers to move people, opium and chemicals across the border.

While on a different scale to Nangarhar, Nimroz's natural resources of water and its routes connecting Farah and Herat in the north-west with Helmand and Kandahar in the south has made it an important internal trading route. But it has also become an international trading point with Iran and Pakistan, particularly for illicit goods such as drugs and chemicals for export, and second-hand tax-free goods for import.

The political representation of Nimroz at the centre is unusual, as until recently the entire province was represented by women, three senators and two members of the lower house.⁸ Although this might seem to indicate a particularly liberal view to women's

6 IEC, (2019) Voting results by province, <http://www.iec.org.af/results/en/home> (accessed 06.03.2021)

7 DW News, <https://www.dw.com/en/afghanistan-election-day-violence-leaves-multiple-casualties/a-50618466> (accessed 06.03.2021)

8 Parliament Watch, (2017) Parliament Watch, A FEFA program for public awareness. <http://www.parliamentwatch.af/dari/pm/mps.php> (accessed 05.04.2021)

engagement in public affairs in Nimroz, it is more likely to be attributed to two other factors. First, most of the provincial elites are busy with both licit and illicit trading and business activities and are not willing to give the time to stay in Kabul and carry out parliamentary jobs. Second, the gender quota enshrined in the constitution requires one of the two seats be filled by women. Most of the political elite in Nimroz gave their support to a female candidate, with the result that two women were selected for the lower house.

In contrast to Nimroz and Nangarhar, Badakhshan has a mountain economy. The province borders Tajikistan and, for a short distance (76km), China. Of three border points, Nusai is mostly used as a formal crossing point for people and licit goods, across the Pul-e-Dosti (Friendship Bridge); Shughnan and Ishkashim are the main routes for drug smuggling.⁹

Badakhshan has the highest level of poppy cultivation in the northern region. Insecurity, limited development activities, a marginal agrarian economy and low government budget allocation have been important factors driving increases in poverty and food insecurity,¹⁰ which in turn have led the local population to rely on cultivating opium and marijuana as key cash crops. In turn the trading of opium to other provinces and over the border has provided an additional means of living. Badakhshan also has major mineral resources of lapis lazuli and gold; mines are controlled by local strongmen who are involved in the illicit trade of these minerals to different parts of country

and abroad. However, the mountainous nature of the borderland terrain, which limits potential crossing points, as well as strict border control from the Tajikistan side, are factors that may limit levels of smuggling drugs and other goods, compared with Nangarhar and Nimroz.

Drug consumption is increasingly widespread in Badakhshan: there are more drug users living in Badakhshan's nine borderland districts with Tajikistan than there are drug users living in the whole of Nangarhar and Nimroz.¹¹

Badakhshan is also characterised by limited access to political power. In terms of political representation, Badakhshan is an important vote bank for the Tajik leadership and is the birthplace of the late Burhanuddin Rabbani, a founding leader of Jamiat party. The parliamentary seats are held by a mixture of individuals loyal to political parties of the Mujaheddin era, those connected to drugs and mining networks, and influential local leaders.

In sum, the diverse characteristics of these borderlands reveal the importance of acknowledging the spatially differentiated nature of Afghanistan's borderland provinces, and of using a sub-national perspective to inform development planning under the ANDPF and linking this to the development of the country's broader SDGs. But borderlands are also transnational spaces in terms of both trading and socio-political networks, which highlights the importance of relationships with other countries, and of taking a regional perspective on development and the SDGs.

9 UNODC, (2018) Afghan opiate trafficking along the northern route. https://www.unodc.org/documents/publications/NR_Report_21.06.18_low.pdf (accessed 07.08.2021) p71-72

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

Disconnection, ambiguity and contradiction: peaceful society and illicit economy

How does the goal of promoting a peaceful and inclusive society map onto Afghanistan today? More than a year after signing an agreement with the Taliban, the US government unilaterally announced full troop withdrawal by September 11th 2021, even if there is no peace agreement in place. This has essentially removed any pressure on the Taliban to negotiate a settlement. It is unclear how the peace process will now evolve, given the diverse interests and position of the Taliban, regional powers, and the Afghan government and the country's political elites. For the Afghan political elites who have been involved so far in the peace discussions, the game has been far more about power sharing and securing their own future than about negotiating a durable and just peace and ensuring the hard-won gains in rights and freedoms made over the last 20 years. They have spent months discussing the rules of engagement and the agenda for a negotiation process that has yet to take place. There is hardly any sign of either the government or the Taliban focusing the talks on key issues that affect the prospects for peace.

There also has also been a serious disconnect between these so-called peace processes, the country's national strategy for peace and development (ANDPF II), the everyday practices of development and peace building across the country, and the A-SDG 16 targets. These targets focus on violence reduction,

reduction in corruption and illicit financial flows, and the promotion of the rule of law, accountability and representation.¹² The word 'peace' is not included in the targets, let alone any approaches to peacebuilding. This indicates a securitised interpretation of peace and development where reconciliation and the softer aspects of the peacebuilding are overlooked. Furthermore, neither the global nor the Afghan framing of SDG 16 targets and indicators make any reference to the role of opium poppy cultivation in the illicit economy. This is all the more striking given that in 2017 opium poppy production accounted for some 20-32 percent of GDP, a record high, although this appears to have fallen 38 percent in 2018 and a 50 percent decline from 2017 in 2019 due to severe drought and other factors.¹³

Acknowledging the embedded nature of the illicit economy is crucial to any realistic attempt at promoting a peaceful and inclusive society. Although the ANDPF II tries superficially to address the illicit economy, it limits the proposed scope of actions to a wish-list of bullet points such as building effective counternarcotic policies without any indication as to what this means or how it might be done.¹⁴ The Taliban, on the other hand, have instrumentalised drug production and trafficking as a bargaining and public relations tactic. In several key statements they have touched on drugs by providing a promise

12 SDGs.Gov.Af, (2021) A-SDGs: Sustainable Development Goal 16, <https://sdgs.gov.af/113/sustainable-development-goal-16> (accessed 26.05.2021)

13 SIGAR (2021:113) Report to US Congress, Quarterly Update on Governance; UNODC, (2018); Mansfield, (2019:3) The Sun Cannot be Hidden by Two fingers: Illicit Drugs and the Discussions on a Political Settlement in Afghanistan. AREU Publication <https://areu.org.af/publication/1904/> (accessed on 26.05.2021).

14 IRoA, (2021:41) Afghanistan National Peace & Development Framework II 2020-2025, <https://um.fi/documents/35732/0/ANPDF+II+Final+Version-English.pdf/6a756141-92d9-f376-3f12-71337c199933?t=1606127398102> (accessed on March 24th 2021)

that under their rule, there would be no place for poppy cultivation and drug trafficking. For instance, drugs are one of three main issues addressed in the Open Letter from Mullah Abdul Ghani Beradar to the American People, the others being freedom of speech and women's rights.¹⁵ The letter harks back to the Taliban policy of 2000 when they forbade poppy cultivation, and states that they will be committed to stopping poppy cultivation again, to preventing trafficking, and will provide alternative livelihoods and medical support to drug addicts.

The Taliban's tactical use of the opium poppy economy as part of a political strategy is as ungrounded as that of the ANDPF II. It lacks any in-depth analysis of the current political economy of the opium poppy, or the actors and stakeholders involved in drug production and trade now, and how these have changed since 2001. It also creates a deceptive impression for those who lack a historical understanding on why Afghanistan produced less opium during the previous period of Taliban rule and their use of coercive power.¹⁶ Moreover, if we look

at the post-2001 sites of drugs production and processing, these are areas where the Taliban have had a strong presence and influence. Not only have they not been able to deliver on reducing or stopping the cultivation, but they have had a vested interest in continuing it. Their commitment for the future seems neither realistic nor feasible, and threatens a repeat of the hard-line policies that have been pursued by the US and others against opium cultivation since 2001.

In sum, there is ambiguity and a lack of clarity in the counter-narcotics policies and intentions of different national actors; furthermore, all actors have limited means to measure any progress or advance in reducing drug production and trade. The framing of counter-narcotics issues in the ANDPF II also reveals the inability of the Afghan government to move beyond the existing policy repertoire and their significant dependence on external policies, programming and planning, despite these having achieved relatively little in terms of reducing the production of illicit crops.¹⁷

15 Twitter, (2021) 'The Taliban's Open Letter from Mullah Abdul Ghani Beradar to the American People', <https://twitter.com/Natsecjeff/status/1361627802332770304> (accessed on 27.03.2021)

16 See Mansfield, D. (2019) 'The Sun Cannot be Hidden by Two Fingers: illicit drugs and the discussions on political settlement in Afghanistan', published by AREU. <https://areu.org.af/publication/1904/> (accessed on 17.04.2021)

17 Pain, A., Kerami, K. and Nemat, O. (2021) Drugs and development in Afghanistan: National policy and actor analysis, Drugs & (dis)order Working Paper, https://drugs-and-disorder.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Afghanistan-stakeholder-analysis-2021_Final.pdf (accessed on 02.06.2021)

A-SDG 16: institutional complexity and data poverty

In Afghanistan, for many reasons, progress towards or achievement of the SDGs seems like mission impossible. Factors include weak governance, widespread corruption and lack of accountability, significant aid dependency, and above all protracted years of ongoing conflict. These have all hindered any meaningful progress in the field of sustainable development goals.

In response to the SDGs, the Afghan government has created a complex organisational framework with linked budgetary units seeking alignment with the ANPDF II.¹⁸ This is intended to make the SDGs relevant to line ministries and their targets and progress indicators. But there is no systematic mechanism for disaggregated data collection, let alone sufficient data for setting the baselines.

Additionally, during the national unity government period (2014-19), intra-government rivalries and competition resulted in little real progress being made on the alignment or localisation of the SDGs. The Ministry of Economy and the Chief Executive Office were on the one side of the process, producing documents and forming “executive committees” to discuss these matters, while the Ministry of Finance and the presidential palace team were on the other side, maintaining stronger control over the resources, data and decisions related to a meaningful alignment between the A-SDGs and the National Priority Programs.

Hence, while a detailed document developed by the Ministry of the Economy in 2018 discussed alignment with the SDGs, there are no progress reports or practical steps indicating to what extent has this materialised in practice. Consequently, the A-SDG process could best be characterised as a technocratic documentation of mechanical solutions to key developmental issues that are not integrated, and are isolated from broader sub-national perspectives and analytical evidence from the ground.

It is important to note that obtaining reliable and updated data in Afghanistan is also a major challenge. In borderland areas where insecurity and illicit economic activities are greatest, line ministries have little ability and or capacity to operate and gather reliable data. As the Ministry of the Economy admits, a “high number of indicators need surveys to set their baselines and targets.”¹⁹ In the absence of disaggregated data, it is not clear how realistic targets and baselines can be set, let alone monitored. And how meaningful will aggregated national data be in its representation of any sense of progress in Afghanistan’s fractured landscape?

Thus, we are left within an A-SDG alignment document where, as noted, most of the SDG 16 targets and indicators are set at a national level and focused on security and the rule of law apparatus, as well as making little mention of the illicit economy. Approaching SDG 16 through security-focused goals and targets will not contribute either to a long-term solution

18 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, (2016) A decade of opportunities: Afghanistan Millennium Development Goals 10 Years Report (2005-2015), [http://moec.gov.af/Content/files/MDG%20Final%20Report%20v6-2\(1\).pdf](http://moec.gov.af/Content/files/MDG%20Final%20Report%20v6-2(1).pdf) (accessed 29.02.2021); ; Najafizada, (2017) Policy Research Institutions and Health Sustainable Development Goals: Building Momentum in South Asia; MoEc, (2020)

19 Ministry of Economy, (2017: 31;67;72) SDG’s Progress Report Afghanistan, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/16277Afghanistan.pdf> (accessed on 29/03.2021)

to the opium poppy economy, or to building peace. Approaching it with a national focus that acknowledges neither sub-national nor regional dimensions will also do nothing to address the challenges of Afghanistan's borderlands.

Moreover, there appears to be no place or role in the ANPDF II or the A-SDGs for civil society or non-governmental organisations, despite their active engagement in basic service delivery, including alternative livelihoods programmes for farmers, harm reduction

programmes for those who depend on drugs, and peace-building and reconciliation programmes across the country. A stronger awareness-raising and advocacy role for civil society organisations is needed to ensure that the community-based forms of peace-building, and lessons from working with marginalised people involved in the illicit economy, are considered as part of an integrated approach to making progress towards SDG 16 in particular.

Conclusion and policy recommendations

This briefing has addressed some key issues involved in potentially making progress towards SDG 16 in the context of the Afghanistan's borderlands. It has highlighted the significant gap between policy, practice and on-the-ground realities in relation to peace-building and development efforts and illicit drug economies. It has also demonstrated the diversity of different borderlands, essential to policy development, but often overlooked. Finally, it has touched on the way that intra-government rivalries contributed to lack of clarity in Afghanistan's national policies, and how the absence of indicators related to illicit economies in the global SDG 16 limits the possibilities for the A-SDG 16 to set realistic targets. The complex and multi-faceted nature of illicit economies, in particular the opium poppy economy, cannot be simply addressed through a mechanical process of setting targets and indicators. Achieving results would require a comprehensive approach to understanding, analysis and continuous consultations.

A borderland perspective on the assessment, measurement and progress towards SDG 16 matters because local reality testing must be central to the goals of building peace, justice and strong institutions. Account must be taken of the diverse characteristics of these different borderlands and their specific socio-political and economic dynamics. Borderlands are central to assessing any form of progress in relation to SDG 16, and cannot simply be subsumed into a national statistic of improvement.

The challenge is to find ways in which these borderlands might be addressed in the A-SDG 16 so that their political economies might be transformed for peaceful purposes. This will be a long-term process, and the following recommendations may be steps towards meeting the challenge.

1. **Recognise that drugs and borderland economies are long-term, complex development problems and not simply law and order issues.** Peace, justice and strong institutions will not be achieved by viewing drugs and borderland economies in this way. Instead, borderlands must be seen as sites of opportunity that could be central to a better future for Afghanistan, and need to be specifically addressed in plans to meet SDG 16. They need refined, granular policies to manage the opportunities and the trade-offs that they offer.
2. **Develop a more analytical understanding of different borderlands and the drivers of their political economies.** Such an understanding can become the basis for setting realistic goals for change, and for identifying appropriate process-based measurable indicators for progress on development outcomes, including SDG 16.

3. **Focus on incremental improvements in poverty and food security outcomes for rural populations in the borderlands, measurable at a suitably disaggregated level.** This is a necessary precondition for shifts towards a more ‘legal’ economy, just society and sustainable development. The Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey,²⁰ the one relatively robust statistical survey in the country, could be appropriately developed to provide the means to do this.
4. **Address gaps between aspirational national strategies for development (ANPDF II), ongoing peace processes, and the reality of borderland economies.** This will require a much greater engagement of civil society in these processes and greater involvement of the populations who are most likely to be affected by such policies and processes – those who live in the borderlands.

20 CSO, (2018) The Afghanistan Living Condition Survey 2016-2017, Central Statistics Office, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. https://www.nsia.gov.af:8080/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ALCS-2016-17-Analysis-report-English-23-.09-2018_compressed-1.pdf (accessed 29.05.2021)

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February 2021	Drugs and development in Afghanistan National policy and actor analysis	Adam Pain, Kaweh Kerami, Orzala Nemat			Governance and Political Economy	Working paper
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December 2020	Jangul		✓	✓		Comic Book
October 2020	Solidarity, Strength and Substance: Women's political Participation in Afghanistan	Anna Larson, Noah Coburn			Gender Studies	Issues Paper
September 2020	Catapults, Pickups, and Tankers: Cross-Border Production and Trade and How It Shapes the Political Economy of the Borderland of Nimroz	David Mansfield			Governance and Political Economic	Issues Paper

September 2020	Women's Participation in the Afghan Peace Process: A Case Study	Shukria Azadmanesh and Ihsanullah Ghafoori	✓	✓	Gender	Case Study
July 2020	Gender Alert on COVID-19 in Afghanistan Issue XII: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women Affiliated with Opium Poppy Cultivation				Gender	Newsletter
July 2020	Mules, Pick-ups and Container Traffic: Cross-Border Production and Trade and the Shaping of the Political Economy of Nangarhar	David Mansfield			Governance and Political Economy	Issues paper
June 2020	When the Water Runs Dry: What is to be done with the 1.5 million settlers in the deserts of southwest Afghanistan when their livelihoods fail?	David Mansfield	✓	✓	Natural Resources management	Briefing Paper
May 2020	The Helmand Food Zone: The illusion of Success	Shahlla Matin			Natural Resources Management	Policy Note
May 2020	Surface-groundwater interaction in the Kabul region basin	Najibullah Sadid			Natural Resources Management	Policy Note
April 2020	When the Water Runs Out: The Rise (and Inevitable Fall) of the Deserts of Southwest Afghanistan and its Impact on Migration, Poppy and Stability	David Mansfield		✓	Natural Resources Management	Synthesis Paper
April 2020	Surface-groundwater interaction in the Kabul region basin	Najibullah Sadid		✓	Natural Resources Management	Issues Paper
March 2020	Can the Afghan state intervene successfully in the conflict between nomads and settlers?	Dr. Antonio Giustozzi	✓	✓	Natural Resources Management	Policy Note



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