

# Social and Economic Impact of Narcotics in Afghanistan

Abdul Saleem Achak

Master of Public Policy  
Willy Brandt School of Public Policy  
University of Erfurt, Germany

---

**Abstract:** Narcotics are one of the unsolved issues of the current world. Annually it takes hundreds of thousands of lives around the world. In addition, the usage of narcotics results in drug addiction and death. Despite the creation of several international conventions on prevention and trafficking of drugs, they are still available in many parts of the world.

Afghanistan is one of those countries where drug addiction has been on rise for several decades. The opium poppy plant first introduced by Arab traders is currently creating major problems for this country. The cultivation of this plant increased during the invasion of Soviet Union and later became an integral part of Afghanistan's illicit economy.

Like other countries, narcotics have impacted social, economic, and security fields of Afghanistan, leaving around a million addicted, helping in increasing crime rate, and family violence, and affecting the already poor economy. Furthermore, links between the insurgents and drug traffickers have worried officials in Kabul.

Therefore, as a student of Master of Public Policy, I decided to do some research on these three types of impacts on opium on Afghanistan. In social impacts on narcotics in Afghanistan, I found a growing numbers of addicts left unemployed and without proper treatment. Moreover, the findings also pointed out to their role in increasing crimes in the country. Furthermore, I also found that there are limited numbers of drug treatment facilities in the country with majority of them run by NGOs.

In the economic impact of narcotics in Afghanistan, I found the increasing role of Hawala (money transfer) in illicit economy. Through this system, millions of dollars of illicit money is transferred annually. Moreover, the system gives the government little access to the source, sender, and recipient of the money, therefore paving the way for an easy and untraceable transfer of millions of dollars to drug lord and insurgents.

In the security impact of narcotics in Afghanistan, I found that how the Taliban are benefiting from drug business, how much do they earn, and what are the methods of collection. This section also discusses the links between insurgents and drugs in South and East of the country. In addition, I have also discussed the Afghan and U.S. Governments counter narcotic strategies as well as their outcomes and further findings on shortcomings.

I hope that this thesis project will provide some information to readers on social, economic, and security impacts on narcotics in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, a brief history of Afghanistan is also provided in order to give readers necessary information on Afghanistan. This thesis also explains the definition, types, and history of narcotics. Furthermore, the history of narcotics specifically in Afghanistan is discussed in detail and in two sections; before U.S. invasion in 2001, and after U.S. invasion in 2001. The thesis also presents a clear picture of U.S. counter narcotic strategy and its pillars as well as its shortcomings.

---

## Introduction

Narcotics are one of the worst problems faced by the world today. According to the World Health Organization, illegal drugs make 0.4 percent of annual deaths in the world. Meanwhile, UNODC reported between 102,000 and 247,000 drug-related deaths in 2011. These are only the numbers derived from deaths directly caused by the usage of drugs, while WHO is yet to count deaths caused by other factors related to the drugs. In fact, we still do not know the number of people dying from narcotic's funded terrorism and wars as well as HIV AIDS.

It is worth mentioning that only some countries in the world are producing these deadly drugs. These countries include Afghanistan, Myanmar, Costa Rica, Colombia, China, Cambodia, Laos and others. Despite some international conventions such as Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs 1961, Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and

United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the drug trade has boomed year after year.

According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2013, between 167 and 315 million people were reported to have taken drugs in the preceding year, which shows an increase of 18 percent compared to that in 2008. Currently, 430-450 tons of heroin is trafficked and sold in the global market. UNODC estimates the value of Western European heroin market around \$20 billion, while the market value of Eastern European market is around \$13 billion. Meanwhile, the market value of Cocaine in 27 European Union and four European Free Trade Association countries is estimated to be around \$88 billion.

Despite strict border controls by some countries, drugs flow easily to the global markets. Annually, tons of drugs are trafficked through Balkan, Russia, and Middle East routes. With fewer amounts subject to seizure, the remaining amount of drugs is easily sniffed into the high demand European markets. Meanwhile, the international community has also increased its efforts in combating the drug trafficking problem. By providing financial support, implementing development projects, and helping in finding alternative livelihood; the international community has encouraged the leading producers of drugs to halt its cultivation.

Afghanistan is one of those countries subject to receiving aid from international community for counter narcotics. Afghanistan for more than a decade remains the leading producer of opium poppy in the world. According to the World Drug report 2013, opium poppy was grown in 236,000 hectares of land, producing hundreds of tons of illicit drugs. Since the collapse of Taliban regime in 2001, the international community shifted its focus back to Afghanistan and invested heavily in reconstruction projects. Nevertheless, opium poppy remained as the main problem for the Afghan government.

During the Bonn Agreement in 2001, the participants called on international community to help Afghan government fight and eliminate opium.

Meanwhile, under the 'Lead Nations' concept, UK handed the responsibility of dealing with narcotics problem of Afghanistan. According to Jr & Rusell (2012), the UK administration at first launched compensation campaign for the farmers. Through this campaign, the UK government was willing to pay \$350 per jerib to the farmers that destroy their opium crops voluntarily. The campaign soon failed because of growing corruption.

At the meantime, opium poppy cultivation increased in several provinces in 2005 forcing the Afghan government to take strong action against it. In the end of 2004 and beginning of 2005, the Afghan government established Ministry of Counter Narcotics as well as Counter Narcotics Force of Afghanistan. According to the Ministry of Counter Narcotics, the ministry was given the task of eliminating opium poppy, finding alternative, and helping in treatment of drug addicts.

Despite those efforts, poppy cultivation increased and with that increased the activities of insurgents in South and East of the country. At the meantime, the Afghan Government and international community noticed the rising number of drug addicts, and HIV AIDS Patients. In addition, the international troops in Afghanistan also noticed links between insurgency and poppy and therefore started targeting drug traffickers.

Some security officials traced links between money transfer and insurgents. According to *The Washington Times* report in 2009, the US government for their alleged ties with insurgents apprehended two major drug traffickers. After 2007, the opium poppy and insurgency increased in South and East of the country with some alleging insurgents for protecting the drug traffickers and opium fields as well as taxing the output.

In the years after 2007, everyone was so busy in studying the role of drugs in terrorism and few studied social and economic impact of it on Afghan people. Therefore, I decided to write my thesis on social and economic as well as security impacts of narcotics in Afghanistan. In my this thesis, I will be focusing on history of opium poppy in Afghanistan, its social (drug addiction, HIV Aids) impacts, economic (financing terrorism, illegal transfer of money) impacts, and describing and evaluating the outcome of US and Afghan Government's Counter Narcotics strategies.

This thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter will provide brief information about the history of Afghanistan. The second chapter will study the definition and types of narcotics. The third chapter will contain information about the history of opium narcotics in Afghanistan. The fourth chapter will explain social impacts of narcotics, while the fifth chapter will explain the economic impact of narcotics in Afghanistan. The sixth chapter will focus on links between insurgency and opium poppy as well as explaining the counter narcotics strategies and their outcomes.

## Chapter One: Brief History of Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a landlocked country located in South Asia while bordering Pakistan in east and south, Iran in west, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan in north, and China in northeast. According to the CIA World Factbook, Afghanistan is slightly smaller than Texas and covered with vast array of mountains and valleys. The capital of Afghanistan is Kabul, which has an estimated population of around 3.5 million people.

The country is rich in mines and natural resources such as copper, natural gas, petroleum, coal, chromate, talc, sulfur, lead, zinc, iron, and some precious stones. The country has a population of around 31 million people living in 34 provinces. The main ethnic tribes are Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Aimak, Turkmen, Baloch and others. The religion of Afghans is Islam with Sunni Muslims making the majority of them, (CIA World Factbook).

Afghanistan's strategic location has always been a headache for its residents. The country has always been a battleground between major regional and global players. In 19<sup>th</sup> century, British and Russian empires, with both trying to assert their influence, (Wahab & Youngerman), contested the country.

According to Ahab and Youngerman (2007), in 19<sup>th</sup> century, both empires finally decided to accept Afghanistan as a buffer zone between them in order to avoid clashing with each other. Therefore, for the majority of years of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, Afghanistan was a forgotten land whose people were poor and illiterate and had no or little access to necessities such as electricity, transportation, telecommunication and education.

Runion (2007) writes that Afghanistan's geography has played a key role in destruction of this beautiful land. He adds that the location of Afghanistan has always attracted foreign invaders into this land aimed at capturing and controlling this strategic territory.

In past, Afghanistan was a key transportation hub for the traders of South Asian and Central Asian countries. Furthermore, the famous Silk road also passed through this land; connecting businesses in Asia and Europe.

War and drought in Afghanistan severely damaged farming industry while forcing farmers to abandon wheat and vegetables and replace them with profiting business of poppy cultivation. In fact, the cultivation of poppy played a vital role in fueling insurgency and terrorist elements during the dark era of Taliban in late 1990s, (Runion, 2007).

### ***A Brief History of Afghanistan:***

#### **Ahmad Shah Durani's era**

Afghanistan has a 5000 years old history. The country was once the center of Persian civilization and Buddhist center. The earliest archaeological proof of Afghanistan's thousands years of history was found in 1970s. Wahab and Youngerman in *A Brief History of Afghanistan* (2007) noted that earliest finds dated to Lower Paleolithic of 100, 000 years ago were found in 1970s in Dasht-e- Nawur area of Kabul.

Meanwhile, most of historians have described the beginning of Afghanistan's modern history in year 1747 when Ahmad Shah Durani famous by Ahmad Shah Baba took the reign of power in southern Kandahar province. " In 1747 Ahmad Khan Abdali, a young Afghan warrior who had served in the army of the Persian conqueror Nadir Shah, won command in Kandahar of a confederation of the leading Pashtun tribes," (Rasanayagam, 2007).

Ahmad Shah Abdali's era is seen as a foundation stone of Afghanistan's modern history. During his reign, several governmental ministries, agencies, and administrations were established. Although his authority was somehow tested and questioned by other tribes around the country, he carefully and cleverly dealt with them by using army and diplomacy effectively. Before his kingdom, tribes in Afghanistan were divided and were often influenced by neighboring countries. Therefore, Ahmad Shah Abdali during his 25 years of reign managed to free these tribes from foreign influence and encouraged them to work and strive for a country called Afghanistan (Saikal, 2011, 21).

Ahmad Shah Abdali not only managed to disperse domestic violence but also expanded Afghanistan's territory into Indian subcontinent and Iran. "Ahmad Khan went on to found a dynastic empire, the borders of which, by the time of his death in 1772, extended from Central Asia and Kashmir to Arabian Sea, and from eastern Persia (Khorasan) to the Indian Punjab" ((Rasanayagam, 2007, xi).

His rule remained unchallenged until his death. He was widely respected, and seen as a charismatic leader by other Afghan tribes. Moreover, his strong presence on the ground and effective management of army as well as expansion of territory helped in solidification of his status among Afghans. According to Saikal (2011), Ahmad Shah's rule was by nature and practice charismatic while Abdali tribe politically and militarily revolved around him.

Moreover, Ahmad Shah Abdali is seen as the first and legitimate king of Afghanistan, whereas his legitimacy came from a Loya Jira (Grand Assembly) that crowned him the head of Abdali tribe and king of Afghanistan (Rasanayagam, 2007).

Meanwhile, Ahmad Shah's Afghanistan could not assure swift and peaceful transfer of power after his death, therefore, inter-dynastic power struggle began among the tribes. In addition, loose infrastructure, inter-tribal rivalries and foreign interventions weakened the governments after him. (Saikal, 2011, 22).

The first reason was his rule and the nature of Afghan society because his confederation was made of a loose structure and consisted of four major tribes: Popalzai, Barakzai, Alikozai, and Achakzai. His main policy was to keep the tribes happy and pleased by giving them financial incentives while limiting their power and influence in the government. Therefore, after his death, these tribes all wanted to grab the power in order to maintain their source of finance and military.

The second reason was polygamy which was often affiliated with kings and tribal leaders in Afghanistan. Ahmad Shah also had several wives and sons. Therefore, high number of sons from wives of different tribes caused inter-family power struggle after his death.

The third and last reason was foreign power struggle among British and Russian empires. They both wanted to influence Afghanistan's foreign policy and use it as a launching pad against each other. The British empire wanted to stop Russian influence into warm waters of Indian subcontinent. (Saikal, 2011, 24).

At the meantime, Ahmad Shah's success and reputation among Afghans relied upon his success in battlegrounds. Therefore, he seven times attacked India and capture Delhi while also expanded his reign into Central Asia. "For the consolidation of power at home he relied, in great measure, on the effects of his foreign wars. If these were successful, his victories would raise his reputation, and his conquests would supply him with the means of maintaining an army and of attaching the Afghan chiefs by favors and rewards: the hope of plunder would induce many tribes to join him whom he could not easily have compelled to submit," (Rasanayagam, 2007, xiii).

In order to prevent future rivalry among his sons, Ahmad Shah Abdali promoted his favorite son Timur Shah from his first wife as his heir. Ahmad Shah's this decision was not met with any opposition at that moment, but it created several problems after his death because his other sons were also struggling for power. (Saikal, 2011, 25).

### **Timur Shah's era**

Timur Shah (1772-93) moved the capital of Afghanistan from Kandahar to Kabul and enjoyed fairly peaceful reign, but he was unable to extend the territory beyond his father's and was caught in between power struggle among his family members. "Benefiting from his father's prestige, the Durani Empire, although subject to international revolts, remaining largely intact for 20 years, leaving the indolent Timur, to devote his main energies to the care of his large harem," (Rasanayagam, 2007, xiv).

Timur Shah had several wives and sons. Therefore, after his death, the issue of who will take the reigns of power became more important and thus resulted in inter-family power struggle. According to Rasanayagam (2007), Timur Shah father 36 children from several families and unlike his father, he did not choose the heir to his kingdom.

While Timur Shah was paying far more attention to his family matters, British and Russian empires were paying more attention to the geopolitical location of Afghanistan. The rivalry between these two empires further accelerated after Crimean war of 1853- 56 when the Russian empire decide to expand its influence into the Central Asia and areas such as Bukhara, Khiva, and Kokand close to Afghanistan (Saikal, 2011, 25).

At the meantime, Afghanistan was divided into three major provinces of Herat, Kandahar, and Kabul and several small localities. Moreover, Persians under Qajar dynasty were trying to exclude Herat and some other western areas of Afghanistan from Timur Shah's reign. Furthermore, Sikhs lead by Ranjit Singh fought off Afghan rule in 1823 and liberated their areas. In addition, Russians supported Persians while the British empire provided weapons to the Sikhs.

“The Sikhs under their charismatic leader Ranjit Singh, threw off Afghan domination in the wake of battle Nowshera in 1823, rapidly expanding influence in the traditional Afghan lands. In the evolving Anglo-Russian competition, the British supported the Sikhs, and the Russians encouraged and assisted the Persians to move against the Afghans as part of wider competition between the two imperial powers, placing Afghanistan in the midst of intense pressure from powers around it,” (Saikal, 2011, 26).

### **Dost Mohammad Khan's era**

When Timur Shah passed in 1793, the power struggle among Durani family accelerated, resulting in small conflicts and clashes among his sons. In 1793 Dost Mohammad Khan took the reins of power and ruled the dark era of Afghanistan's history. His era is often associated with disintegration of Afghanistan's territory when Afghanistan lost a big chunk of its territory in Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, (Rasanayagam, 2007, xiv).

At that moment, British empire slowly controlled all Indian subcontinent and thus reached Afghanistan's eastern and southern borders. According to their doctrines, Afghanistan was seen as a defensive wall against Russian expansion, while Russian saw Afghanistan as a gate of Indian subcontinent by capturing it they can reach warm waters and vast resources of south.

“The British came to see the country as a defense line for their colonial interests, to the Russians it was considered a gate to British interests beyond Turkestan. The Anglo-Russian competition for political control of Central Asia, which before the end of the nineteenth century evolved incrementally into what Rudyard Kipling called the ‘Great Game’ between the two imperial powers, developed three salient features,” (Saikal, 2011, 26).

### **Anglo- Afghan wars**

The British empire in order to prevent Russians from expanding their territory into Indian subcontinent, twice deployed troops in Afghanistan which led into two Anglo-Afghan wars in 19<sup>th</sup> century. The British empire at that moment implemented what they called ‘forward defense policy’ meaning that they would go forward in Afghanistan in order to defend their interests in India. The first time when British soldiers entered Afghanistan was in 1838 aimed at stopping Persians who were supported by Russia to capture Herat province. The second British troops deployment was in 1878 aimed at stopping Russian influence in Afghanistan (Rasanayagam, 2007).

‘Forward defense policy’ created by Lord George Curzon meant that the British colonial troops would immediately act and invade Afghanistan in case if Russians cross Amu River into Afghanistan. “To Curzon, Afghanistan, along with Persia, Transcaucasia, and Turkestan, had grown to be ‘the pieces on a chessboard upon which was being played out a game for the domination of the world’” (Saikal, 2011, 26).

The first British deployment was a disaster. The siege of Herat by Persians was lifted before the troops could cross Indus River. Moreover, Shah Shuja, son of Timur Shah, who was named king of Afghanistan by invading colonial troops, was an unfamous figure among Afghans. Therefore, the invasion was met with heavy resistance by Afghans who fought the colonial troops until their expulsion from Afghanistan in 1842. “The first Anglo-Afghan war, was futile and disastrous: the Persian siege of Herat was lifted before the pompously named ‘Army of the Indus’ crossed into Afghan territory. The British military occupation of Kabul from 1839 to 1842, to prop up an ineffectual and unpopular Shah Shuja, proved untenable because of the fierce hostility of the population and their increasingly effective armed attacks on the British garrison” (Rasanayagam, 2007, xv).

After these two failed military interventions, both Russian and British empires decided not to colonize Afghanistan because such an act would place these two empires side by side and would further fuel tensions among them. Therefore, they decided to use Afghanistan as a buffer zone among them and determine its borders. At meantime Afghanistan did not have explosive mineral resources which could attract these two empires to capture and control this land. A final reason was that the relative independence and war-like nature of Afghan tribes could have caused trouble for invading forces as experienced by the British empire in two Anglo-Afghan wars (Saikal, 2011, 26-27).

After the two Anglo-Afghan wars, the British empire decided not to send any troops to Afghanistan in the future. The reason was that of Afghans' strong reaction against any sort of foreign presence on the ground. Therefore, the British doctrine decided to instead buy Afghan leaders and influence Afghanistan's policies and relations. Moreover, they decided to demarcate Afghanistan's eastern and southern borders in order to limit Afghanistan's influence in the tribal areas of India.



The Gandomak (1879) and Durand line (1893) infamous treaties and agreements were forced by the British empire on Afghan leaders. According to these agreements, the British empire would control Afghanistan's foreign, fiscal and military policies while defining Afghanistan's southern and eastern borders (Saikal, 2011, 28).

#### **Amir Abdul Rahman Khan's era**

In 1880, Abdul Rahman Khan was elected as Amir of Afghanistan. Before being elected, he lived for 11 years in exile in Samarkand area of Russian empire, where he was kept as a guest and refurbished as a king who can guarantee Russia's interests in Afghanistan. At that moment, Abdul Rahman decided to keep Afghanistan neutral between the two superpowers. Abdul Rahman Khan himself once said "how can a small power like Afghanistan, which is like a goat between two lions, or a grain of wheat between two strong milestones of the grinding mill, stand in the midway of the stones without being ground to dust?" (Rasanayagam, 2007, 1).

In face of British empire's demarcation of Afghanistan's southern and eastern borders, the Russian empire decided to instead demarcate their own borders in the north. At that moment, Afghanistan had its own internal problems and thus was unable to react against Russian invasion of northern areas. "In the late nineteenth century, St. Petersburg found it appropriate to strengthen further its position by determining and securing its borders with Afghanistan with Afghanistan. Russian troops took Panjdeh in 1885 after overcoming gallant resistance by Afghan forces. In the east they forced the Afghans to evacuate the principalities of Shughnan and Roshan in the Pamirs in 1894 after a ten-year occupation" (Saikal, 2011, 29).

The Russian invasion of Panjdeh strained relations between them and the British empire, because at that moment the British empire felt responsible for maintaining and securing Afghanistan's territory as well as assisting them against any foreign intervention. At the meantime, some Russians were favoring the capture of Herat province of Afghanistan which could further pave the way to the Indian subcontinent, but any kind of such move could also force the British empire to confront Russians. (Rasanayagam, 2007, 10).

#### **Amir Habibullah Khan's era**

After the death of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan, his son Amir Habibullah Khan became the ruler of Afghanistan in 1901. Amir Habibullah Khan had some interest in modern technology and therefore the modernization of Afghanistan continued during his era (Rasanayagam, 2007). Meanwhile, Saikal (2012) writes that four main variables influenced radical modernization and national independence of Afghanistan. First, the personality of Amir Habibullah Khan himself played a major role in modernization and national independence as he was open-minded and had a taste for technology and luxury.

Second was the emergence of educated and open-minded people in the society who had independent thoughts and were encouraging others to adopt modernization and struggle for independency. Third was trouble among his family members who were struggling for power such as his brother Nasrullah Khan. Fourth variable was the rivalry between Russia and Great Britain who both wanted to have some sort of influence in Afghanistan. Therefore, the Amir and other elites in order to avoid foreign influence in domestic politics, decided to modernize Afghanistan and fight for independency.

During his rule, Amir Habibullah Khan tried to keep distance from Great Britain as well as Russians and therefore rejected some of the British proposals for rail link construction as well as telegram in Afghanistan (Rasanayagam, 2007). During the First World War, Amir also kept Afghanistan's neutrality amid growing interest from Germany and Ottoman Empire.

Rasanayagam (2007) writes "Habibullah Khan was embraced when a Turco-German mission arrived in Kabul in September 1915. They were accompanied by two virulently anti-British Indian nationalists, one Muslim, the other a Hindu. The mission's objective was to persuade the Amir to attack the British in India and the Russians in Turkestan. Their plans called for the coordination of nationalistic uprising in India, with simultaneous revolts by Muslims in Central Asia. In return the German undertook to provide the Amir with a vast quantity of arms, and 20 million sterling in gold."

Amir then proposed to the British that Afghanistan will keep its neutrality during the war if it is given complete freedom in steering its foreign relations (Rasanayagam, 2007).

#### **Amanullah Khan's era**

Amir Habibullah Khan was assassinated on February 20, 1919 in Jalalabad by unknown gunmen. After his death, his son Amanullah Khan took the power and further boosted Afghanistan's struggle for independence and modernization (Gregorian, 1969).

Amanullah Khan in order to force independence launched the Third Anglo Afghan war in 1919. Afghan Army was divided into three columns lead by General Nadir Khan. The British army for the first time used aircrafts during the war with Afghans. As a result of war, the British in 1919 signed Rawalpindi treaty which gave Afghanistan freedom to conduct its foreign relations (Rasanayagam, 2007).

### **Post- Amanullah Khan era**

The reign of Amanullah Khan continued until 1929, when he fled to Italy, after Kabul was overrun by Habibullah Khan. Habibullah Khan did not last long, he was soon thrown by King Nadir Shah. Nadir Shah's reign lasted for four years (1929-33) followed by his son King Zahir Shah (father of the nation). King Zahir Shah rule the country for around 40 years with iron fist. According to Byrd (2012), Zahir Shah' era is seen as one of the most peaceful years of Afghanistan's history. He adds that the country witnessed slow modernization and kept its impartiality intact during the Second World War.

King Zahir Shah was toppled by a coup led by his cousin Daud Khan in 1973. Daud Khan upon taking the power, changed the regime from kingdom to republic and started radical modernization of Afghanistan. According to Barfield (2010), Daud Khan's life and republic were both ended by a communist coup in 1978. The coup then paved the way for Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and ten years of holy war until their withdrawal in 1989. The Soviet withdrawal was followed by a bloody civil war which lasted until the Taliban's capture of Kabul in 1996. Barfield (2010) mentions that the Taliban ruled Afghanistan with strict Islamic laws, no state building and nation building, and in fact with no real government. Meanwhile, their close ties with Al-Qaeda and their leader Osama Bin Laden invited western sanctions against them and with only Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Pakistan recognizing their rule.

Taliban's regime was toppled in the end of 2001 by US led international forces after 9/11 incident. The defeat of Taliban paved the way for the establishment of a western-backed Afghan government. In 2004, Afghanistan new constitution was created followed by presidential and parliamentary elections (Barfield, 2010). In 2009, the country witnessed second term presidential elections won by President Karzai. He will be the president of Afghanistan until the next elections in 2014. This is also a crucial year for Afghanistan when the NATO forces will hand over all security responsibilities to Afghan forces.

## **Chapter Two: Narcotics (Opium); Definition and Types**

Narcotics history relates back to Greece where it was used for relieving pain. According to the DEA, "narcotics also known as 'opioids' comes from the Greek word 'stupor' and originally referred to a variety of substances that dulled the senses and relieved pain."

Opium is of a narcotic drug which can be received from a plant called *Papaver Somniferum* L. Opium plant requires less water and can be used as a pain reliever. In past, human societies used opium for relieving pain and healing injuries, (Chovuy, 2006).

In fact, opium is a dried element of *Papaver Somniferum* L, which is obtained through a process of cutting the plant and collecting the white color liquid, which is dried later on. "Opium is the air-dried milky exudate obtained by incising the unripe capsules of *Papaver somniferum* L. or its variety album De Candolle (Fam. Papaveraceae). It yields not less than 9.5 percent of anhydrous morphine. Powdered Opium is Opium dried at a temperature not exceeding 70°C, and reduced to a very fine powder. Powdered Opium yields not less than 10.0 percent and not more than 10.5 percent of anhydrous morphine. It may contain any of the diluents, with the exception of starch, permitted for powdered extracts," (Jr., 2002).

Opium could also have been used with hemlock to put people quickly and easily to death, as well as a remedy to stop babies from crying continuously, (Brownstein, 1993).

According to the DEA, opium has also some street names such as Big H, Black Tar, Brown Sugar, Dover's Powder, Hilbilly Heroin, Horse, Junk, Lean of Purple Drank, MPTP (New Heroin), Mud, OC, Ox, Oxy, Oxycotton, Paregonic, Sippin Syrup and Smack.

According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2010, Types of drugs are as following:

ATS – Amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) are a group of substances comprised of synthetic stimulants from the amphetamines-group of substances, including amphetamine, methamphetamine, methcathinone and the ecstasy-group

substances (MDMA and its analogues). In cases where countries report to UNODC without indicating the specific ATS they are referring to, the term non-specified amphetamines is used. In cases where ecstasy is referred to in enclosed brackets ('ecstasy'), the drug represents cases where the drug is sold as ecstasy (MDMA) but which may contain a substitute chemical and not MDMA.

*Coca paste (or coca base)* - An extract of the leaves of the coca bush. Purification of coca paste yields cocaine (base and hydrochloride). The term 'cocaine (base and salts)' is used to refer to all three products in the aggregate.

*Crack (cocaine)* - Cocaine base obtained from cocaine hydrochloride through conversion processes to make it suitable for smoking.

*Heroin HCl (heroin hydrochloride)* – Injectable form of heroin, sometimes referred to as 'Heroin no. 4'.

*Heroin no. 3* – A less refined form of heroin suitable for smoking.

*Poppy straw* - All parts (except the seeds) of the opium poppy, after mowing.

From chemistry point of view, opium contains water, sugar, and several organic acids such as fumaric acid, lactic acid, oxaloacetic acid, and meconic acid. "Opium contains approximately 5-20 percent water, about 20 percent various sugars, and several simple organic acids, including fumaric acid, lactic acid, oxaloacetic acid, and meconic acid (Figure 1). Meconic acid, a dibasic acid that is found to the extent of 3-5 percent, is readily detected in solution (either in its unionized form or as its meconate) via the formation of a deep red color on addition of ferric chloride solution, with this color being unaltered on addition of dilute hydrochloric acid," (Jr., 2002).

Opium cultivation has a long history. The plant was widely cultivated in the former Middle East, Asia, Africa and Americas.

Therefore, it is very important here to discuss the origins of opium and its ancient history.

#### A. *History of Opium (Narcotics)*

##### **Sumerians**

Opium has a long history and was first cultivated in several continents but the exact origins of it is still unknown. Some believe that opium was first cultivated in Asian Minor, where the first mention of opium is found in Sumerian clay tablets inscribed in Cuneiform in about 4000-3000 BC. "The Sumerian culture flourished between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in southern Iraq from 4000-3000 BC, and the first mention of the opium poppy is found on Sumerian clay tablets inscribed in Cuneiform script in about 3000 BC. These tablets were found at Nippur, a spiritual center of the Sumerians located south of Baghdad, and described the cultivation of the opium poppy, including the collection of poppy juice in the early morning, with the subsequent production of opium" (Jr., 2002).

Brownstein (1993) also supports the above statement by stating that the first people to cultivate opium were Sumerians who lived in today's Iraq. According to him, the Sumerians called opium 'gil' and its juice 'hul gil' meaning plant of joy.

##### **Assyrians**

Assyrians who lived in the same geography with Sumerians, also cultivated and used opium for their daily use. They called opium "aratpa- pal" and it is speculated that the latin word "papaver" is derived from their etymological origin. When the Parsians captured Iraq and its neighboring areas, they frequently mentioned opium cultivation and preparation in their manuscripts in the sixth century BC, (Jr., 2002).

##### **Egyptians**

In the ancient Egypt, the cultivation and usage of opium poppy was restricted to priests, magicians, and warriors. While in the ancient manuscripts, it is mentioned that the goddess Isis was to have used poppy for healing the headache of god Ra. (Jr., 2002)

##### **Rome and Greece**

Opium also has an ancient history in Greece and Rome. According to the Jr. (2002), "The word 'opium' has been postulated to be of Greek origin, deriving from 'opos' (juice) and 'opion' (poppy juice). Opium likely came into Greece from Asia Minor



and the ancient Greeks associated various divinities with opium, including Hypnos (sleep), Morpheus (dreams), Nyx (night) and Thanatos (the twin brother of Hypnos) (death). Opium is frequently mentioned in Greek mythology, and Homer (850 BC) cites the drug as an intoxicating, pain-relieving and sleepinducing substance in both 'The Iliad' and 'The Odyssey,' while Virgil also mentions it in 'The Aeneid.' Ancient Greeks regarded opium as a symbol of consolation and oblivion, and crowned all of their nocturnal gods with a wreath of poppy blossoms.'

### **China**

The usage and cultivation of opium soon covered all over China, soaring the crime rate, and by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, 25 percent of China's population were taking opium. " In the 15th century, tobacco smoking became popular in the western hemisphere and European sailors introduced the habit into the Orient, where it quickly gained popularity. The last Ming emperor (1628-1644), Tsung Chen, prohibited the use of tobacco in 1644, seeing this New World plant as an evil substance. The Chinese people, however, responded by mixing opium with tobacco in gradually increasing amounts for smoking in special pipes. Finally, many were smoking pure opium, and by the end of the century about 25 percent of the population were using opium" (Jr., 2002).

At that moment, the government tried to curb the cultivation, usage, and importing of tobacco and opium into the China, but was met with harsh response from the British empire and France, forcing China to allow opium trade and usage, (Brownstein, 1993).

### **India**

Most of the authors agree that opium was brought to India and China by Arab traders in the eighth century A.D. Later on, the opium was exported from Asia to the Europe in between tenth and thirteenth century. In some manuscripts related to the sixth century, it is claimed that opium consumption also brought violence and abuse. These abuses were reported in Egypt, Turkey, Germany and England, (Brownstein, 1993).

India also has a long history of opium cultivation and usage. The drug was widely cultivated in Bengal state of Indian and used by magicians and doctors. At that moment, this Indian state had the monopoly over the cultivation and production of this plant in India but this monopoly was later on transferred to the powerful East Indian Company. Jr. (2002) writes that " although historically associated with China, the drug had been cultivated in India (particularly in Bengal) and used for centuries. When the Indian state lost its hold on the monopoly of opium production in 1757, the East India Company made opium a major commercial crop, and by 1831 this powerful organization held a world monopoly. In 1857, the British government assumed administration of the East India Company, with the result that the opium monopoly disseminated throughout India."

The British empire in India played a huge role in globalizing opium. At that time, the empire had the monopoly over the poppy cultivation and exportation and therefore held huge auctions of opium in India which were attended by merchants from China, and America. The British empire made a huge market of opium in China by exporting illegally and by force, which further resulted in two opium wars in 1839-42 and 1856- 60 (Chovuy, 2006).

Chovuy (2006) further mentions that "The two so-called "opium wars" (1839-1842 and 1856-1860) waged by the British to impose their opium trade onto China resulted in "unfair treaties" that not only made Hong Kong a British colony but also provoked, in China, the biggest addiction ever to happen in world history. Eventually, opium consumption and addiction also spurred tremendous opium production in China. In response to the Chinese national consumption that drained its silver reserves, China became the world's foremost opium producer."

China, because of high demand of opium from its 25 percent addicted population and in order to replace foreign opium imports with homegrown opium, cultivated opium publicly and this continued until the end of Second World War and establishment of Communist lead government. Likewise, the Indian government after independence in 1947, took over the monopoly of opium cultivation and production, and controls them until now (Jr., 2002).

### **B. Opium and Cold War**

After the Second World War, the opium cultivation and trade was widely used during the cold war. CIA often used those involved in opium cultivation against the communist regimes in Southeast and Southwest Asia. " The Cold War clearly helped the illicit opium-heroin economies thrive in Asia. This trend emerged first in Laos and in Burma, then in Afghanistan in what came to be known as the Golden Crescent. In both Southeast and Southwest Asia, the Central Intelligence Agency's anti-Communist covert operations and secret wars benefited from the participation of some drug-related combat units or individual

actors who, to finance their struggles, were directly involved in drug production and trade. To cite just two, the Hmong in Laos and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in Afghanistan” (Chovuy, 2006).

With a huge jump in opium cultivation came a huge hike in the number of addicts in the world. In 1913, 25 percent of then China’s population was addicted. Only after huge pressure from British public and parliament, the opium trade in China came into end. Moreover, by 1909 the International Opium Commission was established, and by 1914 thirty four nations were its members. By 1924, sixty nations were its members who committed on reducing opium cultivation and curbing its trade. Later on, the League of Nations assumed the duties of this commission with all signatories agreeing to limiting the cultivation, production, and sale of all narcotics except those used for medical purposes, (Jr., 2002).

When some countries started tackling opium production, others started to grow this plant in order to finance wars or to illegal money. In 1961, the UN Convention on Narcotics called on all countries to fight against drug production, while the then US President Richard Nixon declared war on drugs in 1971, which resulted in opium being eradicated from one country, but grown in another. For example, when Iran in 1955 prohibited cultivation and usage of opium, farmers in Afghanistan and Pakistan started growing them in large amounts, (Chovuy, 2006).

Chovuy (2006) further states that “ after the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the illicit drug trade continued to fuel Asian conflicts, and Afghanistan and Burma became the world’s two main opium-producing countries. Their national economies have now been affected for decades by an illicit agriculture that, to some extent and in some areas, grew detrimentally to food crops such as wheat and rice, even though most farmers grow the opium poppy as a cash crop to cope with extreme staple crops shortages. Various political and economic factors have favored or still favor the resort to the illicit drug economy in both countries: internal or transnational conflicts, the disintegration of the state, ethnic contentions, religious strife, oppressive regimes, lack of economic development projects, low international prices of food crops and droughts, just to name a few.”

### **Chapter Three: History of Narcotics in Afghanistan**

#### ***A. Opium in Afghanistan before U.S. Invasion of 2001***

Opium poppy has an old history in Afghanistan as the plant was first brought by Arab traders. At that moment, opium was just cultivated for medical reasons. According to the National Alternative Livelihood Policy (2012), opium poppy which is locally known as “Khash-Khash” and “Koknar” was first cultivated in Khash district of Northern Badakhshan Province during the invasion of Genghis Khan in 13<sup>th</sup> century, therefore, the name Khash-Khash is also derived from the name of this district. According to Farrell & Thorne (2005), opium can be traced in Afghanistan to 18<sup>th</sup> century, while the first record of opium production is linked to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and 1924 when Afghanistan informed the League of Nations about low-level poppy cultivation. “ In 1945, the Afghan government banned opium cultivation, but in 1972 the International Narcotics Control Board, citing suspicious illicit production increases throughout Afghanistan, identified the country as the most ‘immediate challenge’ to the control of illicit opium and trafficking. ” (Farrell & Thorne, 2005).

At the time of Communist Coup in 1978, Afghanistan produced around 300 metric tons of opium enough for the regional demand and left some for heroin production (Looney, 2009). However, the huge surge in poppy cultivation came after the Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan and during the cold war. “ The first significant shift in poppy cultivation came after the Soviet occupation in 1979. The uprising against the Soviets was not a reaction by the state elite in Kabul. The old regime lacked the organizational base to lead any popular movement. It favored small local power holders, mainly landlords and khans, and the uprising against the Soviet started as a mass-based movement without any unified national leadership. Opium profits played an essential role in the uprising” (J. Lind, 2009).

During the soviet invasion from 1979 to 1989, opium production in Afghanistan grew 15% annually and by the time UNODC did its first opium survey in 1994, opium was cultivated in 71, 500 hectares of land in Afghanistan which prompted UNODC to announce Afghanistan as the leading producer of illicit opium (Farrell & Thorne, 2005). According to Looney (2009), “ commercial poppy farming emerged as rural Afghanistan’s premier industry in the early 1990s, after war and anarchy had pushed farmers into deep poverty. Poppy cultivation became a necessary and highly profitable alternative to conventional crops like wheat and fruits, which couldn’t be brought to market.”

The opium in Afghanistan was used to finance Jihad against the invading Soviet forces. Moreover, the cultivation of this plant was encouraged by the CIA and western countries in order to fuel the war. In addition, tight U.S. laws against narcotics, and improved border controls by Turkey and Iran, increased opium cultivation in Afghanistan (Chovuy, 2006).

In addition, factors such as the exit of other drug suppliers like Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, collapse of governance and law enforcement in Afghanistan, high profits of opium, destruction of local economies, and comparative advantage of opium, played a big role in opium surge in Afghanistan (Byrd & Ward, 2004).

The rise in opium production in Afghanistan can be attributed to three main reasons: U.S. disengagement after the fall of Soviet Union, poverty, and chaos. According to Grare (2008) “ the opium production explosion was first the result of US disengagement from Afghanistan. Before the Russian invasion, the country produced only 100 tons of opium a year. Between 1979 and 1992, poppy cultivation was multiplied by ten. With the fall of the communist regime, the American supply of weapons and money dried up and the Mujahideen had to look for alternative financial sources to fund their struggle.”

He then adds that “ opium production was also driven by poverty. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, irrigated surfaces were halved between 1978 and the end of the 1980s, and diminished by another 37 per cent during the 1990s. Unfavourable climate and destruction of irrigation channels resulting from the war only made matters worse. In such conditions, opium production was increasingly considered the only avenue by which many Afghans could make a living, although it did not help to solve the country’s chronic food shortage.”

“Finally, chaos was a powerful facilitating factor. The increase in opium production in Afghanistan was not a linear process. In 1999, under the Taliban, production levels had reached a record 4,600 tons. In 2001, however, the same regime's ban led to a sharp decline in both cultivated areas and opium production. In the post- Taliban era, however, the absence of effective law enforcement combined with a tenfold fold increase in opium prices, drove production to 4,200 tons in 2004,” (Grare, 2008).

The geography of Afghanistan has also played a major role in opium cultivation. The country is located between the Central Asia and Souteast Asia, and therefore is a vital route for opium smuggling into the Europe (Cornell, 2006).

Moreover, the country’s climate is also suitable for opium cultivation. Afghanistan is a country where only 12 percent of its land is arable and 70 percent of its population is using agriculture as their mean of living. “ During good years, Afghanistan produced enough food to feed its people as well as a surplus for export. Its traditional agricultural products include wheat, corn, barley, rice, cotton, fruit, nuts, and grapes. However, its agricultural economy has suffered considerably from years of violent conflict, drought, and deteriorating infrastructure. In recent years, many poor farmers have turned to opium poppy cultivation to make a living because of the relatively high rate of return on investment compared to traditional crops. Consequently, Afghanistan’s largest and fastest cash crop is opium,” (Glaze, 2007).

Furthermore, high demand of opium related products such as herion and morphine in neighboring countries and as well as Europe also encourage farmers in Afghanistan to increase opium cultivation. Iran has around 1.2 million herion consumers while Pakistan has around half a million addicts. Moreover, addiction has reached one percent of Central Asian population while Russia has around two millions addicts (Grare, 2008).

While opium trade was used to finance the holy war against the Soviet Union, the trend however continued after their withdrawal. In 1989, when the Soviets left Afghanistan, the U.S. also cut funds and weapons to the Mujahidin who were at that moment fighting Soviet backed Dr Najibullah’s government in Kabul. Such disengagement of the U.S. forced Mujahidin to continue growing opium in order to finance their war against Kabul government, (Lind, 2009).

When the Kabul government was finally brought down by Mujahidin in 1992, they then started fighting each other in a bloody civil war which continued untill 1994 and the capture of Kabul by Taliban. During the civil war, Mujahidin again used opium cultivation and profits for financing their war and paying the salaries of their soldiers. “When Taliban entered the scene in 1994, it acted as other warlords when it came to opium production. The area for poppy cultivation was expanded and new trade and transport routes were established as Taliban fought its way to power. Taliban also extracted parts of the opium profits through levying the traditional ushr and zakat taxes on theopium traders. The taxes on opium production were interpreted as a sign of its religious and political acceptance” (Lind, 2009).

After Taliban took the power in Kabul in 1994, the international community lashed out their strict rules and policies and therefore imposed economic sanctions against them. At that moment, the Taliban started to grow poppy in order to finance their war against Northern Alliance. On September 10, 1997, under huge international pressure regarding the cultivation of poppy, Taliban issued a decree banning the opium. According to Peters (2009) the decree said “The Islamic State of

Afghanistan informs all compatriots that, as the use of heroin and hashish is not permitted in Islam, they are reminded once again that they should strictly refrain from growing, using, and trading in hashish and heroin. Anyone who violates this order shall be meted out a punishment in line with the lofty Mohammad and sharia law and thus shall not be entitled to launch a complaint.” The decree was only issued to please the international community and therefore was not strictly imposed and the opium cultivation continued. According to the UNODC (2001), Afghanistan produced world’s 70% opium in 2000. In the June of the same year, Mullah Mohammad Omer, Taliban’s Supreme leader banned opium production in their controlled area (Farrell & Thorne, 2005).

The ban had harsh punishments attached with it in case someone breaks the ban and cultivates opium. According to Farrell & Thorne (2005), “ the ban was enforced by three principal techniques: the threat of punishment, the close local monitoring and eradication of continued poppy farming, plus the public punishment of transgressors. Local inter-agency groups were made accountable for the poppy cultivation of local farmers, giving them a clear incentive to implement the enforcement effort.”

The ban resulted in 90% poppy reduction in Afghanistan. Helmand province which during the last year before the ban cultivated around 42, 853 hectares of land, recorded no poppy in 2001. Moreover, the Nangarhar province which last year cultivated 19, 747 hectares, just reported to have grown 218 hectares in 2001. At the meantime, the provinces controlled by the Northern Alliance increased cultivating opium in order to take advantage of the market (UNODC, 2001).

The events leading to ban started after UNODC maintained minimum contact with Taliban when every other international organization pulled back from Afghanistan. In 1999, UNODC with the help of Islamabad drug liaison officers, held a meeting with Taliban. The meeting was fruitful, as UNODC successfully gained the trust of Taliban (Farrell & Thorne, 2005). This led to further exchange of ideas between the two parties which steadily convinced the Taliban leader to first announce one third reduction in opium in 1999 and forceful ban in 2000 followed by fatwa issued in June the same year (Farrell & Thorne, 2005).

Regarding the intentions of Taliban regime in banning the opium, Looney (2009) claims that the reason for ban was to seek some sort of international recognition as well as halting the supply for a while in order to increase the demand and prices in the international drug market. He further claims that Taliban had already stocked huge amount of opium. Farrell & Thorne (2005) praise the role of UNODC in convincing Taliban to ban opium. UNODC exploited several factors for convincing the Taliban such as building trust, religious factor, carrots and sticks, and financial reward. At first, the UNODC officials built trust with the Taliban who were in that moment totally excluded by the international community. Second, the UNODC officials used religion as a main factor to encourage the Taliban for a ban on opium. Third, UNODC pledged financial support to Taliban for opium eradication in Afghanistan. “ In 1997 the then head of UNDCP, Pino Arlacchi, brokered a deal with the Taliban. In return for the elimination of opium poppy, the UN would provide \$25 million per year for 10 years in development assistance to Taliban areas. Arlacchi’s pronouncements were controversial because many countries either did not formally recognise the Taliban government and/or opposed working with the Taliban due to their poor human right’s record, though the US government backed the deal soon after its announcement” (Farrell & Thorne, 2005).

The ban eventually led to 95% decrease in opium production but also affected the local economy and worsened the overall income. The humanitarian crisis created by the ban was huge. Large families were left without income, while the price of a kilo of opium increased from \$28 to \$350- 400 (Peters, 2009). Moreover, the ban also forced some farmers to migrate to the Northern Alliance’s controlled provinces in order to freely cultivate and produce opium (Farrell & Thorne, 2005).

### ***B. Opium in Afghanistan after U.S. Invasion of 2001***

When the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in the end of 2001, there was no poppy in all the southern provinces of Afghanistan. Immediately after the invasion, farmers in east and southern parts of Afghanistan started growing opium on a large scale. According to UNODC report (2002), opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan ranged from 69,000 hectares to 79,000 hectares in 2002 which shows an immediate hike in poppy cultivation after the fall of Taliban.

During the Bonn Agreement in 2001, the participants called on the international community to help the Afghan government fighting the cultivation, trafficking, and trade of poppy in Afghanistan. Annex III Section 6 of the Bonn Agreement says “ we strongly urge that the United Nations, the international community and regional organizations cooperate with the Interim Authority to combat international terrorism, cultivation and trafficking of illicit drugs and provide Afghan farmers with financial, material and technical resources for alternative crop production.”

In 2003, Afghanistan produced 47% of world’s opium grown on 80,000 hectares of land. In 2004, Afghanistan’s opium production surged to 131,000 hectares of land while the cultivation spread to 32 out of 34 provinces. On year later, in 2005,



opium poppy cultivation dropped by 2.3% with poppy being cultivated in 101,000 hectares of land. The reasons for that as said by the farmers were fears of harvests being eradicated, farmers being imprisoned and religious ban (UNODC, 2005).

In 2006, the opium production reached new level of heights with 59% increase from previous year. This year, opium was grown in 165,000 hectares of land and making Afghanistan the sole producer of opium in the world. The farmers mentioned reasons such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of rule of law for poppy cultivation (UNODC, 2007).

In 2007, Afghanistan opium production further increased by 17% with opium being cultivated in 193,000 hectares of land. Moreover, Afghanistan now produced 93% of world's opium and exported 8,200 tons (34% more than 2006). The interesting find in UNODC report of 2007 is that some poor provinces in central- north zeroed poppy production while others in south doubled it (UNODC, 2007).

According to the UNODC (2007), Taliban were controlling vast areas in south in 2007 and therefore the international community and Afghan government were unable to eradicate opium there. In addition, Taliban were also protecting opium growing farmers from Afghan government and were instead rewarded with a portion of income from opium sales which were then used in financing insurgency.

In 2008, opium production fell down by 19% to 157, 000 hectares of land. The drop in opium production was caused by several reasons such as restraining the cultivation rather than eradication; pressure by governors, shura, and village elders; and decrease in demand of opium in world markets (UNODC, 2008).

The following year (2009), opium cultivation again decreased by 22% from 153, 000 hectares of land in 2008 to 123, 000 hectares in 2009. Such decrease is a result of sticks and carrots policy of Afghan government and international community and low demand for drugs in international market. (UNODC, 2009).

According to the 2010 UNODC report, the opium cultivation in Afghanistan remained the same as 2009 with 98% of them being cultivated in eight southern and western provinces. The next year (2011), the opium production increase by 7% from 123, 000 hectares of land to 131, 000 hectares. The same year, the number of poppy free provinces decreased from 20 to 17 as Faryab, Baghlan and Kapisa grew them. Increasing insurgency, poverty, and lack of rule of law were the main reasons for that (UNODC, 2011).

In 2012, Afghanistan again saw a 18% increase in opium production from previous year. This year, farmers grew 154, 000 hectares of land of opium and produced around 3,700 tons of them. At the meantime, the price of opium also increased in international markets. Moreover, opium production increased by 19% in Hilmand province (UNODC, 2012).

Looking at these reports, one can find out that the opium production in Afghanistan has had high and lows. Whenever there was force and commitment, the production declined; and whenever, there were insurgents, high prices in the world markets, and high international demand for drugs, the cultivation surged.

Therefore, opium cultivation in Afghanistan on one hand increased family income of farmers, but on the other hand gave birth to other problems such as addiction, family violence, crime, insurgency and else. From impact point of view, opium caused two major categories of problems; social (addiction and crime) and economic (financing insurgency, black money, and money laundering) in Afghanistan.

### **Motives behind opium cultivation in Afghanistan**

After knowing the history of opium before and after U.S. invasion in 2001, it is important here to know about the reasons and motives behind the cultivation of this plant. Several writers and international organizations have pointed out poverty, poor infrastructure, higher profitability and war, as reasons behind opium boom in Afghanistan.

#### *Poverty*

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world with household income of \$500- 600 per year (World Bank). Three decades of devastating war has left the country in ruins. The main infrastructure such as roads, canals, dams, and airports were ruined resulting in poor economy and growing poverty. Therefore, Afghan farmers started growing poppy in their lands. At the beginning of the soviet invasion, opium was cultivated to finance the holy war, but then became an inseparable part of the illicit economy (UNODC, 2009).



According to the Afghanistan Opium Survey 2012, 13% of farmers in 2012 pointed out to the poverty as the main reason for opium cultivation. The report states that most of the interviewed farmers have grown opium because of low income, shelter, and food problems. Furthermore, dried latex of poppy is heat resistant and can be stored for months, giving it a comparative advantage compared to other crops that need fast transportation (Jr & Rusell, 2012).

The case of poverty and its role in opium boom is arguable. Some writers argue that farmers grow opium only because of poverty, while some others argue the opposite. According to the Afghan Opium Trade Report 2009, farmers in Southern part of Afghanistan are rich compared to those living in the Northern and Central province. At the meantime, these farmers are also heavily growing opium in their lands. According to a report issued by U.S. Department of State and U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 2011, the poorer farmers in Afghanistan's North and East areas have now stopped growing opium because of improving security, governance, and development. The report claims that rich traffickers and property owners because of no presence of law enforcement agencies grow opium in South.

Currently there are three million people involved in opium business in Afghanistan. These three million people are intentionally kept in poverty in order to force them rely on credit system provided and facilitated by drug traffickers and warlords (Potheir, 2009).

### *Profitability*

Opium cultivation is more profitable compared to other crops. Afghan farmers are also driven to opium cultivation by high prices of drugs in the international market. In 1995, opium cultivation area reduced by 25% when the opium prices in the international market fell down by 30%. In 2002, the total opium cultivated area increased by 10 folds compared to 2001 because of the huge demand in the international market caused by Taliban's ban on opium in 2001 (UNODC, 2003).

According to the Afghanistan Opium Survey 2012, 71% of farmers interviewed said to have grown opium only because of its profitability and high prices. Most of farmers are also involved in wage income rather than farm income. In some areas in south, land owners hire farmers to grow opium in their lands and therefore pay them a portion of overall income generated from opium ((Byrd & Ward, 2004).

According to the World Drug Report 2013, opium prices increased from \$64 per kg in 2009 to \$ 200 per kg in 2012. Most drug traffickers in Afghanistan store opium in order to increase the demand and thus sell them when the prices go five folds higher. According to the Afghan Opium Trade report 2009, Afghan farmers earned \$720 million from opium trade in 2008.

Meanwhile, some agronomists and researchers often argue the claim of opium being the priciest plant. According to the Civil Military Fusion Center report 2012, other crops such as pomegranates, grapes, olive, and saffron can yield more income than opium. The report claims that opium cultivation, irrigation, and maintenance require more labor than that required for other crops.

### *Irrigation*

According to the farmers and agronomists, poppy requires less water compared to the other crops. After decades of war and destruction of canals and dams, it is clear that Afghan farmers started growing opium because of lack of water. Helmand province once known as Afghanistan's 'food basket' lost its main canals and irrigation system during the soviet invasion and civil war. The main Bughra canal, which once watered thousands of hectares of land, is currently ruined (Ghutbi & Tsukatani, 2002). Afghanistan have enough of water in its rivers but because of no proper policy for building canals and dams, the water is wasted. Therefore, there is no option left but to cultivate opium which requires far less water than other crops. According to Jr & Rusell (2012), poppy grows well in well-irrigated areas but are also drought resistant, which requires less water compared to other crops.

### *Other motives and reasons*

UNODC (2003) states other reasons for opium boom in Afghanistan such as:

- opium becoming part of Afghan farmers' livelihood;
- its cost advantage: although requiring high labor, cheap labor is comprised of women, children and refugees
- Farmers' access to easy planting, seeding, and harvesting techniques

- Opium as a source of credit: most poor farmers loan food, clothing, and other expenses and in return promise to cultivate opium on their lands and sell them to the lenders
- According to the Afghan Opium Trade report 2009, following reasons are also playing a key role in opium cultivation:
  - Lack of rule of law
  - Insecurity and insurgency
  - Lack of employment; especially for the farmers
  - Lack of water resources and agricultural infrastructure
  - Survival;
  - External pressure imposed by traffickers and warlords
  - Lack of coping strategies without opium income
- Meanwhile, Byrd & Ward (2004) mention these six factors attributing to the opium cultivation in Afghanistan:
  - *A shift in global opium production:* Major opium producers such as Pakistan, Iran and Turkey were able to eradicate opium, thus leaving a valuable opium market to Afghanistan.
  - *Collapse of law enforcement agencies:* during the two decades of war before the U.S. invasion in 2001, Afghanistan did not have any strong central government which could assert its control over the countryside and effectively eradicate opium
  - *Drug and protection:* most of the warlords had guns and grew poppy to finance their local armies in order to keep their profits intact and protected.
  - *Agriculture as only solution to poverty:* most of Afghans were forced to rely on agriculture as an only source of income during the civil war. At that moment, canals and dams were destroyed, leaving farmers with no option, but to grow opium. Opium required less facilities compared to other crops.
  - *Comparative advantage of opium compared to other crops:* as mentioned before, opium yields more income compared to other crops and requires basic knowledge of agriculture.
  - *Market development:* market development is easy for opium. Even sometimes, the drug traders and traffickers themselves talk with the farmers and buy their opium before the cultivation. They also provide transportation for the opium.

## **Chapter Four: Social Impacts of Narcotics in Afghanistan**

### **A. Drug Addiction**

Drug addiction is one of the main and worst social impacts of narcotics in the world and Afghanistan. According to the World Drug Report 2013, in 2011, between 167 and 315 million people were reported to have taken illicit drugs in the previous year. The numbers show that between 3.6 and 6.9% of global adult population have taken drugs. Moreover, the report shows an increase of 18% of drug users compared to 2008.

According to the UNODC survey report (2005), Afghanistan had around one million (3.8% of the population) drug addicts in 2005. The report also says that 740,000 of addicts were male while the remaining 120,000 were female. More shocking is that 12.1% of the male population were addicts while 2.1% of total female population were also addicts. The report also adds that 60,000 of addicts (0.7% of children population) were addicts, who regularly used drugs. 150,000 out of all drug addicts were

takin opium, 50,000 were taking heroin, 520,000 were taking hashish, 180,000 were taking pharmaceutical drugs, while 160,000 were consuming alcohol (UNODC, 2005).

In 2011 Global Afghan Opium Report, UNODC claims that there were 230, 000 opium abusers a 53 percent increase from 2005. The report adds that the heroin abusing population in Afghanistan tripled by 2009 reaching 120, 000 in 2009 who consumed 5 tonns of pure heroin annually. Overall 8 percent of Afghan population are using drugs, mentions the report.

In 2005, the Afghan government was responsible for durg treatment and rehabilitation. That year, there were few drug treatment centers around the country. According to the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement of United States report issued in May 2010, six Afghan NGOs were providing durg treatment service. These included, Khatiez Organization for Rehabilitation; Nejat; Shahamat Health and Rehabilitation Organization; Social Services for Afghan Women Organization; Voice of Women Organization; and Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan.

At the meantime, the Ministries of Counter Narcotics and Public Health have identified 40 residential drug treatment center across the country. In addition, seven outreach centers are also working in Logar, Nangarhar, Badakhshan and Kabul provinces (Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, 2010).

In 2009, UNODC released another report on drug use in Afghanistan. In this report, UNODC mentions that the number of opium users has increased from 150, 000 to 230, 000 (an increase of 53% compared to 2005). Moreover, the numbers for heroin users is shocking as the it rose from 50,000 in 2005 to 120, 000 addicts in 2009 (increase of 140%). According to the report, opium is of widely used drug among the addicts.

To obtain their daily dose of drugs, addicts used several ways such as working, stealing, begging, and selling their assets. An addict on average basis spent 2.2\$ on heroin, 1.6\$ on opium, and 1.5\$ on other types of opiates. Overall, addicts in Afghanistan spent \$300 million on drugs every year (UNODC, 2009).

The report indicates that 28% of the addicts started using drugs in Iran while 9% of others did so in Pakistan.

The situation of female drug addicts was worse than male. The UNODC report in 2009 says that female addicts were either divorced or widows, had less education, and no job prior to the interview. Moreover, because drugs are widely available in Afghanistan, the addicts usually used different substances of them during the past 12 months (UNODC, 2009).

According to the report, another way of getting drugs was sexual services. The report mentions that 6% of the addicts were engaged in sexual intercourse in order to obtain drugs or money. At the meantime, the usage of opium also differes from province to province. In Badakhshan province, about 20- 30% of the population is using opium (Catherine S Todd, 2005).

A report issued by Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission in 2008 mentions that most of the female addicts are aged between 26-60 years and most of them (57.4% ) married while aged under 16 years. Furthermore, the report finds out that poverty might also play a role in rising female addiction. It says that 67.6% of the addicts interviewed said to have been earning less than 3000 Afghanis (\$60) per month.

Regarding the relationship between poverty and addiction, the AIHRC report (2008) says "The relationship between poverty and drug addiction, can be explored through access to health care. People with low income are more likely to be concentrated in remote parts of the country, whose access to health centers is very limited. Thus, these women use drugs for medical purposes."

Drug addiction in Afghanistan has several reasons such as war, cheap drugs, lack of government control, and few treatment facilities. "Three decades of war-related trauma, unlimited availability of cheap narcotics and limited access to treatment have created a major, and growing, addiction problem in Afghanistan," said UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa in 2010.

### ***B. HIV/AIDS***

Another social and medical impact of narcotics in the world and Afghanistan is HIV/ AIDS which is mainly caused by injecting drugs or have sexual intercourse. According to the World Drug Report 2013, an estimated 14 million people in 2011 injected drugs into their bodies. The higher number of drug addicts who use injections were found in Eastern and Central Europe. The report adds that "Countries and areas with the highest rates of injecting drug use more than 3.5 times the global average are Azerbaijan (5.2 per cent), Seychelles (2.3 per cent), the Russian Federation (2.3 per cent), Estonia (1.5 per cent),

Georgia (1.3 per cent), Canada (1.3 per cent), the Republic of Moldova (1.2 per cent), Puerto Rico (1.15 per cent), Latvia (1.15 per cent) and Belarus (1.11 per cent). China, the Russian Federation and the United States are the countries with the largest numbers of people who inject drugs. Combined, they account for an estimated 46 per cent, or nearly one in two, people who inject drugs globally.”

UNODC estimates that 1.6 million out of 14 million drug addicts who use injections are having HIV.

Drugs in Afghanistan are taken by different ways such as eating, smoking, and injecting. Most common method of drug usage among Afghans is by smoking and eating. Injecting drugs is something new, as it is learned by addicts who lived in neighboring countries such as Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and India. “Although noninjection use of opium (smoking, vaporization, or oral ingestion) is traditional in Afghanistan, injecting likely represents a new behavior. This behavior may be learned in countries of refuge during times of political unrest, as indicated by the participants in a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime study in 2003, in which 50% of participants had started using heroin in either Pakistan or Iran. A prior study in the border city of Quetta, Pakistan, reported that Afghan IDUs were more likely than their Pakistani counterparts to engage in risky behavior,” (Catherine S Todd, 2005).

The latest numbers of HIV patients in Afghanistan is around 478, while the true number might be higher. Currently in Afghanistan, there are few diagnostic health centers with facilities to identify HIV, and also most Afghans are ashamed of telling the truth of being diagnosed with HIV, because of religious and cultural reasons (Nevada Griffin, 2010).

Griffin (2010) adds that “measuring drug use in much of the Muslim world is notoriously hindered by the difficulties inherent in estimating a highly stigmatized and illegal behavior in a traditional society. As a result, many experts consider the problem of drug use, like HIV/AIDS, to be more widespread than official estimates suggest.”

In 2005, there were 50,000 heroin users in Afghanistan out of whom 14% accepted injecting drugs. Moreover, 70% out of all IDUs in Kabul said to have shared needles with each other. In addition, the reason for using injection was its constant pain relief which cannot be achieved through smoking (Catherine S Todd, 2005).

Furthermore, Injecting Drug Users (IDUs) can also suffer from HIV/ AIDS while having sexual intercourse with others for getting money and drugs. A study in 2006 showed that 28% of male IDUs had sexual intercourse with other men or boys while 76% of them had sexual intercourse with other women (Nevada Griffin, 2010).

### **Drug treatment facilities**

Compared to the rising number of addicts, drug treatment centers are limited and they are run by government and private NGOs. In the public sector, the National Mental Health Institutes under the Ministry of Public Health is responsible to provide treatment services across the country. One such institute in Kabul has only 30 slots available (Catherine S Todd, 2005).

Meanwhile, according to the UNODC Drug Use Report (2009), there are about 40 treatment centers in 21 provinces and therefore only 11% of the addicts said that they were provided with much need treatment.

Regarding the private drug treatment centers, Todd (2005) says “ the private sector also has limited treatment resources, with only two non-government organizations (NGO) currently providing in-patient services. The Nejat Center has ten treatment beds and two outreach teams in each of their Kabul and Badakhshan locations. Another NGO, Welfare Association for Afghanistan (WADAN), has a fifteen bed facility for drug addicts in Gardez, Paktiya Province. The standard of care for rehabilitation in Afghanistan is a fifteen day in patient stay, followed by continued counseling via outreach counselors in the home or return visits to the outpatient department.”

According to the U.S. Department of State report (2010), the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is responsible for the administration of national drug prevention centers supported by the Ministry of Counter Narcotics, Public Health, and UNODC. The report adds that only 1% of estimated 100,000 addicts have access to treatment.

Regarding the U.S. support in drug treatment, the report says “ in 2010, the United States will support 30 residential drug treatment centers (75% of all centers) making it the largest contributor to drug treatment services in Afghanistan. Of the 30 centers, 16 provide residential treatment for men and women. Six centers provide residential treatment and outpatient services for women, and each one has an adjacent center that provides services to the children of the female clients. Two centers provide drug treatment services for adolescents.”

Meanwhile, some drug treatment centers are faced with the problems of their own such as lack of capacity, equipment, and even a proper follow up system (Catherine S Todd, 2005). To tackle that, the State Department is working with UNODC, National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), World Health Organization (WHO), and international university researchers to refine and validate new treatment methods for drug addicted children in six centers in Afghanistan (State Department, 2010).

According to the UNODC Drug Use Report (2009), adults male and female have access to the mentioned drug treatment facilities in most of the provinces while adolescents and children have limited access to them and that in few provinces such as Badakhshan, Kabul, Farah, Balkh, and Herat.

Nejat Drug Rehabilitation Center was established in 1991 in Peshawar Pakistan. The Nejat center had a 20- bed residential facility for the treatment of male and female drug addicts. The center also provided treatment to the drug addicts in three refugee camps in Pakistan. In 2002, the center moved its operations to Kabul, Afghanistan. Currently, the Nejat Center is running a 10-bed residential facility supported by Caritas Germany, a 60- bed treatment facility in Jangalak area of Kabul supported by UNODC, and a day-care center supported by Norwegian Refugee Council. The Nejat Center also runs several treatment center in Nangarhar, Balkh, Herat and Kandahar provinces (Nejat Center, 2012).

The other main organization that provides treatment for drug addicts is Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan (WADAN). This organization is providing public awareness regarding the justice and equality, human rights and freedom, and runs drug control initiatives. WADAN runs the Bahar Therapeutic Drug Treatment facility in Gardez city of Paktia province where addicts are admitted for one month closely regulated drug treatment. Furthermore, the organization also runs the same kind of treatment centers in Helmand, Wardak and Kandahar provinces. According to the organization's website ([wadan.org](http://wadan.org)), the organization is also involved in providing awareness about drugs to 30, 000 local elders and village leaders who in turn transform the information to the villagers.

### *C. Crime*

Another social impact of narcotics in Afghanistan is the high rate of crimes. Crime such as murder, robbery, and corruption are all somehow related to drugs. According to the UNODC Drug Use report (2009), 50 respondents out of 92 prisoners in Kandahar's Sarpoza Prison claimed to have consumed drugs in their life time. 19 of them claimed to have taken opium, 9 of them consumed heroin, and the remaining 6 prisoners have tried both of them.

The report also points to the major problem of drug availability in Afghanistan's prisons. The report says "31 prisoners (34 percent) revealed ongoing drug use in prison. Opium and cannabis are the most commonly used drugs in Sarpoza prison with five drug users using opium and 26 using cannabis. During the period the research was conducted, two heroin users reported they had not used in the past week due to the lack of supply but admitted problematic dependency."

The addicted inmates also said to have given drugs to their children and also using injections for drug usage in the prison. Even some of them confessed to have shared needles with each other. Moreover, none of them were provided with treatment in detention (UNODC, 2009).

According to another UNODC Drug Use Survey in 2010, there were 450 drug users out of 4500 inmates in Puli-i-Charkhi prison in Kabul. According to the report, neither of the addicted inmates were provided with drug treatment in detention.

At the meantime, female addicts in Afghanistan have also been involved in different types of crimes. These crimes range from smuggling to prostitution and selling children. According to a report issued by AIHRC (2008), 2.17% of interviewed female drug addicts reported to have been arrested on smuggling charges. The report quotes one of the addicts who says " my husband was a drug smuggler. He wanted me to help him with his business. In order to get me help him, he accustomed me with drugs. Now I am involved in drug smuggling, though my husband has died. This is the means of getting drugs for myself."

In a report by Ferris-Rotman (2012) in Reuters it is said that 64 out of 164 female inmates in Badam Bagh prison are taking heroin and opium, double what it was in 2008 when the clinic first opened.

AIHRC (2008) report suggests that some female addicts even committed crimes such as prostitution and selling their children in order to make money or obtain drugs. "I had to take care of two of my nieces, my brother's daughters. I had to sell them to provide my drugs" (AIHRC, 2008).



Corruption is also one of the social impacts of narcotics in Afghanistan. Some reports suggest the increasing role of drugs in booming corruption in Afghanistan. According to the Global Afghan Opium Report 2011, 30 percent of the heroin laboratory owners said to have paid bribes to the governmental officials. Moreover, it is clear that without bribing the officials, it would be difficult to traffick and transport such huge amount of drugs to the international markets.

## Chapter Five: Economic Impact of Narcotics in Afghanistan

### *A Brief information on Afghanistan's economy:*

Afghanistan's economy has been in crisis for the last three decades. Most of the country's infrastructure has been damaged during the holy war against Soviet Union and internal civil war. According to the CIA World Factbook, Afghanistan's GDP for 2012 was \$34.29 billion. The country ranked 109 in the world. In 2012, Afghanistan saw GDP growth of 10.2% and ranked 8<sup>th</sup> fastest growing economy in the world.

Meanwhile, Euroasia Center's country profile ranks Afghanistan 6<sup>th</sup> fast growing economy in the world in 2012 with a GDP growth of 11%. In 2012, Afghanistan's GDP consisted of 20% agriculture, 25.6% industry, and 54.4% of services (CIA World Factbook, 2012).

Meanwhile, the unemployment rate in Afghanistan is quite high. In 2008, 35% of total population was unemployed while 36% of the population lived under the poverty line. Excluding opium, Afghanistan's agricultural products are wheat, fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts and mutton (CIA World Factbook, 2012).

### **Narco- Economy**

*" we take 3 percent of the revenue and 100 percent of the blame," President Hamid Karzai*

In 2012, officials of Afghanistan Ministry of Counter Narcotics announced that the annual value of opiates trade alone has reach \$ 70 billion. Moreover, an estimated 16.5 million Afghans used illicit opiates annually with the majority of those opiates generated in Afghanistan (Center C. M., 2012).

In 2012, Afghanistan opium was cultivated on 234, 000 hectares of land, making it the leading opium producer in the world the amount is very high compared to the data of ten year before. According to UNODC report 2003, Afghanistan produced 3400 tons of opium in 2002 which shows an increase of 15- fold since 1979. The income generated from that was around \$1.2 billion compared to \$150 million a year between 1994- 2000. The annual income of Afghan families involved in drug business rose from \$750 in 1994- 2000 to \$6,500 in 2002. The opium production increased dramatically in years coming. In 2006, Afghanistan produced 6,100 tons of opium compared to 3,300 tons in 2005. Moreover, the larger the production the greater the income. " During the period 2003 and 2009, the total farm-gate value of the total opium produced in Afghanistan was US\$ 5.9 billion. Out of US\$ 5.9 billion, 2.2 billion (38 per cent) went to Hilmand farmers and 874 million (15 per cent) to Nangarhar farmers" (UNODC, 2009).

Bove (2009) mentions that only in Helmand province there are between 600 and 6000 traders involved in opium trade. " Between 2003 and 2009, Afghan farmers earned more than US\$ 6.4 billion from opium poppy cultivation, and Afghan traffickers approximately US\$ 18 billion from local opiate processing and trading. Today, Afghanistan provides 93% of the global supply of opium and over 90% of the heroin trafficked into the UK Despite increasing efforts by the international community, and ISAF forces, to eradicate the cultivation of poppy" (Bove, 2009).

According to Goodhand (2010), an estimated 76% of the revenue generated from opium trade goes to the pockets of smugglers while the remaining amount flows to the farmers. Moreover, some amount of the money is also allocated for bribing the security officials. Opium's value in the international market is also playing a major role in opium production and its part in Afghanistan's illicit economy. According to UNODC (2009), the value of global opium market is around \$7 billion while the combined market of heroin/ opium is around \$60- 65 billion per year. This amount is higher than the GDP of 120 countries and equal to the GDP of Vietnam (\$71billion).

Meanwhile, one kilogram of heroin in Afghanistan is priced around \$3, 200 while the same heroin is priced at \$150, 000- 170, 000. "The estimated worth of opiates trafficked through the Afghanistan/Iran border is US\$ 1 billion. Iranian opiate users spend around US\$ 1.4 billion a year. European opiate users spend more than ten times that amount on Afghan heroin and opium, an average of US\$ 20 billion/year " (UNODC, 2009). UNODC in Global Afghan Opium Trade Report in 2011

mentions that Taliban earned \$155 million in 2009 from opium trade while \$2.2 billion went to the pockets of drug traffickers and \$440 million to the farmers. The report adds that Afghanistan produced 84% of world's heroin while the remaining amount was produced by Myanmar, Mexico, India, Colombia and Laos.

### **Drug Trafficking**

Drug trafficking is one of the high profit activities related to the narcotics in Afghanistan. This billions of dollars worth trade is run in several countries by smugglers and traffickers and therefore plays a major role in running an illicit economy in Afghanistan.

Drug trafficking and trade in Afghanistan surged during the 1960s and 70s when the opium cultivated in Afghanistan was easily sneaked to Iran. In 1955 Iran's Shah banned poppy cultivation because the number of addicts in that country reach an alarming size of more than one million people. The banning of poppy in Iran eventually encouraged farmers in Afghanistan to grow this plant and to smuggle them into Iran (MacDonald, 1992).

According to MacDonald (1992), "Despite partial reactivation of Iran's poppy crop, Afghan opium production continued to grow, with Iran as its major market in the early 1970s. Afghan traffickers found the movement of opium into Iran relatively easy and well worth the effort, despite the imposition of the death penalty for drug smuggling. Clashes with Iranian law enforcement forces along the Afghan-iranian border were frequent." The drug flow to Iran continued until the 1980s when Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan leading to a decade long resistance by so-called Mujahidin. During the war between the Soviet troops and Mujahidin, Afghanistan's major infrastructures such as water dams, canals, and roads were destroyed leaving people with less income and growing poverty. The events lead to wast poppy cultivation around the country and specially in the areas controlled by Mujahidin (Carpenter, 2004).

Local warlords and drug traffickers took advantage of loose government control on some parts of the country in 1980s and 1990s. Moreover, the two decades of war eventually destroyed everything. Farmers were no more able to store their crops and transport them as soon as possible to the market (UNODC, 2003). Therefore, Afghan farmers focused on growing opium as this plant did not need facilities such as storage centers, marketing and transportation facilities. "Opium does not face these limitations. It is durable, easy to store and carry to the market. Opium markets, in any case, operated like spot and futures markets, with traders providing credit for future production, buying the opium in local bazaars or even at the farmgate, and traffickers taking over the marketing" (UNODC, 2003).

Opium in Afghanistan is not traded in huge amounts. Its small and rapid turnover business. Ward & Byrd (2004) adds that because of new methods of opium seizure by neighboring countries, most of Afghan drug traders process opium into heroin and morphine inside Afghanistan. "Despite some local market concentration, there is no evidence of cartels, but there is large interpenetration of the opium economy with local and central political interests, and many millions of people participate in the profits, in a broad network of protection and pay-offs. Drug profits are clearly financing local warlords and the political elite, but also sustain the livelihoods of many quite poor people" (Byrd & Ward, 2004).

It is important here to know how the opium is collected and then sold in the international markets. According to Shaw (2006), the process of opium collection and trafficking is often complicated. It is more like a pyramid, with the farmers located at the bottom and key traffickers located at the top.

Drug trafficking is directly connected with the demand inside Afghanistan and in global drug markets. Demand and supply of the drugs are also determining the prices and level of drug production. Therefore it is necessary to shed some light on demand and supply of drugs.

### **Demand and Supply**

#### *A- Europe*

According to the European Drug Report 2013 issued by European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), at least 85 million European adults have used drugs at some point in their life. The report further adds that most of them (77 million) have used cannabis, 14.5 million have used cocaine, 12.7 million have taken amphetamines, and 11.4 million have taken ecstasy in their life. In 2011, there were 1.2 million heroin abusers in Western and Central Europe. The market value there was around \$13 billion (Global Afghan Opium Trade report, 2011).

UNODC World Drug Report 2013 mentions that Cannabis to Europe are exported by Morocco and Afghanistan. In 2011, 12,000 hectares of cannabis were grown in Afghanistan and most of them were smuggled into Europe through Balkan

region. European Drug report 2013 claims that most heroin found in Europe are manufactured in Afghanistan and points to the Balkan and Central Asia as main routes for drug smuggling into Europe.

Furthermore, World Drug Report by UNODC in 2010 singles out Western Europe as the leading heroin market in the world. According to the report, England, Italy, and France make half of this market. The report adds that most of the heroin consumed in this market is supplied by Afghanistan and smuggled through Balkan route. The demand for heroin in this market is around 85 metric tons while Afghanistan exports 140 metric tons of heroin with some amount being seized on route in Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey.

The money made by Afghan drug traders from smuggling and selling heroin in Europe is huge. According to the World Drug Report 2010, a kilogram of heroin in Afghanistan is ranged less than \$ 3,000 while the same amount of heroin is sold for \$ 10, 300 and \$ 11, 000 in Turkey and \$ 44, 300 in West and Central Europe.

#### *B- Russian Federations*

The second largest heroin market in the world is Russian Federation. According to Victor Ivanov, Head of Federal Drug Agency, there were 537, 000 registered drug addicts in Russia while some NGOs have reported five times more number of addicts. He in a press conference on Feb 12, 2009 said “Around 90% of the drug addicts in Russia are addicted to Afghan opiates; are hooked on the ‘Afghan needle,’” (Douglas, 2009). This clearly shows that Afghanistan is the major supplier of heroin to Russia. According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2010, 25% of Afghanistan’s heroin (98 metric tons) are annually exported to Russia through northern route. The report also claims the number of opiate users in Russia to be around 1.6 and 1.8 million. Moreover, some 37% of those drug users are also suffering from HIV.

Furthermore, the drug problem in Russia as claimed by Ivanov has also resulted in declining population. Douglas (2009) adds that “ from a level of nearly 150 million people during the breakup of Soviet Union in 1991, the population of Russian Federation has fallen under 142 million, while half a million addicts have died since 2001.”

According to the Global Afghan Opium Trade Report 2011, some 16.5 million people use opiates annually, which generate \$ 68 billion in revenues. The report adds that Afghanistan exported 1,300 tons of opium in 2009. The mentioned amount was trafficked to Europe, Middle East and Russia through different routes.

#### **Drug Trafficking routes**

Looking at the numbers of drugs being consumed in the world market, it remains necessary to know about how such huge amounts of drugs get into those markets. How smugglers are able to get drugs there. And which routes are used for the drug smuggling.

According to the World Drug Report 2013, drugs are trafficked and transported by three modes of transportation; road and rail, maritime, and air. The maritime trafficking makes 11 percent of all drugs trafficked.

It is worth mentioning that the drugs produced in Afghanistan are reaching Europe and America through different routes. These routes go through Iran, Pakistan, and Central Asia. In 2009, some 365 tons of heroin was exported by Afghanistan. 160 tons of which was smuggled through Pakistan, 115 tons through Islamic Republic of Iran, and 90 tons were smuggled and trafficked through Central Asian countries (UNODC, 2009).

According to the UNODC report, there are three main routes of drug trafficking in Afghanistan. One route goes through Helmand, Nimroz, Farah, and Herat provinces to the Islamic Republic of Iran. The second route goes through northern provinces into the Central Asia. The third route goes through Zabul, Nimroz and Helmand provinces to the Baluchistan province of Pakistan.

Meanwhile, in the World Drug Report 2010, UNODC mentions that Balkan and Central Asia are the main routes for Afghan drugs to reach Russian Federation and Western European countries. The trade on this route is worth \$13 billion. Drug traffickers are taking full advantage of Afghanistan’s open border with Pakistan. In southern Afghanistan, there is only official border post in Chaman area of Pakistan while Helmand (leading drug producer) and Nimruz have no official posts between the two countries which makes it easy for the traffickers to smuggle drugs into Pakistan (UNODC, 2010).

*The Balkan Route:* the Balkan route is seen as the shortest route of getting drugs into the European Market. This route goes through Iran to Turkey and then to the former Yugoslavians countries. According to the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) Report 2008, from Turkey, the drug routes are then split into southern and northern.

The southern branch goes through Greece, Albania, Macedonia, Italy, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia. The northern route goes through Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Germany, and Netherlands.

Turkey plays the main role of regional hub for drugs because of its geographical location. The country has also stepped up its operations of seizing drugs. According to a joint report of EUROPOL and EMCDDA (2013), Turkey seized 16 tons of drugs in 2009 compared to 10 tonnes in 2006. The report then adds that north-western European countries such as Netherlands and Belgium are then playing the distributor role for heroin in Europe.

According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2010, 37% of Afghanistan's heroin is exported to Europe through the Balkan route. The report adds that 105 metric tons of heroin is annually exported from Herat, Nimroz and Farah province into the Islamic Republic of Iran. 85 metric tons of heroin is smuggled through land and sea to Europe while 10 metric tons reach Europe by air.

The final destination for Afghan heroin in Europe is United Kingdom. "The United Kingdom is clearly a final destination market for some of the heroin smuggled along the Balkan route, although direct importation by air from Pakistan is also frequently mentioned. Heroin interceptions in the United Kingdom peaked at nearly 4 tonnes in 2001, but have been declining since then, reaching 833 kg in 2010," (EUROPOL & EMCDDA, 2013).

Tons of drugs are also smuggled to Europe through the northern Balkan route. According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2010, this route is also divided into three small routes:

- Islamic Republic of Iran – Azerbaijan – Georgia – Black Sea – Ukraine and/or Bulgaria;
- Islamic Republic of Iran – Caspian Sea – Russian Federation/Caucasus – Black Sea – Ukraine and/or Bulgaria;
- Afghanistan – Central Asia – Caspian Sea– Azerbaijan/Caucasus.

Regarding how drugs are smuggled from Afghanistan to Europe, UNODC World Drug Report 2010 explains that first the drugs are loaded on trucks in Afghanistan which are escorted by organized and well-armed smugglers. The drugs are then smuggled into Iran and handed over to the Iranian traffickers who then smuggle them into Turkey with the help of Kurds. Meanwhile Some amount of the drugs are then smuggled through Azerbaijan into Russia and Europe (UNODC, 2010).

According to the EMCDDA (2008), drugs in the Balkan region are transported by trucks and buses while some are also smuggled through ports and by car. Moreover, the drugs are then sold and handed over to different traffickers along the route who then divides them into several small portions.

This route is quite vital for the illicit drug economy of Afghanistan. According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2010, Europe on daily basis consumes 250 kg of heroin and annually 85- 90 metric tons with a value of \$ 20 billion.

*The Southern Route:* the southern route goes through Pakistan to several destinations such as Europe, Middle East, even US and Canada. According to Shelley & Hussain (2009), a quarter of Afghan drugs are easily smuggled into Pakistan through the tribal border area with limited government control over it. " In particular, Waziristan, the NWFP, and the Swat Valley have become increasingly destabilized and fertile territory for drug smuggling," (Shelley & Hussain, 2009). According to the Global Afghan Opium Trade Report 2011, 160 tons of Afghan opium was trafficked to Pakistan in 2011. Some of the mentioned amount is used by domestic addicts while some of that is trafficked into Iran and Middle East.

UNODC World Drug Report 2010 mentions that Afghanistan share 2,500 km long border with Pakistan almost making it impossible for the border police of both sides to have a proper control over it. The report further adds that 40% of Afghan heroin/ morphine is smuggle to Pakistan intended for local use and smuggling to other countries. Meanwhile Pakistani consumers use 80 metric tons of opium annually with most of it sourced in Afghanistan.

According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2010, Afghan drugs in Pakistan are then smuggled to other parts of the world through these main routes:

- towards China via Gilgit (northern areas) by road;
- towards India through the NWFP-Chakwai/Rawalpindi-Saikhote- Wagha route;

- towards Karachi via the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP)-Rawalpindi-Chawai- Faisabad-Mutan-Sukkur route.
- towards eastern Islamic Republic of Iran by road and rail for onward movement towards Turkey and Western Europe. Towards Gwadar port or the smaller fishing ports and open areas of the Makran coast or the main ports of Karachi and Port Qasim and further to international destinations via air or sea, mostly using cargo containers.

*Northern Route:* Opium from Takhar, Badakhshan, and Kunduz provinces of Afghanistan is trafficked to Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan and then smuggled into the Russian Federations (Afghanistan Opium Trade, 2009). According to the World Drug Report 2010, 20% of all Afghan heroin is trafficked into the Central Asian Republics towards the Russian Federations. The report adds that Russia consumes 71 metric tons of heroin annually while the CARs heroin demand is around 11 metric tons. Afghanistan and CARs have nine crossings with two of them located over the rivers.

The drugs trafficked through these routes are worth billions of dollars. The mentioned amount is distributed among the sellers, traffickers, and farmers involved in this business. Looking at this huge amount, there remains the question of how such huge amount of money is transferred. It is obvious that it is impossible to be transferred through banks. Therefore, in order to transfer the money, those involved in this business use Hawala as the only solution. So here it is important to know about the Hawala system, and its role in drugs trade.

### **Hawala**

*Definition and process:* Hawala is Arabic word which means to transfer. In the past, before the establishment of banks, Hawala was used to transfer money without physically moving it. The system works in a way that a person hands over some amount of money in a country to *Hawaladar* and in return gets a code from that person. He can then give that code to his family member or someone else to collect the money from another *Hawaladar* in another country. The code means that the *Hawaladar* has received money in country A, and therefore his partner in country B can pay that amount to the person carrying the code (Bowers, 2009). Thompson (nn) states that Hawala means the practice of transferring money and value from one place to another through service providers called *Hawaladars*.

Regarding the origins of Hawala, Faith (2011) mentions that Hawala was first originated in India and has been running for the last three centuries. The Economic Expert Website (2010) states that the Hawala system was first used by the traders in Silk Road area, Mideiterranean Sea, and Indian Ocean.

According to (Jost & Sandhu, 2000), Hawala is preferred by some people for the reasons such as effectiveness, efficiency, reliability, lack of bureaucracy, lack of paper trail, and tax evasion. Hawala is effective because it has low costs attached to it. Usually, *Hawaladars* charge 1 to 2 percent of the amount transferred. They might also provide discount and fewer charges if transferring amount belongs to their relatives or friends (Maimbo, 2003).

Moreover, it is efficient because the money transferred through Hawala takes less than 48 hours, while such a transfer through a bank will take at least a week. Hawala is reliable because it works on trust between the *Hawaladar* and the person who wants to transfer the money. Maimbo (2003) states that, transferring money from Kabul to Peshawar, Dubai and London will take 6 up to 12 hours and will possibly take lesser time if both sender and recipient are sitting in the *Hawaladar's* office at the same time.

Furthermore, Hawala requires less paper work compared to the banks and leaves no trail behind. In addition, transferring money through Hawala is the best way to evade taxes as no records of such transactions are kept, and they are hard to be traced (Jost & Sandhu, 2000).

The Hawala process consists of three main functions: money exchange, the sending and receiving of money, and the settlement of transactions. In Hawala trust is very important. Therefore, it is common to see several brothers running a Hawala business (Thompson, nn).

### *Hawala and illicit drug money in Afghanistan*

After two decades of war, in 2001 the financial sector of Afghanistan was found destroyed with banks looted and their equipments destroyed. The Afghanistan Bank faced four key problems such as lack of skilled staff, banking hardware and software, poor payments of telecommunications networks, and existence of outdated legal and regulatory framework (Maimbo, 2003).



Therefore, with no formal banking system operating, Afghans turned to Hawala for money transfer purposes. Hawala in Afghanistan existed for centuries has thus provided reliable and safe services. Maimbo (2003) states that “the quality and utility of the hawala service have led some observers to suggest that the Afghan financial authorities should consider encouraging some of the hawaladars to convert their thriving enterprises into formal banking enterprises.”

According to the (Thompson, 2006), Hawala has been vital in keeping Afghanistan’s economy running during and after the war. In a country where only 36% of the population is literate and only 13 banks are active, Hawala remains the best option to transfer licit and illicit money. Before 1979’s coup, Indian and Pakistani Hawaladars handled Afghanistan’s Hawala services, but Afghans joined them and took control of the domestic money transfer market during the civil war. Currently there are around 2000 Hawaladars in Afghanistan (Maimbo, 2003).

As mentioned before, Hawala is used to transfer money from Afghanistan to abroad or vice versa. Drugs trade is one of the externally generated incomes of Afghanistan, which means that the income generated from that in order to be distributed among the chain of people involved in drugs, needs to be transferred through Hawala. In 2005, drugs contributed \$2.7 billion (half of Afghanistan GDP) to the economy which mainly went to the commanders and traffickers, and secondly to the farmers. In 2004-05, Afghan hawaladars transferred \$5 to \$6 billion money to Afghanistan. This included \$1.7 billion of opium income (Thompson, 2006). Meanwhile, Hancock (2008) states, that NGOs have transferred millions to Afghanistan through the Hawala system. He adds that, “the major international transactions through Hawala ranged between \$100,000 and \$ 200,000, while single transactions between major financial centers such as Kabul and Peshawar ranged between \$ 500, 000 and \$1,000,000.”

After the fall of Taliban, International NGOs were reported to have transferred \$200 million through Hawala system in Afghanistan. Moreover, the NGOs in order to pay the salaries of their employees, used Hawala to transfer the amount. At that moment, there were no private functional banks in Afghanistan (Hancock, 2008).

Regarding the role of Hawala in drug trafficking, Thompson (2006) states that the location of Helmand and Kandahar provinces that produces more than 40% of Afghanistan’s opium, makes it ideal for Hawaladars to transfer huge amounts of illicit money. A saraf who was asked to tell about the relationship between Helmand and Kandahar Hawala markets said “you may as well see them as one and the same market” (Thompson, 2006).

According to Hancock (2008), the drugs in southern Kandahar and Helmand provinces account for %80- 90 of all Hawala funds. In Helmand province, there are five key centers where drugs are traded and Hawalas are conducted:

- Sangin District Center
- Lashkar Gah City
- Dishaw District border area
- Musa Qala District Center
- Grishk District Center

“According to the hawaladars sampled in both Kandahar city and at sites in Helmand, the median estimated number of significant financial traders ‘specializing’ in the transfer of drug money in both provinces totals 54” (Thompson, 2006, 177).

Meanwhile, monitoring of hawaladars and tracing the source and recipient of hawala is difficult. It is mainly because hawaladars do not keep the records, hide their transactions, no one supervises them, and have close connection with corrupt officials (Maimbo, 2003). He further adds that because of the following reasons, it is difficult to track illegal money transferred through hawala:

- Lack of transnational cross border monitoring
- Lack of reporting for large cash transactions
- Lack of unified rules and regulations
- Black market economies

- Little ability to share financial information with law enforcement agencies

It is clear that there is a nexus between the drugs and hawala, but a third angle of terrorism also appears to be linked with these two. Not all the drug money goes into the pockets of farmers, while some goes to the traffickers and the remaining goes to insurgents who in return provide protection to the farmers and traffickers.

### **Chapter Six: Drugs, Insurgency, and the reaction of Afghan and International Community**

While in the previous chapter we discussed the social and economic impact of narcotics in Afghanistan, here it is necessary to discuss the role of drugs in insurgency and the reaction of Afghan and international community strategy of counter- narcotics.

Insurgency is a mixture of social and economic impact of narcotics in Afghanistan. On the one hand, drug addicts who are unemployed are often lured by payments offered by the insurgents; on the other hand, insurgents fund their activities by providing protection to the farmers and drug dealers. Moreover, since the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the opium cultivation has boomed in Afghanistan. The cultivation boom has also brought insurgency with it, mainly in the southern and eastern provinces where opium is widely cultivated (UNODC, 2013).

Such a wave of insurgency and drugs have forced the Afghan government and international community to combine counter-terrorism and counter- narcotics strategies together. In this chapter, we will discuss the links between insurgency and drugs and effectiveness of counter- narcotic strategy.

In this chapter, we will be discussing the link between insurgency and drugs in Afghanistan. Insurgency remains one of Afghanistan's unsolved problems since the U.S. invasion in 2001. Despite the deployment of thousands of international troops, insurgency is increasing day after day. Most researchers and commanders of the international troops in Afghanistan believe that insurgents finance their activities through opium production in Afghanistan.

#### **Taliban (Insurgents)**

The word 'Taliban' is the plural of 'Talib' in Arabic which means 'students' and is often referred to those who study in madrasa or schools (Nolan, 2006). Taliban is a word often referred to a group of armed militia with strict Islamic rules that controlled most parts of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. After the U.S in 2001, Taliban fled to Pakistan but again resurfaced in 2005. Here it is important to know who they are and how they profit from opium in Afghanistan.

Civil war erupted in 1989 after the withdrawal of invading Soviet Union troops in 1989. The mujahidin who once fought against the invading troops were now fighting with each other over the control of Kabul. In 1992, the Soviet- backed Kabul government collapsed leaving vacuum of power behind (Johnson & Mason, 2006). According to Nolan (2006), the west abandoned Mujahidin and eventually left them on their own. The Mujahidin who were once receiving millions of dollars in support from the west were now running out of money and therefore started fighting each other on resources. The civil war left millions of Afghan displaced, wounded, and killed. The majority of displaced Afghans took refuge in Pakistan where their children went to the schools and madrasas funded by Saudi Arabia (Bajoria, J. 2011).

At that time, Saudi Arabia was investing heavily in schools and madrasas in Pakistan in order to teach Wahabi version of Islam. Afghan refugees attended these educational centers and then recruited as Taliban by Pakistan's ISI with the financial support of Saudi Arabia (Johnson & Mason, 2006). The first wave of Afghan refugees in 70s and 80s were targeted by radicals in Pakistan. They were viewed anti- soviets and were in favor of radical Islam (Nolan, 2006).

In 1994, with the help of ISI and Saudi Arabi, Taliban started their offensive from Southern Kandahar province. They quickly managed to capture territory and clean them from Mujahidin. Moreover, they were met with less resistance and were warmly welcomed by Afghans who saw them better than the Mujahidin (Nolan, 2006).

in 1996, Taliban captured all territories in south and east of the country and surrounded Kabul which was still contested between the Mujahidin. "They gained an initial territorial foothold in the southern city of Kandahar, and over the next two years expanded their influence through a mixture of force, negotiation, and payoffs. In 1996, the Taliban captured capital Kabul and took control of the national government" (Bajoria, J. 2011). Taliban's rule characterized as a strict type of Shria law carried harsh punishments for criminals and banning female education. At the beginning, Taliban won hearts of many Afghans who were tired of local warlords, by punishing or expelling those warlords. At the meantime, they also established

Amr Bil Marof Wa Nahi An Munkir ( Promotion of Virtue and Suppression of Vice) to strengthen their role and punishing those who violated their strict rules, which lead to fear among the people (Johnson & Mason, 2006). Taliban forced women to wear head-to- toe veils, banning televisions, and punishing men who shaved their beards (Bajoria, J. 2011).

In 1996, Mullah Mohammad Omer was appointed Amir ul Momenin of Afghanistan by an Ulema shura (council) in southern Kandahar province. From 1996, until 2001, Taliban controlled 90% of Afghanistan's territory (Johnson & Mason, 2006). In 1996, Taliban gave sanctuary to Osama Bin Laden who was wanted by the U.S for embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. In 1998, Saudi Arabia cut its financial aid to Taliban because of Taliban's refusal to expel Bin Laden. During this period, the United Nation's Security Council imposed strict economic restrictions on Taliban. This situation left Taliban in financial crisis, forcing them to take active part on opium business (Peters, 2009).

In 2001, Al Qaeda carried out 9/11 terrorist attack on World Trade Center in New York, killing and wounding thousands. The attack sent shockwaves around the world and demanded a strong response from the international community. After the attacks, U.S. asked Taliban to handover Osama Bin Laden or face the consequences of their actions. Taliban strongly rejected the demand and insisted on their respect for the hospitality (Bajoria, J. 2011). In October 2001, the U.S. armed forces alongside its international allies launched a full-scale operation called 'Enduring Freedom' against Taliban. At the same time, the Northern Alliance and some Pashtun tribal leaders including Hamid Karzai began fighting against Taliban from inside Afghanistan. During the first days of the operation, Taliban resisted strongly despite losing thousands of soldiers, but their resistance eventually broke when Northern Alliance capture Kunduz and swept through territories in the North (Nolan, 2006).

After the fall of Taliban, their commanders fled to Pakistan or hid in Kandahar and Helmand provinces. At that time, 4,500 international troops were in Afghanistan and based in Kabul province. The US followed the 'light-footprint' strategy, which meant fewer troops on the ground and more dependency on local commanders. With no strong military presence in South, Taliban resurfaced and regrouped. They started getting orders from Mullah Mohammad Omer, recruiting soldiers, and buy arms (Peters, 2009). Taliban slowly gained influence in the South and East and even further expanded it to the West of the country. Despite the deployment of one hundred thousand troops, the US and NATO were unable to crush Taliban. Moreover, growing corruption, injustice, unemployment and insecurity decreased Afghan population's support for the government. In 2006, Taliban had 12,000 soldiers in Zabul, Oruzgan and Kandahar provinces, where they frequently targeted Afghan and international security forces (Johnson & Mason, 2006).

The emergence of Taliban is also coincided with the increase in opium cultivation in Afghanistan. As we will discuss later, UNODC and several other organizations have reported links between Taliban and opium in the South and East of Afghanistan. They accuse Taliban of protecting the harvests and taxing the production. According to the UNODC Opium Trade Report 2009, Taliban's income from opium trade between 2005- 2008 was around \$200- 400 million. The report adds that weapons are purchased and salaries of insurgents paid from the mentioned amount.

### **How opium benefits insurgents**

The role of opium and drugs in insurgency studied in several countries indicate that insurgents have shown strong interest in financing their activities through the illicit economy. The Islamic Movement in Uzbekistan and FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) are funding their activities through drugs trade (Afghan Opium Trade, 2009). Therefore, the links between insurgency and drugs in Afghanistan were noted when insurgents resurfaced in 2004.

According to Bove (2011), insurgents in Afghanistan benefit from various points of drug chain. They impose taxes during the cultivation, provide security for the transportation, and protect them from eradication. He claims that insurgents gained \$200-400 million in 2006-2007, and \$450- 600 million between 2005 and 2008 from drugs. The income is mainly generated from four sources: levies on opium farmers; protection charges of laboratories; transit fees on convoys; and taxation of chemicals imported for opium processing. Afghan Opium Trade report (2009) states that Taliban's primary sources of funding are:

- Private donations and foreign charities
- Taxes imposed on population under their area of control and influence
- Criminal activities such as drug, human, and arms trafficking; kidnapping and extortion .

Taliban first resurfaced in 2004 in Southern and Eastern provinces of Afghanistan. At that moment, these were the areas where farmers grew opium. Taliban immediately started creating problems for the incapable Afghan security forces by attacking their checkpoints and abducting their personnel. Their aim was to create a gap between the government and farmers

(Felbab-Brown, 2010). The situation motivated the farmers to grow opium and therefore Afghanistan's opium production surged in 2006 by 60% compared to the previous year (UNODC, 2007). But before that, the Afghan government launched opium eradication campaign in 2003. The aim of the campaign was to eradicate opium and compensate Afghan farmers. Felbab-Brown (2010) adds that " after the failure of a compensated eradication scheme in 2003, counternarcotics efforts shifted to beefed-up interdiction and uncompensated eradication. Conducted by local Afghan officials, interdiction efforts frequently targeted vulnerable small traders as well as competition, while increasing the profits of those who carried out interdiction. "

In 2006- 2007 insurgents strengthened their presence in South and East of the country, slowly driving Afghan security forces out of the remote areas and districts. This on the one hand provided them with safe heavens inside Afghanistan, and on the other hand, gave them territory to rule and control (Ebrahim, 2010). Furthermore, insurgents started imposing strict laws, regulations, and establishing mobile courts leading to no government control and reconstruction projects.

### *Ushr*

Ushr is derived from Arabic word Ashr meaning ten and it is collected from farmers growing opium or other products (Peters, 2009). Ushr is a kind of tax imposed by Taliban in order to finance their activities. According to (Peters, 2009), Taliban ordered local Mullahs to impose 10% agricultural tithes from the farmers growing opium or any other product. The Mullahs would then collect the Ushr and hand them over to the local commanders of Taliban. Ushr was first imposed during the Taliban rule in 1999. According to Rubin (2000), Taliban collected \$15 million from Ushr in 1999. The amount shows that Taliban raised less money from opium cultivation than opium trade. Meanwhile, Afghan Opium Trade report 2009 claims that the income generated from Ushr was around \$75- 100 million annually in the second half of 1990s.

According to the Afghanistan Opium Survey 2007, almost all farmers in the South and East of Afghanistan paid 10% of Ushr to the local Mullah or Taliban commanders. Between 2005- 2008, the farm-gate value of total opium produced in Afghanistan was \$ 2 billion and therefore 10% of that amount (\$200 million) was paid as Ushr to the Taliban (Afghan Opium Trade, 2009). In some areas controlled by Taliban, the sub-commanders are responsible for the collection of Ushr. Peters (2009) mentions that the sub-commanders issue written receipts of the Ushr collection and submit the amount collected with the higher commanders. The process of Ushr collection is closely watched and monitored, and therefore any kind of misuse of it is strongly punished by the commanders. Ushr is not only imposed on opium but also on other crops such as wheat and rice, therefore making the income of Taliban much higher than the Ushr collected from opium (Afghan Opium Trade, 2009).

### *Zakat*

According to Sharia, Zakat is a tax that is imposed on a wealth levied 2.5% or one--fortieth (Rubin, 2009). Besides Ushr, Taliban also started collecting 20% Zakat, on trucks loaded with opium. "In the southern provinces, the Taliban began collecting 20 percent zakat, an Islamic levy, on truckloads of opium as they left farm areas," (Peters, 2009, 12). According to the Afghan Opium Trade report 2009, *Zakat* is 2.5% wealth tax imposed on low- level traders or farmers. It is more or less voluntarily paid depending on the income of the payer. Rubin (2000) states that the income generated from Zakat were annually \$30 million in the second half of 1990s.

Another source of income generated from opium trade is free pass. It means that Taliban will charge any truck loaded with opium from their controlled area. The Taliban will collect \$4 (200 Afs) per kilogram of opium from every truck and will provide them with free passage through their controlled area (Afghan Opium Trade, 2009). Moreover, Farooq Khan, who runs a telephone shop in Musa Qala district of Southern Helmand province, claimed that Taliban imposed \$50 per truck of opium in their district (Peters, 2009).

Furthermore, Taliban also derive their income by protecting the opium convoys in volatile areas of Afghanistan. In such cases, Taliban will provide much needed protection to the convoys and will receive 2.5 percent of the completely smuggled amount (Afghan Opium Trade, 2009). Peters (2009) writes, "More than 65 percent of people said the Taliban's main activities related to drugs were providing security for opium crops as they grew and then protecting drug shipments as they leave the farm area.94 these fees can range up to 20 percent of the consignment."

In order to boost their income, Taliban started extorting national enterprises. In Zabul province, Taliban asked the private mobile phone carriers to pay them taxes and apparently blew some antennas when they refused (Peters, 2009). A stronger link between the Taliban and opium was noticed in Paktika province when trucks were used to smuggle drugs out and weapons in to Afghanistan (Afghan Opium Trade, 2009).

Taliban also impose taxes on heroin labs working in their areas. In 2007, when the coalition troops captured Musa Qala district, they found 50 heroin labs belonging to the Taliban. In each lab, 50 to 60 people were said to be working (Peters, 2009).

Meanwhile, forced eradications and little compensation helped growing influence and presence of Taliban in Southern and Eastern Provinces. The eradications strengthened Taliban in four ways: poor Afghan farmers are too reliant on opium as their main source of income, and therefore the eradication of that left them in disarray and further poverty resulting in disconnection between them and local government officials. The forced eradications also encouraged farmers to contact local Taliban and seek protection during the harvesting seasons. The farmers paid Taliban for such services. The forced eradications further cemented ties between the farmers and Taliban and therefore limiting cooperation between them and NATO troops on the ground. Finally, the eradications also left farmers further deep in debt and forcing them to flee the area (Felbab-Brown, 2010).

Taliban started taxing the output of heroin refineries about \$50- 70 per kg. These refineries shifted inside Afghanistan after Pakistani government cracked down them in FATA region. Meanwhile, in 1998, CIA reported a deal between Haji Bashir Noorzai and Taliban. The deal insisted that Taliban would get \$ 230 from every kg of heroin flown out of Afghanistan (Peters, 2009). Taliban's influence and controlled area in South and East grow rapidly in 2009. At the same year, 98% of opium cultivation also took place in these areas, enabling the insurgents to further raise taxes and income (Afghan Opium Trade, 2009).

### **Afghanistan- US counter-narcotics strategies**

Looking at the social, economic, and military impacts of narcotics in Afghanistan, the Afghan government and international community decided to implement counter-narcotics strategies that could best tackle the abovementioned problems.

Since the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the opium cultivation has peaked annually. After the Bonn Agreement in 2001, under the concept of "Lead Nations" several countries were tasked to assist specific field in Afghanistan such as UK was given the responsibility to tackle the drugs problem, US was tasked to train the Afghan Army, Germany to train Afghan National Police, and Italy to support judicial system of Afghanistan (Felbab-Brown, 2013). At first, the UK Government implemented 'compensated eradication' program that paid each farmer \$350 per jerib of land eradicated by the farmers themselves. For this purpose, the UK Government allocated \$71.75 million. The program was stopped due to the corruption and moral hazards (Felbab-Brown, 2013). In 2004, the policy of interdiction was undertaken which focused on targeting drug traffickers and processing laboratories. According to Felbab-Brown (2013), Afghan local commanders who used it to target their local rivals manipulated the mentioned policy.

At the beginning, the US forces avoided opium eradication and therefore only focused on chasing the bad people. According to Mercille (2012), until 2005, the US forces stayed away clear of narcotics in Afghanistan. In 2002, the US commander General Tommy Franks declared that the issue of narcotics was up to Afghans to solve it. Mercille (2012) mentions three main reasons for lack of US engagement in opium eradication in Afghanistan until 2005. One reason was that US by attacking Afghanistan wanted to prove that no one could challenge its security, while poppy played no role in challenging the US. Moreover, the Iraq invasion in 2003 totally diverted US focus from Afghanistan including opium.

The second reason was that the United States' local allies were involved in the drugs trade and therefore destroying their laboratories could have harmed their cooperation with the US. Furthermore, these allies were paying the salaries of their militias through the drug trade and thus drying that source by the US could have hindered their counter-terrorism efforts (Mercille, 2012).

According to Mercille (2012), the third reason was that the US wanted to win hearts and minds of Afghans and therefore destroying the crops of farmers and detaining them could have stopped the US forces from winning their hearts and minds.

The US eventually shifted its focus to opium in 2005 when the insurgents slowly resurfaced in some southern and eastern provinces of Afghanistan. Most importantly, these were the provinces where opium was widely cultivated. According to Jr & Russell (2012), the US Counter Narcotics responsibilities were distributed among several following agencies:

- The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) which works under the US State Department and is responsible for providing assistance in the fields of public information and eradication to the Afghan Government.



- The Office of National Drug Control Policy that coordinates with INL in providing guidance in counter narcotics policies
- The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) which is responsible in implementation of alternative livelihood projects in Afghanistan
- The US Department of Defense providing intelligence, logistics and protection to the eradication teams through Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs).

With the help of these agencies, the US Counter Narcotics Strategy in 2005 was drafted which consisted of five main pillars:

- Public Information
- Alternative Development
- Elimination/ Eradication
- Interdiction
- Law Enforcement/ Justice Sector Reform

#### 1- *Public Information*

According to the US counter-narcotics strategy 2007, public information pillar's aim was to help the Afghan Government spread awareness regarding the opium to its population through media and local teams. Moreover, through this pillar, the US Government wanted to inform the farmers and local elders about the side effects of opium, punishments affiliated with that, and alternatives provided by the international community.

The pre-planting campaign's goal was to reduce poppy cultivation by 15%, increase poppy free provinces, and maintain poppy reduction in some provinces (US Counter narcotics strategy, 2007).

#### 2- *Alternative Development*

Alternative development is the second pillar of US Counter Narcotics Strategy in Afghanistan. This aim of this pillar is to find an alternative for poppy. According to the strategy, the international community has been unable to find a crop that matches the income of poppy. Therefore, the strategy urges the US government to combine eradication with alternative as well as focusing on improvement of private sector. Meanwhile, according to the US Counter Narcotics Strategy 2010, the private sector and USAID have helped in reducing unemployment through establishment of factories and implementation of public projects. The strategy gives following examples in support of this statement:

- In 2009, Afghanistan exported apples to India for the first time because of the demand for apples caused by a draught in that country
- In mid- October 2009, an Afghan juice factory was opened in Kabul that will buy fruit from 50,000 farmers of several provinces
- USAID funded cash for work projects in several provinces. Such projects help in reducing unemployment and implementation of public benefit projects.

In 2012, the Afghan Government developed its own National Alternative Livelihood Policy to develop alternatives for poppy. The policy states that projects such as milk collection and diary, community-based seed enterprises, conservation agriculture, organic export of dried fruits, protected agriculture, production, processing and marketing of saffron, and production of electricity as an enterprise were successful in providing alternatives for poppy.

### 3- *Elimination/ Eradication*

According to the US Counter Narcotics Strategy 2007, the Elimination/ Eradication Pillar asked the US Government to help the Afghan Government in reducing poppy cultivation by launching incentives and building a credible eradication force. Based on that, in 2004, the Afghan Eradication Force was established consisting of 600-armed personnel. In the beginning of 2007, the force successfully eradicated poppy fields in some parts of the country but the progress slowed because of increasing attacks and lack of political will. According to Mercille (2012), the training of AEF trained by Dyncorps at cost of \$50 million was supervised by the US through the Ministry of Interior Affairs. In 2007, 19,000 hectares of land was cleared from opium because of AEF and Government Led Eradication efforts (Counter Narcotics Strategy, 2007).

In late 2008, the US forces' involvement in opium eradication campaign increased after Pentagon changed its rules of engagement to permit US troops to target drug traders, uncover drug stokes, and destroy laboratories (Marcille, 2012). According to Marcille (2012), the Obama Administration in 2009, decided to increase its focus on destruction of laboratories which could led to further disruption of opium trade. meanwhile, according to the US Counter Narcotics Strategy (2010), the administration also promoted the idea of air-spraying the opium fields but was rejected by the Afghan officials.

### 4- *Interdiction*

The aim of this pillar was to target high value drug traffickers and their shipments in the northern area of Afghanistan. In 2009, the Obama Administration also presented a list of 50 major drug traffickers to be targeted by the US troops in Afghanistan. The administration blamed them for having links with insurgents (Mercille, 2012). The list was met with strong reaction from Afghan Government who says that such list undermines their legal system and can trigger a backlash against foreign troops.

According to a report issued by *The Washington Times* in 2009, the US Government have arrested several major drug kingpins in Afghanistan including *Bashir Noorzai* in 2005 and *Baz Mohammad* extradited by Afghanistan Government in 2006. The report adds that Noorzai lured by the US officials to strike a deal in New York was detained there. It is thought that he has transferred some information on Mullah Mohammad Omer to the US. Baz Mohammad who was one of the founding members of Taliban Shura, was detained in 2006 and extradited to the US. He was convicted to 15 years in prison in Southern District of New York for drug conspiracy charges in 2007.

### 5- *Law Enforcement/ Justice Sector Reform*

The aim of this pillar was to strengthen the rule of law by training, equipping, and reforming the justice sector of Afghanistan. Based on this pillar, the US Government supported 70 justice and prosecution advisor in Kabul and 5 provinces in order to build a central justice system, expanding it to the provinces, and increasing international justice coordination. Meanwhile the Afghan government also increased its own efforts in curbing the narcotics problems.

According to the article 7 of Afghanistan Constitution, the state prevents all types of terrorist activities, production and consumption of intoxicants (muskirat), production and smuggling of narcotics. This article obliges the state to stop opium cultivation, smuggling and trade. Later on, based on this article, the Afghan government prepared Counter Narcotics Drug Law in 2005, which is drafted to combat drug related activities.

The first article of this law defines the bases of it stating that “this law is enacted pursuant to Article 7 of the Constitution of Afghanistan in order to prevent the cultivation of opium poppy, cannabis plants, and coca bush, and the trafficking of narcotic drugs, and to control psychotropic substances, chemical precursors, and equipment used in manufacturing, producing, or processing of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.”

The Counter Narcotics Drug Law also requires the Afghan Government to not only stop opium cultivation, smuggling, and trade, but to also punish those involved in it as well as take care of those addicted. Regarding the objectives of the law, article two says:

- The objective of this law is to prevent the cultivation of poppy, cannabis, coca bush, and prescribe penalties for those involved
- To regulate and control narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, chemical precursors, and substances and equipment used in the manufacture, production, or processing of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in order to prevent

their use for illicit purposes and to ensure their use for medical, scientific, research and industrial purposes in accordance with the provisions of the law

- To prescribe penalties for persons engaging in and to prevent the cultivation, production, processing, acquisition, possession, distribution, manufacture, trade, brokering, importation, exportation, transportation, offering, use, storage, and concealment of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and of the chemical precursors, other illicit substances, and equipment used for these illicit activities
- To coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the counter narcotics activities, policies, and programs of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
- To encourage farmers to cultivate licit crops instead of opium poppy, coca bush, and cannabis plants
- To establish health centers for detoxification, treatment, rehabilitation, and harm reduction services for drug-addicted and drug dependent persons in order to reintegrate them into society
- To attract the cooperation and assistance of national and international organizations in the task of combating cultivation, trafficking and use of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and the chemical precursors used in their production, manufacturing, and processing

Article of this law defines the certain terms used in the law. In the article four, the law classifies and regulates the types of drugs in Afghanistan. Article five of the law, regulates the appointment of a Drug Regulation Committee as follows:

- a) One medical and pharmaceutical expert from the Ministry of Health
- b) Two experts from Counter Narcotics Ministry
- c) And one Customs expert from the Ministry of Finance

One of the main duty of this committee is issuing licenses for some drugs used only for medical purposes. Article 7 of this law explains this process in details.

Chapter four and article 15 of this law explains the penalties and drug related offenses in detail. The articles states:

Any person who engages in the following acts without a license or authorization issued according to the provisions of this law has committed a drug trafficking offense and shall be punished in accordance with the provisions of this law:

- a) The production, manufacture, distribution, possession, extraction, preparation, processing, offering for sale, purchasing, selling, delivery, brokerage, dispatch, transportation, importation, exportation, purchase, concealment, or storage of any substance or mixture containing a substance listed in Tables 1 through 3 annexed to this law
- b) Any of the operations referred to in paragraph 1 of this article in relation to any chemicals or precursors listed in Table 4 for the illicit cultivation, production or manufacture of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances.

The law also imposes strict penalties for those involved in drug trafficking, cultivation and possession. Article 16 states:

Whoever commits a drug trafficking offense involving the following quantities of heroin, morphine, or cocaine, or any mixture containing those substances, shall be sentenced as follows:

- Less than 10 grams, imprisonment for between 6 months and one year, and a fine of between 30,000 Afs (\$600) and 50,000 Afs (\$1000)
- Between 10 grams and 100 grams, imprisonment for between one and three years, and a fine of between 50,000 (\$1,000) and 100,000 Afs (\$2,000)
- Between 100 grams and 500 grams, imprisonment for between three and five years, and a fine of between 100,000 Afs (\$2,000) and 250,000 Afs (\$5,000)

- Between 500g and 1kg, imprisonment for between seven and ten years, and a fine of between 300,000 Afs (\$6,000) and 500,000 Afs (\$10,000)
- Between 1kg and 5kg, imprisonment for between ten and fifteen years, and a fine of between 500,000 Afs (\$10,000) and 1,000,000Afs (\$20,000)
- Over 5kg, life imprisonment, and a fine of between 1,000,000 Afs (\$20,000) and 10,000,000Afs (\$200,000)

In order to arrest and detain opium farmers, traffickers, and traders, the Afghan Government and International Forces established Afghan Special Narcotics Force (ASNF) in 2003. The mission of this force was to carry out counter narcotics operations in Afghanistan. The Ministry of Interior Affairs directly controls the force (MOI).

According to the Afghanistan Ministry of Interior Affairs, the ASNF was later replaced by a more equipped and capable force called Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA). The force consists of 3000 personnel who are selected carefully after attending two months long police training course in Kabul. According to the US Counter Narcotics Strategy 2010, CNPA consists of the following units:

- *Sensitive Investigation Unit (SIU)*: The unit is made of 45 well-trained Afghan investigators whose job is to uncover the evidence, obtain information, and build cases against high- profile drug traffickers. The investigators were trained in Quantico, Virginia.
- *Technical Investigation Unit (TIU)*: The unit is made of 11 highly trained and capable Afghan interceptors who wire and listen to the calls of drug traffickers. These guys were trained in Quantico, Virginia.
- *National Interdiction Unit (NIU)*: It is a well-trained law enforcement unit which is responsible for executing search warrants, conducting raids, and arresting drug traffickers.

The mentioned police force hands over suspected drug dealers to the Criminal Justice Task Force (CJTF) of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Established in 2005, CJTF is responsible for the investigation of drug-related cases and sentencing the convicts. According to the CJTF, the organization constitutes of five departments:

- Investigation and Laboratory Department
- Administration and Finance Directorate
- General Prosecution
- Primary/ Appeal Tribunals
- Communication Department

The Investigation and Laboratory Department is responsible for investigation cases that are submitted by CNPA and other law enforcement agencies in Afghanistan. The department has 32 investigators that have so far successfully investigated 2457 cases of drugs and alcoholic beverages and 3107 suspects across the country.

According to the CJTF, the department of Finance and Administration is responsible for the day-to-day financial and management activities of this organization. The General Prosecution Department is responsible to prosecute the suspects and cases and transfer them to the primary court. The court is then responsible to hear the cases and sentence those convicted. In case of dissatisfaction with the decision of the primary court, the accused can appeal to the appeal court of CJTF.

In 2010-11, CJTF convicted 429 people for their involvement in drug- related crimes. In 2011-12, the court convicted 378 people while in 2012-13, the court has so far convicted 419 criminals.

The Afghan Government drafted its own Counter Narcotics Strategy in 2006 which consisted of eight pillars:

- Public Awareness
- International and Regional Cooperation

- Alternative Livelihoods
- Demand Reduction
- Law Enforcement
- Criminal Justice
- Eradication
- Institution Building

As discussed before in the US Counter Narcotics Strategy, five pillars of public awareness, alternative livelihood, law enforcement, eradication, and criminal justice are shared in both Afghan and US Counter Narcotic Strategies, but the pillars of international and regional cooperation, demand reduction, and institution building exists only in Afghanistan Counter Narcotics Strategy. Therefore, here we are going to discuss the remaining three Afghan pillars:

#### *International and Regional Cooperation*

According to this pillar, the Afghan Government will improve its cooperation with neighboring countries such as Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asia on narcotics related issue. According to the National Drug Control Strategy 2006, the Afghan Government will establish mutual- cooperation with its mentioned neighbors for better control of border and drug-related activities.

#### *Demand Reduction*

According to this pillar, the Afghan Government is responsible to reduce the demand for drugs as well as providing health treatment to those addicted. Based on this pillar, the Afghan Government drafted a five year National Drug Demand Reduction Policy from 2012-2016. The aim of this policy as described by the Ministry of Counter Narcotics is to prevent drug addiction, expand treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts (National Drug Demand Reduction Policy, 2012).

#### *Institution Building*

According to this pillar, the Afghan Government is responsible for the establishment of Counter Narcotics institutions that could better fight against drugs in the country. Based on this pillar, the Afghan Government with the help of international community has established Counter Narcotics Task Force, Afghan Eradication Force, and Counter Narcotics Tribunal (National Drug Control Strategy, 2006). According to the UNODC, the Afghan Ministry of Interior Affairs with the help of international community, established Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan that comprises of three sections: intelligence, investigation, and interdiction. Moreover, in May 2004, the Afghan Government established Central Poppy Eradication Force (CPEF) to eradicate poppy fields. In November 2004, the position of Deputy Minister for Counter Narcotics was established in the framework of the Ministry of Interior Affairs. Most notably, the Afghan Government established the Ministry of Counter Narcotics in December 2004.

### **Outcomes of Afghanistan-US Counter Narcotics Strategies**

#### *Eradication*

When the US troops in Afghanistan noticed the role of opium in destabilization of the country in 2005, they started funding the eradication teams and forces in Afghanistan. The trained teams were flown to the opium fields where they manually eradicated poppy. Nevertheless, such efforts were often geographically limited because of insecurity and corruption. According to Jr & Russell (2012), it has been estimated that 25% of Afghan parliament is involved in drugs. In one such case, nine tons of poppy was discovered in the basement of former governor of Helmand province who later became senator. In 2005, the eradication of poppy in eastern provinces was met with violent strikes and protests as well as attacks on troops (Felbab-Brown, 2013). These violent reactions were also one of the reasons behind the Afghan Government's decision to reject US offer of air-spraying the poppy fields (Jr & Rusell, 2012).

In some cases, the governors and their troops had only targeted poppy fields of their opponents and competitors or poor farmers that resulted in public disbelief on Afghan Government and international community (Jr & Rusell, 2012). At the



meantime, Afghan government and international community's inability in providing better alternatives and implementing public projects left thousands of families in poorer conditions. According to the Felbab-Brown (2013), alternative livelihood projects never materialized while case-for-work projects were only implemented in the cities of villages close to the city. He adds that some farmers who were deeply hurt by the forced eradication and sold their daughters as younger as three in order to pay their debts.

The main problem with eradication was that it was aimed at farmers rather than focusing on the roots of the problem. In fact, eradication even helped the rural population to turn against the government. The timing of eradication was also a sign of worry with most of eradications taking place during the harvesting season. Jr & Rusell (2012) mentions that eradication after the planting season may leave farmers with no other source of income during the whole season as well as forcing them to grow more poppy in the next season in order to cover their loses.

In 2008, the number of poppy-free provinces increased from 13 to 18 meaning that poppy was no cultivated in 18 out of 33 provinces of Afghanistan. Some military experts believed that this achievement was due to the forceful eradication of poppy fields. But some, such as Mansfield & Pain (2008) believe that other factors such as increase in wheat price, decrease in poppy demand, and public awareness campaigns played vital roles than eradication. Some farmers abandoned poppy for wheat and migration after the price of a kg of poppy fell down to \$60 in some central provinces, (Mansfield & Pain, 2008).

In fact, the eradication of poppy played no part in bankrupting the Taliban. Even before the surge in opium cultivation and its links with the insurgents, Taliban had already managed to establish their base in Pakistan with the help of that country, charities from Middle East and smuggling of goods across Afghanistan- Pakistan border (Felbab-Brown, 2013). In addition, the eradication played a key role in alienating local population from government and international community. According to Felbab-Brown (2013), eradication not only created distance between the local population and government but also between them and local influential elders who once supported the eradication and urged the residents to stop cultivating poppy. Most importantly, the eradication campaign also deprived the Afghan and international security forces from receiving vital intelligence about Taliban because the local residents cut their ties with them (Felbab-Brown, 2013).

#### *Alternative livelihood*

The aim of alternative livelihood initiative was to provide farmers with alternative crops, or other means that can ease the pain of poppy eradication or ban. Roads, small dams, canals, and irrigation systems were supposed to be constructed through this initiative but none of them took place. Despite some progress by USAID, the initiative failed to fulfill the expectations of local farmers. According to Jr & Rusell (2012), implementation of development projects in Nangarhar province between 2004 and 2005 were seen as a factor behind 96 percent poppy reduction, but such projects dismantled soon because of lack of goodwill, funds, and security.

In many cases, the alternative livelihood projects were not implemented in rural areas of the country because of insecurity and insurgency. In addition, some of these projects were also marred by corruption claims. Felbab-Brown (2013) mentions that insecurity in south of Afghanistan played a key role in slow reconstruction. He adds that the Kajaki dam reconstruction, which started after the fall of Taliban, is still underway.

Meanwhile, switching crops by farmers is not always achievable through alternative livelihood projects, but through some other factors such as economic, agricultural, and security. The shift from poppy to wheat in 2007 and 2008 in some provinces was the result of change in four factors: high wheat prices, decrease in poppy prices, pressure from government, and high demand for food products (Jr & Rusell, 2012).

#### **Conclusion**

Narcotics are one of the main problems faced by the world. Narcotic drugs on the one hand destroy the future generation of a country, while on the other hand, it damages the foundation of societies. According to the World Drug Report 2012, about 230 million people or 5 percent of the world's adult population have taken drugs once in 2010. This represents a huge number of addicts that are not only relying on state to treat them but are also involved in different types of crimes in order to fulfill their needs of buying drugs.

Drugs have their own social and economic impacts on each country including Afghanistan. According to the UNODC figures 2005, Afghanistan had around one million drug addicts with 740,000 male and 120,000 female addicts. In fact, one million people addicts in a population of around 32 million people shows the high rate of drug addiction. The Afghan Government alongside international community has failed to overcome the issue, therefore leaving room for further addictions.

On the one hand, one can blame the lack of treatment facilities, decades of war, poverty, and illiteracy as factors behind the rising addiction among Afghans, but on the other hand, one should also blame the easy-access to drugs in Afghanistan. For centuries, opium poppy has been cultivated in Afghanistan but in small amounts. The cultivation only hiked during the holy war against Soviet Union in 1980s. At that, the aim of opium poppy cultivation was to finance the holy war against the invading troops.

However, the trend continued even after the withdrawal of invading troops because of lack of finance from west to the resisting forces. During the civil war, the local commanders cultivated opium poppy to pay the salaries of their militias. In 1996, Taliban took the control of Kabul city and the opium poppy cultivation continued as usual. At the meantime, because of strict international sanctions and lack of recognition as well as trade between Afghanistan and foreign countries, the Taliban supported the cultivation of this poisonous plant in order to finance their regime. Nevertheless, in 2000 and 2001, after several meetings with UNODC officials, Taliban banned opium poppy. The ban eventually decreased Afghanistan's opium production by 90 percent.

Meanwhile, suspicion still exists among the researchers, on the real motivation of Taliban behind the ban on opium. Some believe that the main aim of banning opium poppy by Taliban was to gain international support and some sort of recognition, while others believe that the aim was to increase the demand for opium so that they can sell their stocks of it for higher prices.

The problem of opium poppy continues even after the establishment of western-backed Afghan government in 2001. Despite the establishment of Ministry of Counter Narcotics, Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan, Eradication Force of Afghanistan, Counter Narcotics Joint Task Force, and Counter Narcotics Tribunal; the opium poppy increased annually.

The increase in opium poppy production also caused increase in drug addiction, HIV patients, as well as transfer of illicit money and insurgency. In fact, it was the resurgence of Taliban and increase in opium poppy production in South and East of the country that most caught the attention of the international troops. In 2005, the Americans believe that they can no longer afford watching the rise in opium poppy production, thus deciding to target the main traffickers. Some military experts also pointed out to the strong links between insurgents and opium. They believe that Taliban protected the opium fields, collected taxes, and even provided safe passage and security to the traffickers.

At the meantime, the Afghan government is unable to deal with the social impact of narcotics such as rising drug addiction, treatment of HIV AIDS patients, and curbing the crime rate related to the drug-addicts. In addition, there are only few treatment centers available for the drug addicts and that run by NGOs such as WADAN and Nejat. In addition, the Afghan government has also failed in curbing the illegal transfer of money through Hawala. Every year, millions of drug money is transferred through Hawala, which often goes into the hands of insurgents.

Furthermore, the US and Afghan Government's Counter Narcotics strategies have not only failed to ripe results, but have also caused anger and further unrest among the poor and vulnerable farmers. Public information has only been provided to the farmers in secure areas, while leaving farmers in the insecure areas accessible to the insurgents. Eradication has failed badly after no alternative and compensation provided to the farmers. Moreover, forced eradications have resulted in displacement of families, further poverty, distrust among the people and government, and leniency towards the Taliban.

The reform of justice sector has been unsuccessful with the corruption rising day by day. According to the Transparency International, Afghanistan's judiciary sector remains the second corrupt institution after police. Interdiction has fallen into the wrong hands, with some officials targeting their competitors through it. The USG and Afghan Government are still looking to find an alternative to poppy that can yield higher income.

In conclusion, I want to say that the problem of opium poppy requires decades to be solved. In fact, it requires commitment from inside and outside Afghanistan. It can be achieved through setting real and achievable goals. Most of the country's infrastructure lies in ruins and less attention is devoted to it in the last decade. Illiteracy, poverty, and lack of security are still the main obstacles towards poppy-free country.

Eradicating or eliminating poppy from Afghanistan, is first impossible, but if even achieved, then it can further deepen poverty among the farmers. Currently opium poppy is the only income that can at least finance the basic needs of poor Afghans living in rural areas that have no access to clean water, electricity, and education.

Therefore, my solution would be to keep the farmers grow poppy opium for at least a decade and focus more on building the infrastructure, improving living conditions, and finding a good alternative for poppy. After a decade and achievement of mentioned goals, the Afghan government can implement the policy of 'sticks and carrots'. On the one hand, the government

should force the ban and eradicate opium, and on the other hand, it should provide farmers with loans, subsidy, and alternative.

Here it is also worth mentioning that the international community should also take the blame for opium production in Afghanistan. It is clear that the demand for opium poppy comes from international markets and, the place where the prices of drugs are sky high. Therefore, the international community should also try to decrease the demand for drugs, increase border control, and share intelligence with other countries.

### **Recommendations**

In this final section of my thesis, after reading and researching about the social and economic impact of narcotics in Afghanistan, I have come up with some recommendations, which I believe could help the Afghan Government and international community in better dealing with this issue. Based on the types of impact, I have also divided my recommendations into three groups:

#### *Recommendations for curbing social impacts of narcotics in Afghanistan*

- Strict state- control over the trafficking and trading of drugs in domestic markets: the Afghan Government and international community should improve the training of its police force as well as enhancing the intelligence in order to hunt down the local traders of drugs
- More focus on creating jobs: the Afghan Government and international community should pay more attention to creating more job opportunities for its vulnerable young generation in order to keep them away from drugs
- Inclusion of materials on drugs in education system: the Afghan Government should include subjects and information related to drugs in its school curriculum so that the children will have more information about the side effects of drugs
- Improving public information: the Afghan Government and international community should try to broadcast and air more and fruitful programs on drugs through famous domestic TV channels as well as radios. In addition, they should also focus on increasing public awareness to the vulnerable areas of South and East of the country
- Seeking help of Mullahs and Influential figures: the Afghan Government and international community should seek help from local Mullahs and elders that have the influence on rural population. Mullahs can urge the population to stop cultivating opium by providing religious reasons while the local elders can take advantage of their influence in doing so.
- Justice for all: the Afghan Government and international community should reform the justice sector of Afghanistan so that they can provide justice for all and in every part of the country. Such action can build the trust among the local villagers and government which could be used in halting the opium production
- Better treatment of addicts: the Afghan Government and international community should do more for better treatment of addicts in the country. In fact, they should increase the number of treatment centers and build them in every district of every province. Such thing would be difficult, but not impossible. It will require the Afghan Government and international community to establish 360 treatment centers throughout the country. It can be either separate or part of an already existing health center.

#### *Recommendations for curbing economic impacts of narcotics in Afghanistan*

- Infrastructure: the Afghan Government and international community should pay more attention to the infrastructure in the country. They should invest heavily in water dams, electricity, roads, clean water, and canals. Meanwhile, lack of water because of poor irrigation system encourages farmers to cultivate poppy, as it requires less water compared to other plants. Likewise, lack of electricity forces farmers to use generators, which increase the input, and expenses that can be only regained through the cultivation of poppy.
- Alternative livelihood: in the last decade, the Afghan Government and international community have failed to find an alternative for poppy that can yield higher income. Lack of an alternative has also forced the poor farmers to cultivate

poppy because it can generate higher profits compared to others. Therefore, the Afghan Government and international community should start promoting saffron which can generate the same amount of profit like poppy. Moreover, the expertise of saffron should be shared with farmers.

- Loans: in the last decade, the Afghan Government and international community have failed to provide micro or macro loans to vulnerable farmers. While some loans were provided by private institutions, but they were rejected firmly by farmers because of high interest rates and small amounts.
- Agricultural technology: the Afghan Government and international community should provide modern agricultural technology to farmers that are still using centuries old tools for their farming purposes.
- Marketing: the Afghan Government and international community should also focus on creating markets for illicit products. Currently, poppy is the only product that does not need marketing. In fact, the buyers or traders themselves find farmers and pick the product from their farms. Lack of marketing has discouraged farmers that grow wheat and rice, therefore leaving them in further debts. Furthermore, marketing of Afghan products in abroad will also help in selling them in good prices.

#### *Recommendations for curbing security impacts of narcotics in Afghanistan*

- Winning hearts and minds: the Afghan Government and international community should win hearts and minds of Afghans through providing security and basic services. Such thing can be achieved only through reform in police, judiciary, and availability of water, electricity and roads in rural areas.
- Targeting drug traffickers: although the Afghan Government and international troops are targeting drug lords, the scale is small, and the process is slow. Drug lords can be targeted through accurate human intelligence on the ground.
- More control over money transfer: the Afghan Government and its Central Bank should increase their control over the transfer of money through Hawala and other means. Measures such as mentioning the source of money, full information of recipient, and amount of money will help in curbing the funding of terrorism through drugs.
- Fight against corruption: the Afghan Government should also focus on fighting corruption from inside which could help in building public trust on government. Links between government officials and drugs have already been proven and reported in several western newspapers, with some even calling it a *narco-state*. Therefore, it is the responsibility of Afghan government to clean its backyard from those corrupt officials. Such thing can help in winning hearts, minds, and keeping people away from insurgents and their influence.
- Public hearing: the Afghan Government should start broadcasting public hearing of drug traffickers so that the ordinary people will learn from their fate and keep distance from drugs.
- Strict border control: the Afghan Government should improve control of its borders especially in south, east, and west. These are the areas where most of Afghan drugs flow towards West and Middle East. The Afghan Border Police should be increased in numbers and provided with better training as well as modern equipments such as night-vision goggles.

#### **References**

1. Bowers, C. B. (2009). Hawala, Money Laundering, and Terrorism Finance: Micro-lending as an end to illicit remittance. *Bowers Macro* , 379- 417.
2. Brownstein, M. J. (1993). A brief history of opiates, opioid peptides, and opioid receptors. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* , 5391-5392.
3. Byrd, W., & Ward, C. (2004). Drugs and development in Afghanistan. *Social Development Papers: Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction* , 1-34.
4. Carpenter, T. G. (2004). How the Drug War in Afghanistan Undermines America's War on Terror. *Foreign Policy Briefing* , 1-7.

5. Center, C. M. (2012). *Afghanistan in Transition*. Civil Military Fusion Center.
6. Center, N. (2012, nn nn). *Nejat Afghanistan*. Retrieved July 22, 2013, from <http://www.nejat.org.af>: <http://www.nejat.org.af/background.php>
7. Chovuy, P. A. (2006). Afghanistan's Opium Production in Perspective. *China and Euroasian Forum Quarterly* , 4.
8. Cornell, S. E. (2006). The Narcotics Threat in Greater Central Asia: From Crime- Terror Nexus to State Infiltration. *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, Volume 4, No. ,* 1-31.
9. Douglas, R. (2009). *Afghanistan Heroin Drives Drug Epidemic in Russia*. Moscow: EIR.
10. Faith, D. C. (2011). The Hawala System. *Global Security Studies* , 23- 31.
11. Farrell, G., & Thorne, J. (2005). Where have all the flowers gone?evaluation of the Taliban crackdown against opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. *International Journal of Drug Policy* , 81-91.
12. Felbab-Brown, V. (2013). Counterinsurgency, Counternarcotics, and Illicit Economies in Afghanistan: Lessons for State-Building. In J. Brewer, M. Miklaucic, & J. G. Stavridis, *Convergence: Illicit Networks and National Security in the Age of Globalization* (p. 298). Washington DC: National Defense University Press.
13. Felbab-Brown, V. (2010). *The Drug-Conflict Nexus in South Asia: Beyond Taliban Profits and Afghanistan*. Brookings.
14. Ferris-Rotman, A. (2012, April 1). *Reuters*. Retrieved July 18, 2013, from Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/01/us-afghanistan-women-drugs-idUSBRE83001H20120401>
15. Glaze, J. A. (2007). *Opium and Afghanistan: Reassessing U.S.counter- narcotics strategy*. Pennsylvania: U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks.
16. Grare, F. (2008). Anatomy of a Fallacy:The Senlis Council and Narcotics in Afghanistan. *Working paper: State Fragility* , 1- 43.
17. Gregorian, V. (1969). *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
18. Hancock, D. A. (2008). The Olive Branch and the Hammer: A Strategic Analysis of Hawala in the Financial War on Terrorism. *The Culture & Conflict Review* , 1- 16.
19. Lind, J., Moene, K. O, & W.F. (2009). Opium for the Masses? Conflict-Induced Narcotics Production in Afghanistan. *CESifo Working Paper No. 2573* , 1-35.
20. Johnson, T. H., & Mason, M. C. (2006). Understanding the Taliban and insurgency in Afghanistan. *Foreign Policy Research* , 71-89.
21. Jost, P. M., & Sandhu, H. S. (nn). *The Hawala Alternative Remittance System and its Role in Money Laundering*. Lyon, France: INTERPOL/FOPAC.
22. Jr, D. M., & Russell, A. (2012). Counternarcotics efforts and Afghan poppy farmers:Finding the right approach. In P. Lujala, & S. Rustad, *High-Value Natural Resources and Peacebuilding* (p. nn). London: earthscan.
23. Jr., P. L. (2002). Opium and its alkaloids. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education Vol.66* , 186-194.
24. Looney, R. (2009). Afghanistan opium trade thwarts government's authority. *The Milken Institute Review* , 8-15.
25. MacDonald, S. B. (1992). Afghanistan's Drug Trade. *Society* , 61-65.
26. Maimbo, S. M. (2003). *The money exchange dealers of Kabul: A Study of the Hawala System in Afghanistan*. nn: World Bank.



27. Mercille, J. (2012). *Cruel Harvest: US Intervention in the Afghan Drug Trade*. Pluto Press.
28. N, G., & T., T. (2002). Poppy fields in Afghanistan. *KIER DP-555*, , 1-16.
29. Nevada Griffin, K. K. (2010). Opium Trade, Insurgency, and HIV/AIDS in Afghanistan: Relationships and Regional Consequences. *Asia Pacific Journal of Health* , 167.
30. Nolan, L. (2006). Afghanistan, Education, and Formation of the Taliban. *The Fletcher School* , 1-62.
31. Peters, G. (2009). How Opium Profits The Taliban. *United States Institute of Peace* , 1- 37.
32. Rasanayagam, A. (2007). *Afghanistan: A Modern History*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd.
33. Rubin, B. R. (2000). The Political Economy of War and Peace in Afghanistan. *World Development Vol. 28* , 1789-1801.
34. Saikal, A. (2011). *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd.
35. Shaw, M. (2006). *Drug trafficking and development of organized crime in post- taliban Afghanistan*. Kabul: UNODC.
36. Shelley, L. I., & Hussain, N. (2009). *Narco-Trafficking in Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Areas and Implications for Security*. Virginia: The National Bureau of Research.
37. State, U. D., & Office, U. F. (2011). *Fighting the opium trade in Afghanistan: Myths, Facts, and Sound Policy*. U.S. Department of State; U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
38. Thompson, E. A. (nn). *the nexus of drug trafficking and Hawala in Afghanistan*. nn: UNODC & World Bank.
39. Todd, C. S., Safi, N., & Strathdee, S. A. (2005). Drug use and harm reduction in Afghanistan. *Harm Reduction Journal* , 6.
40. UNODC. (2003). *the opium economy in Afghanistan: an international problem*. New York: UNODC.
41. Ward, C., & Byrd, W. (2004). *Afghanistan's Opium Drug Economy*. Washington D.C.: World Bank.