## List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGEs</td>
<td>Anti-Government Elements</td>
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<tr>
<td>APRP</td>
<td>Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program</td>
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<td>ARTF</td>
<td>Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund</td>
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<td>ASGP</td>
<td>Afghanistan Sub National Governance Program</td>
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<td>ASPR</td>
<td>Agriculture Support for Peace and Reintegration</td>
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<td>AWP</td>
<td>Annual Work Plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCPR</td>
<td>Bureau for Crisis Prevention &amp; Recovery of UNDP</td>
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<td>BOM</td>
<td>Bureau of Management of UNDP</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Community Development Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<td>CRIP</td>
<td>Community Recovery Intensification Program</td>
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<td>CTA</td>
<td>Chief Technical Advisor (Program Manager)</td>
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<td>DDA</td>
<td>District Development Assembly</td>
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<td>DDR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilization &amp; Reintegration</td>
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<tr>
<td>DoWA</td>
<td>Department of Women’s Affairs</td>
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<td>FRIC</td>
<td>Force Reintegration Cell of ISAF</td>
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<td>GOA</td>
<td>Government of Afghanistan</td>
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<td>HPC</td>
<td>High Peace Council</td>
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<td>ISAF</td>
<td>International Security Assistance Force</td>
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<td>JS</td>
<td>Joint Secretariat</td>
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<td>LM</td>
<td>Line Ministries</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAIL</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock</td>
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<td>MoD</td>
<td>Ministry of Defense</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MoF</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance</td>
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<td>MoI</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior</td>
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<td>MoLSAMD</td>
<td>Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled</td>
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<td>MoPW</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Works</td>
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<td>MRRD</td>
<td>Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development</td>
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<td>MTE</td>
<td>Mid-Term Evaluation of APRP</td>
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<tr>
<td>NABDP</td>
<td>National Area Based Development Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDS</td>
<td>National Department (sometimes ‘Directorate’) of Security</td>
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<td>NIM</td>
<td>National Implementation Modality</td>
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<td>NRAP</td>
<td>National Rural Access Program</td>
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<td>NSP</td>
<td>National Solidarity Program</td>
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<td>PCAP</td>
<td>Provincial Conflict Analysis Profiles</td>
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<td>PGO</td>
<td>Provincial Governor’s Offices</td>
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<td>PI</td>
<td>Public Information</td>
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<td>PJST</td>
<td>Provincial Joint Secretariat Team</td>
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<td>PLD</td>
<td>Provincial Line Department</td>
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<td>PPCs</td>
<td>Provincial Peace (and Reintegration) Committees</td>
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<td>PRT</td>
<td>Provincial Reconstruction Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCO</td>
<td>Regional Coordination Offices</td>
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<tr>
<td>RuWATSIP</td>
<td>Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Irrigation Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>Security Council Resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOPs</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>SURGE</td>
<td>UNDP BCPR roster of crisis-experienced experts ready for rapid deployment</td>
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<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
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<td>TC</td>
<td>Technical Committee</td>
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<td>TDY</td>
<td>Temporary Duty</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNAMA</td>
<td>United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDSS</td>
<td>United Nations Department for Safety and Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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Background & Acknowledgements

The Mid Term Evaluation (MTE) Report of the Afghanistan Peace & Reintegration Programme (APRP) presents to the Government of Afghanistan, ISAF, international donor partners and the United Nations (UNDP, UNAMA) the findings of four international consultants, drawn from North America, Europe, Asia and the Pacific, and four national experts, all recruited by UNDP, to form the MTE Team. The Report is prepared to be read by APRP stakeholders already familiar with the current context in Afghanistan and the history of APRP since its inception in mid-2010.

The MTE Team prepared a work plan methodology paper with key areas to be explored which guided its consultations with stakeholders in Kabul and at APRP regional centers in Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, Kunduz, and Jalalabad. The MTE Team interviewed High Peace Council/Joint Secretariat officials, participating Line Ministries (LMs), Provincial Line Departments (PLD), Provincial Governors (PGO), Provincial Peace Councils (PPC), Provincial Joint Secretariat Teams (PJST), Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), Civil Society Representatives, reintegrees-beneficiaries, Women’s representatives, UNAMA, UNDP, UNDSS, donor Embassies and the Force Reintegration Cell (FRIC) of the International Security Forces in Afghanistan (ISAF).

The MTE Team wishes to thank the above stakeholders for the time and information contributed, with a special thanks to the APRP and UNDP country office, who arranged meetings with counterparts and made travel and logistical arrangements for the MTE to travel to provinces.

The MTE Team would also like to thank the colleagues at UNAMA and UNICEF for their support, perspectives shared and for the kind hospitality at their field offices and guest houses in the provinces of Afghanistan.
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Executive Summary

The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program, (APRP) was established in 2010 by Presidential Decree under the Government of Afghanistan’s High Peace Council’s (HPC) Joint Secretariat (JS). The APRP, initiated and executed by the Government of Afghanistan, receives support from UNDP under a national implementation modality (NIM). UNDP provides Technical Assistance (TA) to JS, and oversees the APRP Trust Fund with funding contributions from several donors.

The APRP program serves an indispensable function by allowing armed dissident groups and individuals to discontinue fighting with the Government of Afghanistan (GoA), to take an oath to obey the laws and constitution of Afghanistan, hand in weapons, and register to receive various forms of benefits for themselves, and community recovery projects for their communities. APRP has made noteworthy progress in developing its structures, policies and methodologies for the past 2 years, all from the ground up. APRP has established itself with a strong but as yet unrealized potential to serve all corners of Afghanistan. APRP effectiveness has improved as it learns from experience; more recent efforts can be shown to be supporting the peace process with its interventions.

While recognizing these accomplishments, the MTE found from a scrutiny of the available evidence, that APRP delivery is too slow and uneven to be allowed to continue without a determined effort to improve performance and delivery. Broadly speaking, the shortcomings regarding APRP delivery are caused by central decision making at JS, and late operational support from UNDP, mostly involving slow-to-materialize recruitments and technical assistance.

Because APRP is not reaching its potential, there is too little social outreach, too few armed groups joining the program, and too few communities, namely those in rural areas where insurgents wield influence, are receiving recovery projects. This perspective, with varying degrees of articulation, has been expressed by practically all APRP stakeholders.

There is an urgent need to establish an APRP Project Board¹, which is normally mandatory in the NIM modality, although there are other bodies such as the Financial Oversight Committee (FOC) and the Technical Committee (TC) providing controls and technical inputs, there is no project governance system, where broad strategic direction is planned and more challenging issues decided in an inclusive manner with shared responsibility.

It is recommended that the Board be co-chaired by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of JS, together with the UNDP Country Director². The senior Deputy CEO from the JS and the UNDP APRP CTA shall jointly report to the Board, on a quarterly basis, on progress made

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¹ Original signed Project Document of APRP dated 15th July 2010
² Guidelines approved by UNDP that may serve this exercise are set forth in Projects in Controlled Environments or PRINCE2 methodology, SEE www.prince2.com
against the main success indicators of this programme that are directly linked to the overall development objective: tangible and durable peace and stability for Afghanistan.

At mid-term, there is urgency to address and rectify the deficiencies identified in this report. As they currently stand, the deficiencies risk alienating supporters of both APRP and the government; some may even act as a disincentive for potential reintegrees to join or cooperate with the APRP program.

The MTE team recommends to the stakeholders of APRP a fresh examination be launched to determine if there are feasible opportunities and the capacity amongst the executing partners of APRP, i.e. JS, UNDP and FRIC, for a mid-term course correction that will be required if APRP is to reach its potential and change the current small flow of peace dividends into a torrent of peace incentives.

This report does not evaluate the high-level upstream activities of the JS and the HPC, but to present its view that APRP’s social outreach, demobilization, and community recovery activities are essential to adding credibility and legitimacy to peace negotiators and need to become more effective in order to do so.

It is recommended that, led by JS, the primary stakeholders including FRIC, UNDP, and UNAMA, should hold Project Board meetings at close intervals in early 2013 to promptly agree upon and implement the recommendations included below, allowing the envisaged improvements to APRP to commence during the 1st Quarter of 2013 and to be in place sometime before the end of the 2nd Quarter of 2013. Donor stakeholders should be invited to participate in Project Board meetings at appropriate intervals.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Section A - Role of the Joint Secretariat and Provincial Actors (PGO, PJST and PPC)

The Joint Secretariat (JS) is centrally staffed at the senior level with a high caliber of professionals, who understand the goals of the programme and understand and can articulate well the basic principles of international cooperation and development.

The JS shoulders many responsibilities, from organizing high-level Peace Conferences, and negotiations with neighboring countries, to managing the details of APRP. The ‘upstream’ political and policy role is central if Peace is to be achieved, but its importance is sometimes overlooked by critics of APRP ‘downstream’ delivery shortcomings at the provincial level.

Similar to practices common in other government offices in Kabul, the concentration of decision-making resides with a very few JS senior officials, including micro-level provincial level decisions. Under the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) there is currently only one Deputy; hence all JS-APRP units fall under one Pillar managed by the one deputy.

This concentration of decision-making authority restricts rapid program delivery. It also prevents development of local ownership of APRP, undermining the development of cooperative alliances for Peace which could enhance APRP’s engagement with Government
and non-government elements at the provincial and district level. Compounding the centralization of authority is an institutional culture that focuses on tight controls, justified by the expressed desire to eliminate fraud and waste.

However, the MTE believes that the lack of delegation of decision making authority to the provincial counterparts and the sometimes unbalanced approach to controlling waste and financial misconduct is constraining the speed of program delivery at the provincial level.

The Provincial Governors are engaged in many governance duties, and can only provide limited attention to APRP needs. The PJST spearhead activities in support of the Provincial Governors’ critical role in APRP. They engage with Afghan National Security Forces, PPCs, community leaders, and civil society to secure activities from APRP that bring peace and stability to very troubled areas and more secure areas alike.

Yet there has been little financial authority delegated to the PJST who report they do not have contingency funding available to nimbly address opportunities as they appear. Furthermore, the PJST vary in capacity: in some regions the staff is educated and dynamic, in other regions, this is less true. Unfortunately, the strongest PJST also reported high staff turnover, citing uncompetitive PJST salaries as the cause. Other factors contributing to PJST turnover may be involved.

None of the five Provincial Peace Committees (PPC) engaged by the MTE team could meet with the MTE team in plenary sessions because of logistical limitations. The MTE team conducted interviews primarily with the PPC chairmen and made numerous efforts to triangulate findings with other provincial stakeholders.

Several senior stakeholders felt that most PPC members did not have sufficient past exposure with developmental initiatives or the required orientation to understand their role, or to adopt new outlooks or approaches readily. Literacy levels among PPC members varied greatly. Some PPC members were accused by GOA or other senior stakeholders as having committed reprehensible crimes towards members of the communities they were meant to represent. It was alleged that too many PPC members have gained membership who are stigmatized by past ‘bad deeds’, accused of past atrocities to their neighbors that prevents them from serving as credible ‘Ambassadors for Peace’.

Critics expressed their concern that the “real” tribal leaders in some provinces are frequently not included in the PPCs. New provincial planning tools proposed for APRP, discussed later in this Report, should provide the names, affiliation and district of origin for all significant tribal leaders in each Province.

The PPC seem to have grown in number during their establishment, most PPCs started small but later grew to as much as 40 members, too large a body to reach consensus on pressing or thorny matters. Having stated the above, the Chairmen of the PPC, for the most part, expressed that they were very interested in seeing APRP succeed, and PPC chairmen consulted gave the impression that they were drawn from quite respected elements of their province’s leadership.
The establishment of the four different project accounts at the provincial level has made the management of financial process and flow complicated. There is no internal auditing mechanism established, which can lead to wrongful financial practices and is considered as not following ethical and good financial management systems.

In the current structure of JS, there is no unit dedicated to M&E. Data is collected within each unit, especially field operations and development, but it is not aggregated across all departments so it is impossible to get a clear picture overall. This is not because JS has not tried. Efforts to recruit a qualified person to introduce an M&E system have failed three times with one of the main reasons being the relatively low salary being offered. For Afghans with the requisite skills and experience, demand often exceeds supply so that well qualified individuals may command higher salaries in the national job market than JS-APRP has been paying.

Efforts have also been made to contract a pre-audit company who would be responsible for data collection for the purpose of transparency and accountability. However, there are few companies willing to travel to insecure areas and those companies willing to apply have so far been under-qualified.

At the local level, monitoring has been weak for reasons of capacity and security. As is also true in JS, there is no one person in the PJSTs with dedicated capacity for M&E. The Development Officer is supposed to be responsible for monitoring but that position is reported to be already overloaded and unable to undertake M&E without additional means.

Some have the professional capacity but not the time whilst others are not recruited by merit and have neither the level of education nor experience to do monitoring. The same constraints of capacity and security apply to the line departments responsible for community recovery programs. Some do not have additional capacity to undertake monitoring and are reluctant to do it because it adds to their workload. Capacity, in terms of numbers of staff available with the necessary qualifications, is also an issue.

**Recommendations Section A – Joint Secretariat & Provincial Actors**

1. MTE recommends a de-concentration of decision-making authority for work in the provinces by APRP as an essential next step if the priority objective of supporting Peace through the downstream activities is to be delivered in a timely manner.

2. The JS should delegate a significant portion, perhaps as much as 50%, of its 2013 Annual Work Plan provincial activity budget, with planning and execution responsibility to the PJST and retain the balance for its own decision-making as per current practices, concentrating mostly on ‘upstream’ activities. In parallel, an effort to strengthen PJST capacity by JS should begin, with expanded roles for APRP Regional Coordination Offices (RCO) and dedicated JS field support staff in support of heightened capacity and delegation of authority.

3. The PJST should become responsible for designing the programmatic interventions at the provincial level and submitting their Annual Work Plans (AWP) in quarterly segments, rather than attempting to plan the year ahead as is the current practice, so that lessons can be learned as implementation occurs, opportunities that arise can be
addressed. The JS should submit a general AWP for the calendar year, which allows for quarterly inputs from the PJSTs.

4. The JS should have two deputy chairpersons *in lieu* of the current structure with one deputy chairperson. The role of administrative, operational and financial controller should rest with one JS deputy chairman; the role of APRP strategic direction, strategic partnerships, program delivery, and planning with the second deputy chairman.

5. Conduct a salary survey to determine whether to raise the salaries level for PJST. Create a contingency funded for the PJST that would allow modest expenditures to be made without referring to the Central offices of JS.

6. Each PGO and PPC chairman should, from the PPC members, select an Advisory Cabinet of 6-7 members, with at least one religious leader from the ulema, and one woman representative, for regular engagement with the PJSTs. Some extra travel incentive may be required to stimulate good attendance at PPC Cabinet meetings. The HPC and JS should determine if prominent tribal elders have been excluded from the PPC and include any deemed important to Peace and Reconciliation, who are willing to join, in the PPC Advisory Cabinets.

7. It is recommended that all the multiple accounts for the PJST be merged into one single project account at the provincial level and introduce simple single book ledger entry to track the budget expenditure.

8. A fortified M&E approach for APRP is essential and should include the engagement of monitoring agents, different for each province, who can travel to those areas where community recovery activities are to take place. Consultations with reintegrees groups may yield individuals who can be trained to perform this function, with photograph-taking recording location coordinates with GPS by mobile phone units. Training of M&E personnel can be done at the provincial level by the RCO. Support from BOM and BCPR experts familiar with long distant monitoring in conflict areas should be secured through SURGE and TDY deployments, to allow the APRP to engage more effectively promptly and develop its own capacities soonest.

**Responsible Parties for Effecting Recommendations A: 1-8:** For ensuring the new arrangements are made regarding de-concentration of delegated roles to the provinces and the division of the JS into two pillars should be the **CEO of the Joint Secretariat**, with support, whenever deemed advantageous, by the **Chairman of the High Peace Council**. The UNDP Country Office should approach BOM and BCPR for expertise in effective M&E mechanisms in conflict countries (e.g. UNDP Iraq evolved long distance monitoring systems).

**Recommended Timeframe:** The urgency of making APRP more effective, points to the need to have priority actions initiated during the 1st Quarter of 2013, with New Year, 31 March 2013 as a date of completion, allowing APRP to start the 2nd Quarter of 2013, with these new arrangements in place.
**Section B – The Imperative for Planning Tools**

While JS states that it receives regular reports from the Regional Coordination Offices, with information and contextual perspectives that are used to make decisions, there was very little evidence that APRP decisions are made using adequate planning tools, or that the current application of resources is focused and strategic. There was anecdotal evidence that many funding allocations are *ad hoc* and often political nature. APRP’s methodology for resource allocation has been reported to sometimes resemble a political patronage system, with APRP packages awarded to armed groups associated with influential tribal leaders who have gained proximity to the APRP. This patronage maybe sometimes be important politically, and is not necessarily unrelated to building peace, however it appears to have frequently substituted for more focused interventions based on an analysis of various opportunity costs and regularly updated mapping of the factors and insurgent leaders in a district or province which are contributing to instability.

There was no evidence that APRP had undertaken formal Conflict Analysis or Opportunity Mapping exercises and very little reference can be seen to any provincial analytical studies of local factors and players related to the conflict guiding the allocations of APRP resources. With proper access to reliable provincial Conflict Analysis and Opportunity mapping tools, PJST could work with Provincial Governors, PPCs, NDS, and the JS to elaborate work plans and specific proposals in which the arguments for any specific APRP intervention were founded on all available information about each province. Currently, NDS primarily identifies groups ready to demobilize, not APRP. Such information could also guide the Public Information unit at JS, to tailor messaging used in social outreach more effectively province-by-province.

It is the view of the MTE that more strategic interventions bases on provincial conflict analysis and mapping are needed to avoid relegating the program to that of a patronage handout project that rewards parties that are already cooperating with the Government.

**Recommendations for Section B – Planning Tools.**

1) A team of expert consultant conflict analysis researchers, both international and national, should be fielded for APRP to undertake conflict analysis and opportunity mapping studies for each province. While it is likely that conflict analysis studies that could lead to opportunity mapping exercises may exist at FRIC/Regional Commands, PRTs, ISAF, UNAMA, NDS and the “power” ministries (MoD, MoI), this information is not currently being shared.

2) Therefore, the proposed Conflict Analysis Research Team should meet with Provincial and District Governors, Provincial Councils, Provincial Peace Council’s PJSTs, UNAMA, UNDSS, ISAF, PRTs, NDS and power ministries, ministerial

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departments, to glean as much information on each province and district to elaborate Provincial Conflict Analysis Profiles (PCAP) that detail information needed to make APRP decisions more strategic and increase cogency of the process.

**Responsible Parties for Effecting Recommendations B: 1-2:** UNDP should recruit, employing its fast-track procedures, seasoned international consultants familiar with Afghanistan and top national experts to support the PJSTs to elaborate the PCAPs. Given the priority of understanding the factors surrounding the conflict so as to design better focused interventions for peace, UNDP should consider seconding some of its senior national staff to support this effort, so that valuable time is not lost advertising, vetting and recruiting capable new national staff. UNAMA should be invited to contribute its staff to this process.

As PCAPs become available, the JS and PJST would use them for decisions or when making allocations, from approaching and vetting AGE for inclusion in the demobilization, transitional assistance and community recovery works, to tailoring messages disseminated by the Public Information unit of the JS, working in community outreach activities.

**Recommended Timeframe:** With UNDP APRP fortified by SURGE and TDY secondment, and also utilizing fast track practices for recruitment of consultants to undertake the proposed PCAP, it should be possible to field the secondment by early March 2013, for completion of the PCAP for most of the country to be ready by 31 May 2013. All seconded additional staff should also support the establishment of improved M&E systems.

**Section C- Social Outreach**

The expectation of APRP to deliver and achieve are very high, given the complexity, magnitude, long history of both unpredictable political and insecure environment prevailing in Afghanistan, yet the hope of the Afghanistan people for peace are kept alive through this programme. To bring about any tangible change in this complex environment needs both time and persistent efforts to show long-term results and impact. The past two years have created the required institutional arrangements and necessary environment that has laid a foundation for peace talks, creating an opportunity for re-integration. However more efforts on outreach strategies, simplified procedures in planning, decision-making, implementation and mitigating risk need to be promptly addressed through rapidly fortified capacity at the JS, PJST, and UNDP APRP support office.

With 2014 less than two years away, when 1) national elections and 2) the withdrawal of ISAF from the Afghan theatre will occur, APRP must use of these two years to make a far more effective effort than at present, to achieve a more peaceful and stable country. It is broadly understood that far more social cohesion will be required in two years if the landmark events arriving in 2014 are not to preside over social upheavals with armed conflict dominating the lives of the population. There is precious little time for ‘business as usual’ or the administrative inertia of all organizations concerned ‘holding hostage’ the APRP agenda. The application of streamlined procedures for recruitments, procurements trainings,
deployments, and so forth, has become an imperative if APRP is to achieve the required progress in two years that might prevent the worst case scenarios from materializing.

The importance of the JS’ Public Information (PI) Unit, responsible for the Social Outreach aspects of the APRP effort cannot be overstated but there are gaps, in part due to a lack of staff and resources. Most important of these is that a Social Outreach strategy has not been elaborated.

The PI Unit urgently needs several more top media and communications specialists; however, MTE was told that top media specialists were not procured as competitive salaries for such persons are approximately USD 3,000 per month, when JS guidelines allowed for only USD 1,800 per month.

The Ulema Shura (religious council) and individual ulema in each province have been engaged only irregularly; more attention to this body is indicated. One dedicated office within the PI Unit is assigned to work exclusively with the Ulema Shura in Kabul to engage persons with highly respected religious credentials to transmit messages of peace at rural mosques, madrasas, and over the broadcast media, or to run mobile workshops for peace. This office needs to become robust, to have sufficient funding to engage a wide-spectrum of Ulema members to travel on speaking engagements and to broadcast messages of peace over the media.

Funding should be made available for the procurement of broadcast media, organizing shows, forums, platforms, hiring of top media experts, engagement of the Ulema, given the importance of this pillar to APRP performance, and the relative low costs compared to the costs of other aspects of APRP.

Objectives of Political and Social Outreach
The aim of the political and social outreach component of APRP is to lay the foundation for an unbiased and sustained peace across the country in partnership with political parties, social and religious groups and fighters, through confidence building, strategic communication, grievance resolution, and peace building processes with strong Government support and commitment. APRP is expected to positively contribute towards strengthening the District Delivery Programmes, Afghan Social Outreach Programme; the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Programme (ASGP) the Performance Based Governors Fund, and other provincial and district level governance programmes leading to a more cohesive political and social stewardship toward peace and stability.

Achievement against objectives
The Government of Afghanistan, with the support of donors and UNDP, introduced different methods and approaches to carry out social outreach. Some serious efforts have been made by APRP resulting in several key achievements. The re-integration of about 5,000 insurgents indicates that social outreach component of APRP did contribute to achieving the stated objectives of the programme. It is observed that social outreach could be more effective by having a robust Strategic Framework plan, appropriate policy development, increased capacity at the provincial level, adequate financial resources, greater participation
of religious leaders and women in the programme, and more commitment from government officials at provincial and central levels.

Considering that social outreach is one of the most fundamental and initial stages in the theory of change of APRP, this component has made some achievements:

- Social outreach has been successful in creating an image among masses and insurgents that Government of Afghanistan has opened a window to facilitate the reintegration of “Upset Brothers” into their communities and live with their families and societies in accordance with Government laws.
- A wider understanding and consensus has been developed at national, regional and international level for seeking both political and practical solutions for the ongoing conflict continuing for over a decade.
- For the first time there is evidence that a considerable number of insurgents including some senior commanders are developing an orientation that the conflict cannot be won through military means.

**The key strengths of Social Outreach**
The APRP has been successful in meeting the objective of raising public awareness of the programme, spreading the message of peace and stability, and creating a new sense of hope at the community level, by adopting various methods of outreach. The types of outreach activities include: supporting the celebration of peace day in various provinces, organizing social events like painting competition, poetry recital, youth programme, football match, and so on.

There are some successful innovative initiatives introduced by an active PPC member who also happen to be staff of a national television station. This station has been conducting special live two-way interactive TV programs related to APRP on a monthly basis where Afghan women receive a forum to speak out their views regarding peace and receive calls from the audience discussing peace and stability. In one of the provinces, a magazine was developed with stories encouraging insurgents to join the peace process. It is planned to widely circulate the magazine among the public within the city as well as the accessible communities through Afghan National Army and District Governor offices.

A number of PPC members spoke to the MTE emphasizing that they were able to change the minds of the insurgents through effective outreach and active contacts resulting in successful negotiations. These PPC members believe many insurgents have joined APRP because they were tired of fighting, and stated that others who remain outside the program no longer fight with the same determination or any passion.

In some regions visited by MTE (Kunduz, Mazar and Herat) PPC, PJST, local leaders, district governors, and family relatives of AGEs have played an important role in contacting and reaching out to the insurgents. However there are clear indications that in the eastern region, the majority of contacts made with insurgents were done by NDS because the PPC were unable to carry out social outreach activities in the more contested provinces along the border.
The key weaknesses of Social Outreach

In spite of these modest achievements, social outreach still faces serious challenges. The major gaps in social outreach are the lack of a robust strategic plan that can diversify the outreach programming, little or no attention on policy development, low capacity at the provincial level, constrain in financial resources and budgetary allocation, nominal or superficial engagement of women in the programme, and the alleged lack of commitment of some of the government officials at provincial and Kabul level.

In the southern and eastern parts of the country, there is very little evidence of sustained engagement by the Provincial Peace Council (PPC) members in contacting and negotiating with the AGEs and insurgents. In the northern and western parts of the country they have been far greater efforts, but in the south and eastern regions most of the PPC members claim they are unable to travel outside the provincial and district centers due to insecurity.

As the PI Department is not well funded, the tendency has been to support only those activities that are conventional, with a larger focus on print and electronic media as very little funding has been available for more innovative use of broadcast media. It is also found that PI Department does not have sufficient funds on hand to enhance the support to the outreach programmes. Although it is claimed that PI Department of APRP performs media monitoring, there is not clear mechanism or system established to monitor and analyze media messaging and other programs being broadcast. The PI Department has no dedicated person for media monitoring, hence most monitoring is currently done in an ad hoc manner.

There are cases where some of the communities have implemented their projects but they were not aware that the projects were part of peace programme support to the communities. This indicates gaps that need addressing in linking investments as peace dividend rewards and an inability to capitalize on the opportunity created though APRP interventions. This is another area where social outreach has failed to capitalize and build on the good will generated though these activities.

Although APRP is designed to reach out to the grassroots levels, it is failing to reach many rural areas. Most APRP activities take place near provincial centers with limited outreach to districts and villages. It was found that some PPC members are unable to travel to districts and communities to carry out outreach activities for various reasons; two key obstacles have been lack of transportation means and insecurity. Although the programme envisages establishing peace platforms at district and community levels, to strengthen the outreach, conflict mitigation and peace initiatives, no such action has been initiated.

The social outreach perspective of the programme has so far been unable to create the necessary awareness about the programme among the public and communities at large. It is estimated that the majority of the public have very little idea about the goals of APRP and the government which fosters a climate of distrust. For example, some persons questioned believed that “Peace only means bringing the Taliban back in power and leading our community into darkness again”. Others believe that the government is not really
committed to lasting peace. These sentiments are indicative of the shortcomings and gaps in effective outreach messaging and reflect suboptimal engagement of the media.

It was also found that many elements of civil society feels not included in APRP and dissatisfaction of civil society with APRP and PPC was a common sentiment expressed across the provinces. In this instance, civil society consists of a wide range of NGOs, development actors, women development and cultural entities, prominent community elders and other social leaders and activists, but it is observed that these strong networks of civil society are not actively engaged, missing a ready opportunity to establish fruitful partnerships.

The key Threats in Social Outreach
The key messages relayed though both print and electronic media often have a very narrow outlook and are highly influenced by ISAF and FRIC. Most of these messages are generally targeted to hard-core ideological fighter and most of the times do not resonate well with more mainstream target groups.

The majority of the PI provincial officers are not believed to have been recruited on merit basis and thus do not have the required knowledge and skill sets to perform their tasks as public information officers. Further, the PI Directorate-Kabul is not involved in the selection process and has very limited say in the recruitments, which has an adverse impact especially when it comes to key deliverables at the provincial level.

It is reported by different stakeholders that some of the provincial governors are not sufficiently proactive in supporting this programme and some have been reported to be actively opposed to it. Some do not actively support the outreach activities. However, where provincial governors are supportive of APRP, the outreach has been more effective, this has resulted in more positive outcomes. It is most likely that support from provincial governors, or lack thereof, is an ingredient key to the success or failure of APRP in a given province.

Lack of disengagement training and follow up that has been causing frustration among reintegrees, has negative effects on the social outreach efforts of the programme since such frustration is communicated onwards by the reintegrees to the insurgents particularly those who are in the processes of making decisions whether or not to join the programme.

It was found that reintegrees do not feel comfortable with respect to media coverage particularly showing their identities and displaying their faces on TV. It is very likely that past TV coverage of reintegrees, (although TV as a media has tremendous potential), has been adversely affecting the programme by creating security threats to reintegrees, and discouraging other insurgents from joining the program since they do not want to expose themselves to repercussions from dangerous elements of their communities.

The broad opportunities available for Social Outreach
As part of the outreach and negotiation efforts, the programme has been actively supporting and facilitating the HPC, JS and high ranking officials of the government in making contacts with prominent AGEs leaders both within the country and outside the country. Although the impact of such meetings and contacts are difficult to assess, nevertheless there is much
evidence to demonstrate concerted efforts by the government towards engaging at a broad spectrum of AGE leadership at the political level.

As for the Ulema and very influential religious leaders within the society, there have been very little activities drawing this influential body into the peace process. Some of the Ulema council’s members are present in the PPC, but they are not seen as actively engaged with mobilizing the greater ulema membership for peace or engaging the network of madrassas where much of the anti-Peace messaging is being done, and where recruits for the more dangerous activities of the insurgency, suicide bombing, are conducted. Although the Ulema have shown interest in the programme and could become important to the reintegration process, there is no systematic programmatic support to them from APRP.

The provincial governors and district governors can become key peacemakers and negotiators, if they reached out though their networks and contacts to the AGEs. To date, there is reportedly very little effort being made by them, except in a few cases where they have led the contact and negotiations with insurgents. One of the main obstacles to better involvement by governors is lack of access to financial resources, causing delays due to the current lengthy approval mechanisms, which risk governors losing credibility amongst the communities thereby discouraging more active participation by them.

It is evident that the current public information and outreach strategy is very basic and does not differentiate between actors, most of the messages are very general and do not have very pointed focus to a target audience. A new Public Information Strategy has been drafted with a wider perspective focusing on two elements: a) **Educate**: focusing on common people, community members and educating them on peace and stability; b) **Influence**: Focusing on the Insurgency.

The new Public Information strategy will target and focus on AGE insurgents, youth organizations, civil society, and neighboring countries particularly Pakistan and Iran, Islamic countries and the international community.

The new strategy does not yet cover the role of women in peace. It may indeed be the case that most national stakeholders do not see for women an involvement in peace process as all the fighter are men who live separately so as to preclude influence. It should be pointed out to all in discussions that under the norm of **Nanawati** 4 under the Pashtunwali code 5, women do have a very distinct role as conflict-resolution mediators.

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4 **“Nanawati”** Under the norm of Nanawati the guest can also ask for a revenge-conflict to stop. Women often will go to the house of their family’s feuding enemy and ask for the conflict to stop, whereupon the host must accept.

5 Pashtunwali (Pashto: پښتو ول) or Pakhtunwali is a non-written ethical code and traditional lifestyle which the indigenous Pashtun people follow.
There is a new initiative planned by the JS to identify and support peacemakers though the Peace Advocates Programme that is expected to further improve the outreach component of the APRP. This programme covers senior Taliban leaders and commanders who will be supporting the programme as message multipliers.

In some of the provinces, especially in the east and south regions, the ISAF radio antennas and “radio in a box” system in the districts transmit programme related to peace for the local audience. District radios, particularly the ones which are supported by PRTs, are also effective with regard to public awareness and addressing reintegrees. District radios pass peace messages every hour. Concerns have been raised by local journalists on the content of some of these programmes, where implicit threats generate negative sentiments. Some radio channels have been conveying contradictory messages that might promote violent reactions amongst insurgents and increase their resistance to APRP and peace overtures from the Government.

The social outreach part of APRP does not engage with the student community in different schools, universities and academies. Students and youth are very powerful group and can play a very important role in mobilized to support the Peace objectives. However, there is no clear strategy on engaging students and youth as an important element of the community.

Besides their development role, DDAs have been very active in conflict resolution and mitigation and they should be included in social outreach of APRP as well. DDAs consist of CDC members; this body can play a vital role in APRP outreach programmes. There has been very little evidence so far of APRP reaching out to the DDAs or CDCs to take active role in both outreach and community recovery part of APRP.

Given the complex history, different interrelationship between groups, individual community grievances, “one size does not fit all” in social outreach messaging. Media outreach messaging should become more customised, tailored to each target groups, to provide more focussed messages for better results. The PI unit should continue to grow so as to have enough public media professionals to cover the country, with guidance from experts experienced in peace messaging.

**Recommendation for Section C: Social Outreach**

1) The Public Information unit of the JS should be strengthened with new high level national staff as a matter of urgent priority.

2) Establish a dedicated unit to interface with the Ulema under the Public Information Manager.

3) Costing considerations need to be more flexible when recruiting top media personnel to work for JS/APRP Public Information Unit.

4) It is important to elaborate a clear and comprehensive Social Outreach Strategic Framework document that builds on the Public Information Strategy.

**Responsible Parties for Effecting Recommendations C: 1-4**

JS should initiate recruitments promptly as per the above recommendations.
**Recommended Timeframe:**

During the 1st Quarter of 2013, all necessary recruitments to create a strong Public Information unit should be finalized.

**Section D - Demobilization**

**Objectives and Activities**

The APRP’s demobilization component’s objective is to provide a formal process through which insurgent fighters may be reintegrated into their communities. GoA’s project document specifies two activities to “deliver demobilization.” First is the actual demobilization of fighters, the second is the provision of community and individual security guarantees.

Demobilization cannot occur without prior outreach to combatants and their communities, as described in the previous section, and it cannot be successful without effective consolidation of peace and community recovery, as described in the section following this one. Overlaps in chronology between APRP’s three component efforts exist, and so, for the sake of clarity we note that here we consider that demobilization begins once candidates for reintegration have agreed to register and present themselves for vetting, and ends once the reintegrees have begun receiving their transitional assistance payments.

**Demobilization Processes**

As of December 2012, more than 6,000 reintegrees are now officially part of APRP while an additional 786 potential reintegrees are currently in negotiations to join.6

According to UNDP staff, the demobilization process requires three steps in what is supposed to be a 90-day process; this must be completed prior to the commencement of the three month transitional assistance payments. First, candidates must appear at the demobilization center for their ceremonial induction at which they receive a chapan7, a turban, and a copy of the Holy Koran.

At this point, they also provide information for the vetting process—APRP conducts vetting prior to candidates’ formal acceptance into the program that is intended to ensure that “only eligible people are formally registered.” Candidates then return a second time to complete a biometric registration and to fill out questionnaires used to inform the community recovery portion of the program. It is only now that candidates are considered to formally be in the program as initial reintegrees. Reintegrees must then return a third time to receive their first transition assistance payment, and then return each subsequent month to pick up in person.

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6 See chart in Annex 1 for further details.

7 A traditional outerwear robe, chapans are common throughout Northern Afghanistan and Central Asia.
It should be noted that this description of the process differs from that provided by JS and the SOPs for demobilization and vetting. Based upon the MTE team’s meetings, each region seems to have its own idiosyncrasies in the process. Here, as in several other areas of the JS’ work, it appears that the top down nature of the organization has prevented lateral coordination among the provinces, with UNDP’s staff providing the only source of lateral coordination regionally and, to a lesser extent, nationally.

The MTE team received complaints on the overall demobilization process, especially from provincial stakeholders, including UNDP and other GoA offices. First, many stated that processing reintegrees often took significantly longer than the intended 90 days, with several noting that the process can take up to 6 months before transition assistance begins. Second, even 90 days is seen as being too long. Third, many noted that the multiple trips required to reintegration centers before official enrollment in the program was expensive and dangerous as participating in APRP often makes reintegrees targets, a factor exacerbated by the fact that many reintegrees are located far from reintegration centers, often in areas not entirely under GoA control.

JS management initially stated that consolidating all the steps in demobilization, so that the ceremony, vetting, biometric data collection, and the first transition assistance payment would be made immediately, was not possible. From the JS’ point of view, the biometric registration would make candidates believe that they are part of the program before they officially are. However, given the reality that many reintegrees seem to be going through the reintegration ceremony prior to biometric registration, this concern may be misplaced. We note that later meetings with the JS seemed to indicate much more openness to consolidating the process.

One of the most successful components of the demobilization process has been the candidate questionnaire. This provides the JS with an assessment of reintegree skills, abilities and interests, as well as an outline of community needs, allowing more effective community recover and consolidation through better targeting of small grant projects, vocational training, and development assistance.

On the other hand, the component of the demobilization process that generated the most concern from donors was candidate vetting, conducted according to a JS Standard Operating Procedure. Currently there are two levels of vetting, the first taking place at the provincial level, and the second at the national level. In both instances, the names of potential reintegrees are presented to ANSF entities: MoI, NDS, and MoD, in addition to the PPC and the governor at the provincial level, where the provincial governor is intended to be the lead of the vetting process.

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8 See chart in Annex 1
The provincial governors are also responsible for ensuring that community council vetting meetings (vetting *shuras*) are included in the process, however, the MTE team did not find any evidence that vetting *shuras* are being held on a regular basis. The MTE team believes that in provinces where community reintegration is effective, this role has been effectively taken over by other elements of the program.

After the provincial lists are finalized, the governors forward the lists to Kabul for national vetting. In Kabul, the three ANSF entities bring their intelligence sections to the table, and attempt to reach a consensus on candidates. When this is not possible, the JS stated that information is provided to the JS and a decision is made by the Operations Department.

According to the JS, the broad scope of input at both the provincial and national level was an attempt to ensure quality information and, to the extent possible, prevent one organization from hijacking the process and using it for its own ends. It should be noted that while the process is designed to insulate vetting from undue influence from one party or other, concerns were consistently expressed by participants in the process that politically powerful people would attempt, often successfully, to influence who is accepted or rejected from the program, both in Kabul and in the provinces.

While the steps of the vetting process are relatively clear, key elements of vetting are not. Intelligence is gathered, compared, quality checked, and acted upon by the various participants in the process in a “black box,” hidden from scrutiny. The JS noted that revealing too many of the details of the process could compromise security, in particular noting that releasing names of potential reintegrees to a wide audience prior to their formal investiture into the APRP would place candidates at risk. On this matter, the JS stated that it is sharing vetting lists with PPC members at an earlier stage in the process than before, especially the female members, who, due to Afghan gender roles, often have different avenues of information, intelligence, and influence than men.

The imprecise standards used in vetting cause problems. The JS’ SOP on vetting states that to be eligible for acceptance into the APRP, candidates must be:

1. “Verified insurgents” (though not “foreign fighters”),
2. “Must not be wanted for criminal offenses that GoA determines prevent their entry into APRP,” and,
3. “Must be prepared to renounce violence and terrorism, and agree to live within the laws of Afghanistan.”

While requirements 3 is clear enough, requirements 1 and 2 are quite broad and are not further defined, leaving different stakeholders with different understandings about who is and who is not eligible for reintegration.

“Verified insurgents” was interpreted so differently by stakeholders as to render it nearly meaningless. Some asserted that only “Taliban” should be reintegrated, a statement less definitive than it might appear at first glance, since some people using the term meant only those with a chain of command leading back to the Quetta Shura, while others used it for any groups supported from Pakistan. Still others used it as shorthand for any group that
had taken up arms against the government. Others had a more expansive view, believing that “verified insurgents” included nearly any illegally armed group that was not criminal. This likely reflects the failure to use effective and consistent conflict analysis and mapping at the provincial level as well as less than optimal policy communication from Kabul.

Another split was between stakeholders who believe that only those who actually carried a gun or commanders could be “verified insurgents” and those that believed that individuals who provided material support to the insurgency, but did not carry a weapon, also fit the criterion. Representing the more restrictive point of view, one member of the Ministry of Defense working with the JS stated that anyone wanting to reintegrate should be required to present a weapon of good quality, and that those who could not present such a weapon should not be accepted into the program.

The JS holds the more expansive view on who are insurgents and as to whether they are required to carry a gun to qualify. First, though this has not been written into policy, most decision-makers at the JS seem to believe that anyone, except criminals, who has taken up arms against the government, should be considered insurgents.

Second, the JS holds that technical supporters, e.g. those who make, place or detonate improvised explosive devices, or provide support for such acts should be reintegrated along with weapon carrying fighters. This position is recognized in the JS’ current policy that only 90% of any group of reintegrating insurgents need to present weapons. However, consistent application of the weapons requirement has been a challenge, especially since the Provincial Security Councils, chaired by the Provincial Governors, wields significant influence over vetting and may decide to allow exceptions. In addition to the governor’s official power over the process, special exceptions are apparently made if political influence is brought to bear on decision makers.

Additionally, message from the leadership in Kabul on this point has been absent or inconsistent. Several different standards on this point have been issued. JS Policy Directive 1, issued on 24 November 2010, stated that was that no more than 15 percent of a group can be unarmed. Policy Directive 2, issued on 12 January 2011 clarified this position by stating that 100 percent of a group’s members are required to have functioning weapons, with exceptions made on a case-by-case basis. While JS is working to clarify the situation through field visits, such visits rely on an already burdened staff, so that questions remain unresolved.

It is important to note that APRP is not, at heart, a disarmament program. While heavy weapons are taken from reintegrees, “personal” weapons, such as AK-47s, will be registered by the MOD and then returned to reintegrees if requested and if the Provincial Security Council decrees it necessary for reintegrees’ personal security. The number of personal weapons that a group may receive back is not limited in either of the two Policy Directives of which the MTE team is aware. As a result, it is quite possible that a group of candidates may leave the reintegration center after their formal induction into the process with the same number of weapons with which they arrived.
Notably, of all stakeholders, many Afghan National Security Force interviewees evinced the least satisfaction with weapons management, with many insisting that APRP will fail if all weapons are not turned in. The latter note that by returning weapons back to reintegrees it is possible for some armed groups, illegal prior to joining APRP, to become ‘legalized’ by the process, leaving them with the same weapons capabilities and same orientations they had before joining APRP but with past acts excused and their names removed from security force target lists. Others argue that reintegrees need weapons to defend themselves and their communities from their former AGE allies who have now become enemies. However, most agree that even if all the weapons that are brought in by reintegrees are taken by the MOD, it is unrealistic to assume that reintegrees will not have access to other weapons.

The JS stated that the return of weapons is only a temporary measure, intended to allow for self-defense. The JS argues that the registration required of all reintegrees’ weapons will allow the government to collect those weapons in the future, once greater stability is achieved and when such personal weapons are no longer needed.

Requirement 2, “must not be wanted for criminal offenses that GoA determines prevent their entry into APRP” was questioned by a much broader swath of the community. The MTE team could find no list of these criminal offenses barring participation in APRP. While some stakeholders, in the interests of peace, showed a willingness to forgive insurgents’ past acts, discussions made it clear that the absence of a legal standard has caused many to believe that no crime was too great to bar entrance to the program, and many expressed concern that even acts committed after entrance into the program might be forgiven. One stakeholder presented a Tolo news article reporting that several AGEs killed a villager for alleged adultery and were later admitted to the program, with many interviewed believing that by virtue of joining APRP, this killing was now a pardon act.

Given the lack of clarity on qualifications for reintegrees and the disagreements on interpretation of those qualifications, it should not be a surprise that the success of the program in including all qualified AGES and excluding the non-qualified is a source of much contention— many of the stakeholders are not even using the same standards. One western ambassador asserted that 80% of reintegrees were not qualified for the program. However, an internal ANSF audit found that only about 5% (approximately 300 of about 6000) of reintegrees were false. Which statistic is correct is impossible to ascertain—none of those who expressed concern that too many reintegrees were being brought into the program could point to a particular systemic failure, but referred to intuition, assumptions, and anecdotes.

Acceptance into the APRP program provides reintegrees with amnesty for “political acts.” The SOP notes that “participation or acceptance for APRP and reintegration is not an amnesty or pardon for serious crimes,” but does not define the meaning of “serious crimes” or the legal basis for APRP granting either an amnesty or pardon for any crimes.

During the reintegration ceremony, reintegrees must renounce violence and terrorism, and agree to live within the laws of Afghanistan. Not surprisingly, some reintegrees are unable or unwilling to live up to their promises, and many stakeholders discussed the problems of
reintegrees committing crimes or outright defecting from the program and returning to insurgent activities. Some noted that the ceremony does not require reintegrees to take an oath on the Koran to that effect, something many thought would be an effective tool in ensuring that reintegrees keep their promises. It is also notable that recidivism in itself carries no specific legal sanction.

Some stakeholders believe that recidivism is a serious problem with one derisively describing APRP as a “winter salary” program, used by commanders to keep their fighters paid outside the fighting season, with the expectation that once the relatively short transitional assistance support runs out they will return to their insurgent activities. Reintegrees are tracked by the PJSTs through the work programs in the community development programs, but this tracking is not comprehensive as not all reintegrees are in such programs. Currently ANSF and ISAF consider only 7 reintegrees “official” recidivists. However, most stakeholders (including some of those same security experts) believe that the number is higher, though this seems based on informed speculation, not direct evidence.

In addition, stakeholders noted that just as people are taken off Afghan National Security Force and ISAF target lists when they are accepted into the reintegration program, recidivism puts them back on the lists. In addition, not all recidivists were on targeting lists initially, but are placed on them once it is clear that they have defected from the program.

Disengagement training, designed to prevent recidivism and promote reintegration, might help in addressing recidivism, is required by the GoA Project Document for all the reintegrees throughout the transition assistance period. That component of APRP is not ready, but is expected to be rolled out in the next few months. At this time, the curriculum has been approved by the Ministry of Education and a competitive bidding process has begun to find vendors to implement the training.

As with so many other portions of the APRP, the absence of real M&E makes judging demobilization’s success thus far a challenge. Further, looking for success at this point may be premature—at least one interlocutor not involved in the program, working in the security field in Afghanistan, opined that this is a generational issue and that a 25-year timeline for success is far more realistic.

Regardless, the MTE Team looked at security incident reports from 2009 through 2012 in order to see if APRP was having a discernible impact on insurgent activity. What can be seen is that an upward nationwide trend in security incidents was arrested and dramatically reversed over the past year. Between 2009 and 2011, the number of violent incidents in Afghanistan nearly doubled. In 2012, however, there was a steep decline nationally of more than 25%, as well as declines in every province that the MTE Team visited except for

9 See Annex 1 for a chart interpreting the security data provided to the MTE Team. Due to the sensitivity of the data, the organization providing the information requested to remain anonymous.
Nangarhar. This correlates neatly with APRP’s buildup, and could be viewed as evidence of program success, though the link is, at this point, clearly tenuous given the number of other factors that may have influenced security. If nothing else, it suggests that APRP is not exacerbating the security situation in Afghanistan.

**Community and Individual Security Guarantees**

Reintegrees informed the MTE Team that there are basically two types of security that they need from APRP: physical security and the economic security.

Economic security is provided in the short term through transitional assistance and in the long term through the community recovery portion of APRP, discussed later. Transition assistance is currently 3 monthly payments of 5,000 Afghanis (USD 100) for foot soldiers and 10,000+ Afghanis (USD 200) for commanders. The payments were initially linked to the salary levels of ANP members, with the intent that they should be slightly lower to avoid creating perverse incentives. Most interlocutors agreed that the payment period was too short and the payments too small, especially now that the ANP has received a significant increase in salary. Immediately prior to the drafting of this report, the Executive Board of the JS decided to expand the assistance to 6 monthly payments of 8,500 Afghanis (USD 170) for foot soldiers and 13,500+ Afghanis (USD 270) for commanders. Some stakeholders have expressed reservations about the decision-making process, so it is unclear if this is a final decision; however, the MTE Team expects that even if there are changes in the specifics, the number of monthly payments will be increased as well as the amounts.

With regards to physical security, reintegrees face three primary threats:

1. Being killed or arrested by the ANSF or ISAF;
2. Revenge from former victims; and
3. Attacks from their former AGE networks.

APRP addresses the first threat in two ways. First, reintegrees are removed from both ANSF and ISAF targeting and black lists. Reintegrees are given APRP identity cards and guaranteed freedom of movement without harassment by government or allied forces. In discussions with reintegrees, none informed the MTE team that they had concerns with this portion of the program. It should be noted that security forces view recidivism quite dimly, and made clear that recidivists who might not have been senior enough to put on the target lists prior to joining APRP would be put there if they defected from the program.

Second, reintegrees are granted amnesty for past “political acts.” As discussed earlier, the absence of the necessary legal framework defining what this means, the extent of this
amnesty is vague and unclear, eroding the legitimacy of the program among average Afghans.\textsuperscript{10}

More important for the reintegrees, the MTE team was unable to establish the source of APRP or any of its associated institutions’ purported power to grant any such amnesty.\textsuperscript{11} While in practice the MTE team has not heard of reintegrees prosecuted for crimes committed prior to reintegration, this appears to be, at the moment, only a policy decision of the executive branch of GoA. Should this policy change for any reason, such as more intense oversight by the National Assembly or the judiciary over criminal prosecutions, or because a particularly heinous crime committed by reintegrees comes to light, or simply due to the upcoming elections, APRP’s promises of amnesty may be worth nothing. Should the government decide to prosecute even one special case, the entire amnesty component of APRP may begin to unravel, as reintegrees realize that if one reintegree can be prosecuted, so can all the rest.

The MTE team notes that the GoA APRP program document states that a legal team will be established in collaboration with the IDLG and the MOJ to “prepare the legal framework and guidelines for amnesty and grievance resolution,” however the MTE team found no evidence that this has been done yet.

Providing security for reintegrees, preventing them from becoming new victims, is provided in part through the public outreach activities discussed earlier. Communities are required to vouch for individuals who reintegrate, meaning that there must be some level of acceptance within the community for reintegrees to join. APRP calls upon the PPCs to engage in dispute resolution to facilitate community acceptance using both formal and informal methods. PPCs stated that they have been effective in this task, though some of the constraints they face in travel suggest that this might be overstated. However, according to both Afghan and international security forces, some PPC members have had an impact on specific disputes. The small grants program also provides communities with a real incentive to accept, if not welcome, reintegrees back into their communities.

Protecting reintegrees from their former AGE networks is the greatest challenge for the program. It is clear to the MTE team that ANSF and ISAF forces do not have the resources to protect all reintegrees. The MTE team was told many times that the Afghan government

\textsuperscript{10} An example of the danger to APRP’s legitimacy can be seen here: “Future government talks with the Taliban should not hinge upon denying justice to victims of war crimes and other abuses,” said Brad Adams, Asia director…. Providing immunity from prosecution for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious human rights abuses violates international law…. Those responsible for war crimes and other serious abuses on both sides should be investigated and prosecuted.”

\textsuperscript{11} It is possible that the National Reconciliation, General Amnesty and National Stability Law, published in December 2009, is the intended basis for the APRP’s power to grant amnesty, but nowhere is this clarified. See http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=665 for a discussion of the law. Alternatively it could be a power delegated by the president. Without some clear understanding of where this power comes from determining its extent and legal resilience is difficult.
is not able to protect itself from attack, referring to the assassination of Professor Rabbani and the more recent attempt on the life of the current NDS Chief; reintegrees should not expect any better protection than that provided to these important government officials.

While the MTE team understands the resource constraints on ANSF and ISAF’s ability to provide security, physical insecurity was the greatest concern of the reintegrees with whom the MTE team met, and many stated that they would not encourage former comrades to join the program because of their fears.

The security sector informants who met with the MTE Team stated that reintegrees are high on some AGE target lists. They noted that to the extent that various AG groups have command structures, they view the APRP as a serious threat to their internal cohesion and erode their preferred public image as a unified, realistic alternative to GIROA. Many of these professionals viewed the number and intensity of attacks on reintegrees as a true sign of APRP’s success, as AGEs would not divert resources from their main effort of attacking GIROA and ISAF if they did not believe it to be essential to their survival.

While establishing security, relocation, either temporary or permanent, is used to provide a safe haven for reintegrees. Several government officials said that a large gap in their ability to provide interim security for those going through the reintegration process was due to a lack of funding for safe houses, transportation, or food for reintegrees. Permanent relocation is preferred by many reintegrees, but some stakeholders, both in the donor community and on the technical side, do not like this option as it is costly and because the intent of the program is to rebuild communities. Furthermore, members of the JS stated that if reintegrees depart from a community, other less desirable elements will fill in the vacuum left by their departure.

Factors supporting achievement
- Vetting involves a broad range of Afghan entities within the APRP structure, providing at least some safeguards against the program being used for patronage and parochial interests.
- The Executive Committee’s recent moves to extend transition assistance increase the level of payments, and JS comments in support of streamlining the demobilization process are encouraging and demonstrate that the JS is adapting its processes in response to the bottlenecks in delivery.
- Full disarmament of reintegrees is not allowed to be a bottleneck in the process
- Community acceptance, achieved through dispute resolution and the incentive of development, allows many reintegrees to live within their home communities; relocation is also useful in limited instances.

Factors limiting achievement
- A relatively small payment lasting only three months has provided insufficient incentives for AGEs to join and reintegrees to remain in APRP.
- Delays in the provision of transition assistance and later community development discourage new AGEs from joining APRP.
• The lack of understood and transparent standards for determining who is a “legitimate insurgent” allows some seen by Afghans as criminals to become reintegrees, eroding the legitimacy of APRP in the eyes of the community.
• The lack of a clear legal basis for APRP’s grants of amnesty for “political acts,” raises questions as to the extent and permanence of the amnesty granted, and contributes to community concerns that the program allows criminals a pass on past crimes.
• Attacks on reintegrees by former AGE compatriots discourage new AGEs from joining APRP, though the tempo and intensity of focus of AGEs on reintegrees may signal significant program success at least in the somewhat narrow goal of discomfiting the insurgency.
• Although it is expected to be initiated in the next few months, disengagement training is not occurring now, which may lead to higher rates of recidivism amongst reintegrees.
• Funding constraints and delays have led to gaps, key among these the absence of a functioning safe house for temporary reintegrees’ relocation in several provinces.

Conclusions on Demobilization

In the demobilization activity, the MTE team believes that APRP is effectively bringing some AGEs onto the government’s side. While it is difficult for an outsider without access to sensitive intelligence to vet the numbers to determine what percentage of reintegrees are real insurgents, the fact that both they and the leadership of the peace process (e.g. the late HPC Chairman Burhanuddin Rabbani) have been specific targets of AGE attacks strongly suggest that the program is reintegrating at least some of the right people. Further, there are significant safeguards in the vetting process to ensure that the APRP is not captured by one institution or another and that “real” insurgents are included. The MTE team did find some evidence of unfortunate attempts to influence the process, but we believe that these are not having an outsized impact on the project.

The MTE Team finds the JS’ willingness to consider changes in how the demobilization activity is administered highly encouraging. The current process is cumbersome takes too long, and, based upon the differences between the SOP’s and the varying practices in the provinces, somewhat ad hoc. The lengthy process discourages reintegrees and, to the extent that community recovery projects do not happen prior to official admission of AGEs to the program, this hinders program delivery. Consolidating all demobilization activities into one step would simplify the process and increase its speed without significant degradation in program quality.

It is difficult to establish the rate of recidivism, but the MTE team believes that the recent measures proposed by the JS, including higher and more monthly transition assistance payments should help to lower them. Disengagement training is a key component of recidivism prevention and bringing that portion of the activity online should be a priority.

Delivering on individual and community security guarantees has been more of a challenge. While dispute resolution and reconciliation efforts combined with the development opportunities made available through APRP have been somewhat successful at ameliorating
threats to reintegrees, AGEs still present a real danger to APRP participants and their host communities. More than anything else, this danger threatens the growth of the program and the willingness of more AGEs to join APRP.

**Recommendations on Section D: Demobilization**

1. Delays in the provision of transition assistance and later community development discourage new AGEs from joining APRP.
2. Compress the demobilization process from three to one step, with the ceremony, insurgent questionnaire, vetting data collection, biometric data collection, weapons management, and the first transitional assistance payment occurring at the first visit, with the full vetting occurring in the month between the first and second transitional assistance payments.
3. Increase the amount and number of payments made to reintegrees for transitional assistance.
4. Establish a permanent legal team to address critical legal deficiencies in APRP, with the immediate tasks of establishing APRP’s basis for offering amnesty, the nature of that amnesty, the types of crimes that bar participation in APRP, the legal consequences for recidivism, and to rewrite the vetting and demobilization SOPs to reflect these decisions.
5. Work with legal team and stakeholders to determine the standards for determining who is a “qualified insurgent” and, using those standards and effective conflict mapping, develop prioritized targeting and outreach strategies to bring those insurgents into APRP.
6. Prioritize demobilization training.
7. Recognize that reintegrees’ physical security is a key factor limiting the success of APRP, and consider de-emphasizing community reintegration in the short term in those communities where reintegrees are targets.

**Responsible Parties for Effecting Recommendations D: 1-7**

The JS, supported by APRP-UNDP Support Unit, can effect recommendations 1-4. Recommendation 5 may require support from Regional coordinators, with JS support as required. Future M&E should include monitoring the security status of reintegrees.

**Recommended Timeframe**

Recommendations 1 and 2 should commence immediately, in January 2013.

Recommendations 3-5 should be implemented during the 1st Quarter of 2013.

**Section E – Community Recovery**

The MTE evaluated the community recovery and small grants projects and found them to be popular with target communities, and an effective incentive to peace and reconciliation, hence an activity to be continued and enhanced.
APRP funding for the community recovery projects was viewed by many at the line departments as relatively small, administratively intensive work and not seen as ‘core’ responsibilities under the terms of reference of the Ministries and their departments. It was stated repeatedly that APRP funding was dwarfed by Line Ministries other budgets.

On the community recovery projects, APRP’s continued channeling of its funds through Line Ministries was questioned by the MTE. Was this modality used to comply with the principal strategies articulate at the Kabul Conference to increase donors’ on-budget support? A reasonable justification might have been that the line ministries and their departments should have the in-house capacity of engineers and technical experts to elaborate technically sound proposals that adhered to ministerial standards and sector plans as well as for longer term sustainability.

While it might have been an early assumption that the line departments have the capacity to deliver APRP community recovery projects rapidly, the present evidence does not suggest the above to be the case. The need for rapid delivery of APRP community recovery projects as added leverage when building cooperation of communities with the GoA is of paramount tactical importance to a program like APRP. Timely delivery should not become secondary and subordinated by well-intentioned but misplaced, in this instance, ideals on long term sustainability through line department engagement, if line department engagement proves untimely and if APRP can evolve alternative delivery methods.

A course correction may be required, although the MTE recognizes that the APRP stakeholders now face a hard choice: 1) whether to continue with the current arrangement and initiate a concerted effort to build capacity of the line departments to undertake the APRP work in an enhanced manner, or 2) whether to depart from the practice of channeling funding to the Line Ministries and their provincial departments, and assigning the responsibility of designing and executing the community recovery small grants works to the PJST, supported by the Regional Coordination Offices and the APRP Support Office in Kabul for contracting out the functions currently held by the Line Ministries. While the second option is more likely to achieve results, this assessment is dependent on UNDP and JS rapidly strengthening the capacity of their APRP offices, in Kabul and the provinces, to take over the work currently assigned to the line departments.

For the purposes of consistency with the need to make a major course correction so as to accelerate significantly the effect the APRP is having on Peace and Stability in the provinces, the second option is recommended, but the factors surrounding both options are explored below with concrete recommendations that follow.

**Objectives of Community Recovery**

The objective of the Community Recovery (CR) component of APRP, as stated in the project document, is “to consolidate peace for all Afghans by assisting the transition of society from conflict to peace, and to provide access to services, employment and justice”. The purpose of activities is to facilitate the long term process of recovery and the provision of a peace dividend for both ex-combatants and their communities.
The implementation of this objective has been through a combination of immediate response projects, delivered through the small grant mechanism, and a long term response delivered through the line departments. The design envisaged that the executing ministries would be: MRRD (Community Recovery Intensification Program); MOI and MOD (integration to Afghan Security Forces); MOLSAMD and MOE (vocational and literacy training); MOHRA (religious mentoring and education); MOPW (enrolment in Public Works Corps); and MAIL (Agriculture Support for Peace and Reintegration). At this stage of the program, progress is variable across provinces and between line departments.

**Small Grants**

As of November 2012, 14 small grants projects (SGPs) had been completed and 89 were ongoing. These included irrigation, drinking water, road construction, small bridges, culverts, and construction of community infrastructure such as schools and a mosque, with an estimated total value of $1.1m, and benefitting around 24,000 reintegrees and community members. Projects are spread throughout Afghanistan and approximately equally across the northeast, east and northern provinces, but with fewer in the south and central regions.

An attempt was made to analyse the available quantitative data to show the number or value of projects in relation to the number of reintegrees. This did not produce useful results because the monitoring data that is collected mainly relates to technical aspects of what is delivered (e.g. inputs/outputs for a road, bridge or similar) rather than disaggregated information about who the beneficiaries are. The limitations of M&E are discussed further in a other sections of this report.

Small grant projects were implemented by a range of partners including existing and new CDCs. In addition to infrastructure, some projects were implemented by de-mining NGOs with the purpose of providing employment opportunities. These seem to be popular with reintegrees because training, including basic literacy, is provided and there is potential for ongoing rather than only short term employment.

Small grants generally appear to be popular with reintegrees and communities. They link directly with the demobilisation process and, if developed in a participatory way, provide an opportunity to support a process of reintegration. Each of the reintegrees interviewed by the MTE team had been the recipient of a small project for their community and some gave credible accounts of the effect this had. One had received funding for several wells but had exceeded the planned number by making cost savings, motivated by the gratitude of the villagers. This was verified by a UNDP staff member. Another, a small commander, had been able to provide a gravel road which had made a real difference in terms of access to markets and services for the community. However, he himself was not able to use the road because, since joining the program, his own security was at risk. His son faced threats in school and he was planning to move the family to Mazar where he felt more secure.

These examples are anecdotal and no general conclusions are drawn from them. The MTE team could not visit any actual projects, for reasons of time, distance and security so it was not possible to assess the quality of either the process or of the projects themselves. From discussions with PJST and UNDP staff it is reasonable to conclude that sincere attempts are
made to ensure that reintegrees and their communities receive these benefits. However, on the basis of evidence from small grants schemes across Afghanistan, delivered through a range of actors, it is also reasonable to conclude that the quality of projects is likely to vary considerably from unsatisfactory to excellent. The quality of implementing partners was acknowledged by all informants to be variable and the capacity of the PJSTs and UNDP to undertake rigorous monitoring to promote quality is considerably over-stretched.

**Line Ministry Programs**

In line with intention, a range of projects have been implemented through four ministries: MRRD, MAIL, MoPW and MoLSAMD. In the absence of a comprehensive overall monitoring and evaluation system it is currently very difficult to know how many reintegrees and their families are receiving support. The various reports from the line ministries contain different quantitative data, which cannot be aggregated, and the reporting formats have changed which additionally complicates monitoring over time.

**MRRD**

Funding has been provided by APRP for four programs in MRRD: the National Solidarity Program (NSP); National Rural Access Program (NRAP); National Area Based Development Program (NABDP); Rural Water and Sanitation Program (RuWATSIP).

**NSP: Conflict Recovery Intensification Program (CRIP)**

Approximately USD 58 million has been provided to MRRD for CRIP of which around USD 28 million has been disbursed. At the time of the evaluation it had just become clear that CRIP funds have been absorbed within the broader National Solidarity Program (NSP). Funds had been allocated retrospectively against projects in 18 provinces rather than strategically for specific projects designed for the benefit of reintegrees and their communities. This finding highlights a fundamental tension in the design of APRP because, from the MRRD perspective, NSP is a well-established program delivering according to a methodology which is widely seen to be effective. NSP is seen as working well with the community as whole and is designed not to discriminate either positively or negatively for any particular group. It also works slowly, taking around one year to develop a new Community Development Council (CDC) to the point that it can receive funds.

While this longer timeframe may be entirely reasonable for MRRD, it raises a question about the added value for APRP of delivering through this mechanism. NSP is also a huge program, disbursing around $1.6 billion since inception in 2003. It is reported to have an effective M&E, supported by the World Bank within the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). Reporting against APRP funds has been problematic because the data produced routinely for NSP does not disaggregate particular groups of beneficiaries other than by gender. It has also been frustrating and confusing for both APRP and MRRD because APRP, in the process of developing its own M&E system, has changed the format for reporting several times.

Managing the interface between APRP and MRRD at central level has been additionally difficult because funds for NSP are provided directly to the ARTF by APRP donors through Window A. This means that neither the JS nor UNDP have any control over them. In
contrast, several of the small grants projects are delivered directly by the CDCs through local level agreements with APRP. This mechanism is working well where CDCs already exist.

**NRAP:** APRP provides USD 15 million for building roads. Like NSP, NRAP has planned to utilise these funds across 11 provinces within the existing program of work. Five projects have been completed and 45 are ongoing. Disbursement is currently low, owing to prolonged development and procurement phases and has been complicated by working under an annual rather than multi-year funding system.

**NABDP:** Under NABDP $1.7m is provided with 8 projects completed and 12 ongoing. Progress has been slow owing to delay in approving annual plans, long procurement processes and non-receipt of funds.

**RuWATSIP:** Projects have only just started in water and sanitation with the first funding approved in December 2012. Thirty projects are now in the planning phase in 6 provinces.

**MAIL:** MAIL is managing the Agriculture Support for Peace and Reintegration project (ASPR) for APRP to deliver labor-intensive agriculture conservation and natural resource management projects. This program comprises 20 completed projects with 113 on-going, including the establishment of orchards, irrigation canals and intakes, cold storage facilities, and rehabilitation of pistachio forests. Having established a Project Implementation Unit, MAIL has been able to monitor and report on activities more comprehensively than MRRD. Using available data, the MTE team were able to construct a graph to compare the number of reintegrees involved in ASPR with the total number of reintegrees in that particular province. This is not possible with current MRRD data.

**MTE Conclusions and Recommendation for Section E – Community Recovery.**

1. **Review the function and purpose of Window A.** Funds in Window A comprise almost one third of total APRP funds but are provided directly to ARTF and not within the control of APRP. Without control, JS and PJSTs are wasting a considerable amount of time trying to coordinate with only modest results. If this time is freed up, staff will be able to concentrate on improving the quality of small grant projects.

2. **Decentralise some program responsibilities.** Although the identification of small grants takes place at local level and is approved by the Provincial Governor, the proposals still require additional approval at central level before funding is released. It is recommended that this practice be discontinued so that responsibility for selection for Tier 1 projects rests entirely at provincial level.

3. **Speed up the fund release mechanism.** One of the main reasons why fund release is slow is that there is not enough staff to process the volume of payments in a timely way. This is an inexpensive recommendation because the kind of staff required for basic processing are relatively junior and likely to be available in the market at the salary offered.

4. **Re-assess staffing requirements at central and provincial levels.** The current JS staffing is inadequate to support delivery of the CR (Development) function where a
substantial proportion of the funds are allocated. At provincial level, one Development Officer, however qualified and experienced, is wholly inadequate for the complicated processes of project identification, design and monitoring. This structure is the same in all provinces even though the workload is considerably different. This issue needs to be addressed as part of full organisational assessment.

5. **Reassess UNDP’s role.** UNDP has been under-resourced for the development function until recently and the roles identified for the three international staff need to be reviewed to ensure that they are realistic. In particular, it is not clear whether the roles are intended to ensure accountability or to be capacity building. If capacity building is the objective it should be focused on the functions JS and PJST can realistically be expected to deliver and not stray into capacity issues of the line ministry which are far beyond the scope of APRP to address.

6. If rapid fortifying of JS and UNDP APRP is seen as feasible, discontinue the policy of channeling APRP funds for community recovery works through the Line Ministries, and use existing APRP systems to design and execute this component. In this instance, APRP-UNDP Support Unit would contract out community recovery projects to private sector contractors/ civil society organizations.

7. Strengthen the capacity of the PJST and Regional Coordination Offices to execute technically sound community recovery works by funding them to recruit civil engineers, agronomists and livestock experts as opposed to more general ‘development’ officers;

8. The PJST, supported by the APRP Regional Coordinators should utilize the *Provincial Conflict Analysis Profiles (PCAP)* to map opportunities and identify community recovery projects for insurgent areas where AGEs have joined, or are envisaged joining the program. The APRP Regional Coordinators should have the capacity to augment capacities of the PJST to elaborate cogent and technically sound proposals.

9. Once a proposal is approved by the PJST, and endorsed by the PGO, it should be brought to the APRP Support unit for rapid contracting. This is allowable under NIM modalities, if agreed upon by the parties.

10. A list of prequalified Afghan private sector contracting firms capable and willing to implement in insurgent areas needs to be gathered so as to speed up contract selection and awards, in compliance with UNDP procurement rules. If firms from reintegrees communities were contracted, that hire reintegrees to the extent possible, the impact on the peace process would be heightened.

11. Whenever possible, when technical capacities, costs and bills of quantities on tender documents are comparable, those contractors who originate from the insurgent areas should be given preference over those with no ties. An expressed methodology in the next APRP project document to this effect, when signed by JS and UNDP, would allow procurement offices to weigh this factor when choosing bids.

12. Once community recovery works are executed, Line departments through their National Priority Programs, especially those supported by UNDP under a NIM modality (e.g. NABDP) should be encouraged by JS, UNDP, to align their programs with APRP to leverage the peace dividend coming into insurgent areas.
Responsible Parties for Effecting Recommendations E: 1-12

Joint Secretariat, UNDP APRP.

Recommended Timeframe

First Quarter of 2013

Section F – UNDP’s APRP Support Office (Kabul & Regional Coordination Offices)

The APRP Support office is headed by a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) contracted at the D1/P6 level. However, at present there is a relatively small number of effective staff, both international and national, hampering the Support Office’s ability to operationalize strategies and to provide effective support to APRP, limiting the effectiveness of this unit.

The key components of the APRP-UNDP Support Office, located currently at, and supported by, UNDP Afghanistan Country Office in Kabul, are not as well established as they need to be at this stage. Their role as Trust Fund Managers and a source of Technical Assistance is not well understood amongst counterparts and their ability to provide Technical Assistance is hampered by lengthy delays in urgently needed administrative support from the UNDP Country Office.

Recruitment and procurement support from the UNDP Country Office is considered by many to be too slow, unresponsive, and appears to lack any sense of urgency or understanding that the APRP, as a Peace Initiative, is priority project requiring special attention. The unevenness and slowness in support forces the senior manager to expend too much time and effort appealing for basic requirements of the unit. The MTE team notes that some national posts deemed critical by the Support Office have been unfilled for 18 months.

There also appears to be a serious shortfall in the capacity of the Operation Management Office to understand the role and support required by the APRP program management.

The Regional Coordination Offices (RCO) located in Kandahar, Herat, Mazar, Kunduz and Jalalabad; cover 31 of the 34 provinces, with a regional office in Kabul. For the most part, the national officers that head the RCO appear qualified, but also seem to lack clarity on their roles and responsibilities. They work mostly alone, appear informed about the provinces in their respective region, if somewhat isolated from the “action”. RCO could benefit from being fortified by additional members, notably, development specialists with specific qualifications in Engineering or Agriculture.

There is virtually no alignment of GoA, UNDP and other development programs with APRP downstream activities. This may change now for the better as APRP falls under the UNDP Sub National Governance Cluster, and hence better coordinated interaction has become a likelihood with the National Area Based Development Program (NABDP) and the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Program (ASGP).
MTE Conclusions and Recommendation for Section F – UNDP APRP Offices

1) A capacity assessment of the existing APRP offices should be undertaken rapidly before the start of the second quarter of 2013.

2) The UNDP P6 APRP CTA should have one P5 level Strategic Framework & Partnership Officer to work as a senior deputy, to follow up on those work-related elements of policy, planning, execution, partnerships, and to serve as Officer-in-Charge during the absence of the CTA. This post should be advertised and recruited under Fast Track procedures as a priority.

3) The UNDP Bureau of Management (BOM) and Bureau for Crisis Prevention & Recovery (BCPR) should be formally requested by the UNDP Country Office, to activate SURGE mechanism or TDY secondment missions of operational experts seconded from HQ or other CO programs working in crisis or conflict countries. The SURGE or TDY missions should arrive to pitch in all manner of APRP work, including to finalize APRP paperwork for procurement/operations/HR identify and relieve bottlenecks, and review operational support to APRP Support Unit. This BOM and BCPR SURGE and TDY Missions could assess the operational environment under which APRP works, and make recommendations for improvements and enhancements, and identify gaps in APRP that could be filled by temporary consultants or SURGE members until recruitments of permanent fixed term appointments can be achieved.

4) Seasoned UNDP-experienced experts as senior advisors to the CTA, either arriving on SURGE missions or seconded from HQ on TDY, for short term missions, need to be fielded to Kabul to support the CTA. Working under the CTA with broad TOR, during the important year of 2013, which some donors have expressed is a “make-it-or-break-it” year for APRP, these extra ‘hands’ should help the CTA make noteworthy and timely progress. The addition of seconded experts from within UNDP’s global network should pitch in to aid recruitment panels, following up on operational matters, draft TOR for badly needed recruitments, undertake a broad spectrum of essential tasks, relieving the CTA from the near-impossible task of straightening out the deficiencies in APRP singlehandedly and would avoid placing the CTA in the unenviable position of working with an over-reliance on newly recruited and inexperienced project staff. The stakes involved for Afghanistan, its new institutions of governance, its war-weary people, the donor partners, UNDP, UNAMA, and ISAF appear to be too high to allow current bottlenecks to dictate what happens next at the APRP Support Office which oversees the APRP Trust Fund and whose supportive role needs to quickly become far more effective if APRP is to achieve its objectives in the next few years.

5) The Regional Coordination Offices should be fortified with qualified engineers and agricultural experts. These should be, wherever possible, recruited locally, where their familiarity with the makeup and history of the region can support the planning, opportunity mapping, interaction with local stakeholders and actors, and the efficient execution of APRP community recovery activities. Such technical capacity would allow for improved M/E and design of community recovery works.
6) Program Alignment is a much discussed but all-too-seldom achieved goal. Its importance increases in crisis and conflict-ridden contexts, where modest but important initiatives can be leveraged by the focused application of resources from multiple sources that are “delivering as one”. Within the UNDP supported programs of the Country Program, there is room for enhanced alignment in the insecure areas where APRP seeks to work.

7) The CTA of APRP, supported by Senior Advisors, and with information and inputs from the RCOs in field, and the UNDP Subnational Governance Cluster Head, should strive to identify development programs that can be used to follow up on APRP activities for maximum additional positive impact to provincial security, economic recovery, and jobs, jobs, jobs for all Afghans, including those residing in areas with unresolved grievances and a preponderance of insurgents engaged in armed confrontation.

**Responsible Parties for Effecting Recommendations F: 1-7**
UNDP Country Office, UNDP RBAP Division for Afghanistan, UNDP BOM, UNDP BCPR.
UNDP Afghanistan Subnational Governance Cluster Head

**Recommended Timeframe**
To be initiated during the 1 Quarter of 2013 with SURGE and TDY support through the 2nd Quarter (until permanent recruitments are in place).

**Section G – Gender**
Two representatives of the Department of Women’s Affairs (DoWA) interviewed during the evaluation were very active in spite of criticism from their male counterparts. One had won a competition for writing about the role of women in the peace process (see box below). She had also been influential in supporting reintegration. At a ceremony held for reintegrees, it was reported to MTE that she provoked tears in many of the reintegrees through the kind words she used to welcome them.

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**A Winning Article – The Role of Women in Peace Building**

“Many of the peace efforts are designed for the short term which cannot bring long term peace to the country. They are shallow and not coordinated properly. This wastes resources. Factors for unrest and rejection of peace are poverty, unemployment, lack of education, lack of political awareness and poor governance. We need to take strategic steps towards long term Peacebuilding. This means achieving justice for women”.  

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Gender concerns the relative roles of men and women and some men have been fundamental in opening spaces for women to participate in APRP. A senior adviser in JS has been influential in supporting the efforts of the SCR 1325\(^{12}\) focal point in the Ministry of Finance by promoting participation of female members of the PPCs in capacity development efforts including them in international forums.

A Chair of a PPC in a conservative province, who initially resisted the involvement of women in social outreach, has reportedly become an ardent supporter and provided protection to a female staff member in an environment traditionally hostile to women’s participation in public activities. Several male and female civil society representatives reported positively on the Chairman of the HPC for his open-minded attitudes to women.

The above anecdotes serve as examples that highlight an important point about special factors and conditions that have allowed women to play active parts in APRP. In PPCs, where the majority of members are often traditional males without much education, it is extremely difficult for women to participate without appearing threatening. As one female informant commented “if we were warlords, they would listen to us”. She also noted that the meetings were particularly alienating because the men spent most of the time arguing among themselves and added “and this is the problem with these kinds of people”.

Security is crucial for women’s participation. In Kunduz there had been a significant increase in women’s participation when security in the provincial capital improved. When conditions become insecure, the tendency of men is to become extra-protective of their woman, which has the unintended consequence of limiting female participation in public.

The role of the Provincial Governor is also crucial in APRP. In most provinces the composition of the PPC is determined by the PG and none have exceeded the target of three women representatives or ensured that three women candidates are proposed for inclusion. A mandated member of a PPC is the Director of DoWA but the few interviewed were frustrated by the perpetual struggle to play their role. In one case UNAMA had acted as a welcome bridge between her and the Governor because she had been unable to establish credibility alone. She observed that “if I had a supportive hand in government it would be easy”. Women express particular frustration that their role in social outreach is so limited. One commented that “they say it’s dangerous for us to go to communities but most of the men don’t go there either. They did many bad things so they’re not welcome but we can go there ourselves because we are sincere in our reasons for wanting peace”. The social outreach section of this report discusses the potential for expanded female participation in peace messaging.

**Women in the Delivery of APRP**

Only one woman holds a program responsibility in one PJST out of 31 provinces. She has faced considerable difficulties as well as criticism but has been able to initiate and support

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\(^{12}\) Security Council Resolution 1325 on the role of Women in Peacebuilding
various activities related to peace-building. In terms of delivering projects, it is almost impossible to know how they are involved. Data on small grants is not disaggregated and there are few activities that are aimed specifically at women.

A frustration of one of the provinces was the rejection of a proposal to raise women’s awareness of their role in peace by the JS on the grounds that it was not related to community recovery. It was not clear whether the rejection related to the poor quality of the proposal or to its subject matter but the result is that the potential to involve women is reduced. One of the limitations of proposals needing to be approved by JS is that issues that are important at provincial level may be less valued or inadequately understood at the center.

Program linkages with civil society across provinces are relatively weak and remain largely undeveloped. This aspect further reduces opportunities for women, many of whom are active outside of government. Both men and women in civil society are critical of the lack of transparency of peace-building processes and express concerns that they are excluded from making inputs to an agenda where decisions will be made that could negatively impact them. If they are not involved in agenda-setting of APRP, they stated to MTE that they will not buy in to what is agreed behind closed doors. This is a problem that is difficult to address because negotiations with insurgents are sensitive and cannot be conducted openly.

**Gender and Monitoring**

Data collected through the line ministry programs is generally too weak and not gender-disaggregated so it is impossible to know the extent to which women are involved in community recovery projects. NSP has gender-disaggregated data but it is not linked to information about reintegrees. MoLSAMD claims that it is involving women in vocational training but monitoring information is weak and unreliable. Only MAIL/ASPR has information that can be usefully quantified in terms of comparing the number of male and female beneficiaries alongside the number of reintegrees. The table below shows the proportion of male and female beneficiaries compared with the total number of reintegrees. Unfortunately the number of female reintegree beneficiaries, the data of which was to be represented in purple bars, is too small to register on the following table.
**Women’s broader role in Peace**

It is difficult to understand how women engage in peace-related activities beyond the scope of APRP. There are various activities at provincial level undertaken by other projects and respondents are not always clear who initiates or supports them. This means that attribution to APRP is difficult. An example at central level, during the period of the evaluation, was a two-day conference for women that was facilitated by UNDP’s Cross Practice Unit but which included a session related to APRP.

**Recommendations for Section G: Gender**

1. A Gender office, headed by an Afghan professional woman, is established under the Public Information Unit of the Joint Secretariat, to find opportunities to engage Afghan women in the peace process.

2. Although numerous international development agencies vocally support the concept of women’s empowerment, few of them bother to apportion a sizeable part of their budget to be received by female recipients. Given the expressed conviction of JS and UNDP in the importance of women in building peace and stability, it is recommended that a significant portion of the annual budget of APRP be set aside exclusively for women’s groups, female national consultants, and women’s organizations to execute social outreach and community recovery activities.

3. An international position at the P4 level be opened for an expert in gender economic and social empowerment in conflict countries, the incumbent candidate preferably coming from a country where traditional roles for women are limited by cultural practices, to work with JS, PJST, PPC, and all partners to mainstream gender empowerment and participation of women in as many aspects of APRP as possible.
Responsible Parties for Effecting Recommendations G: 1-3

JS, UNDP-APRP Support Office

Recommended Timeframe

During the 1st quarter of 2013, the positions and new budgetary allocations should be in place.
ANNEX I: Demobilization
As of December 2012, more than 6,000 reintegrates are now officially part of APRP. Negotiations are currently ongoing with another 786 potential reintegrees.

According to the JS’ SOP on demobilization and vetting, demobilization should occur as follows. However, as discussed in the text, the process differs significantly from the official plan.
Security Incident Index
2009-2012
(2009=100)
ANNEX II: Community Recovery

The graph shows that only in Kunduz are a significant number of reintegrees involved compared with other beneficiaries. In other provinces the involvement of reintegrees is small. In Badghis, where the number of reintegrees is the highest in the country, no reintegrees are involved. In part this can be explained by the fact that development planning cannot be adapted easily or quickly to the more rapidly evolving demobilisation patterns.

MPW: Public Works Corps

The aim of the Public Works Corps is to provide long term employment through road maintenance projects. This program is currently in Faryab, Baghlan and Kunduz where around 356 reintegrees and 164 of their family members have received training, including in safety, including who have worked as labourers. New contracts are in progress in in Nangarhar, Paktia, and Herat provinces. Reintegrees and their families comprise around one third of the 1,632 people who have daily wage labour opportunities overall. However, the program is not yet running efficiently as payments are late and the correct equipment is not being provided. Many reintegrees are carrying their own shovels and picks so that they can participate but wheel barrows and hand scrapers are also necessary and not provided to all labourers.
MoLSAMD

Information about the vocational training projects undertaken by MoLSAMD is the most confusing of the four ministries. There appear to be 15 projects ongoing, Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan, Badghis and Herat with eight more in the planning stage. These provide training to a total of around 5,000 men and women in construction skills, carpet weaving, tailoring, carpentry, motor bike mechanics and welding. Of these, around 1,400 are reintegrees. Considerable problems have been experienced which relate to MoLSAMD’s weak capacity to undertake needs assessments and to link to labour market opportunities. Few DOLSAMD’s have a training centre or experienced trainers and, following training, there is no provision for micro-finance to support those who graduate. There are also concerns that the numbers enrolled are inflated and monitoring is often impossible because of security. Improvements in selection are currently being made.

Factors supporting achievement

From interviews with stakeholders and observations, the following are important factors contributing to success:

- **Facilitating local determination** of small grant projects, especially where these are implemented by established CDCs. These projects are owned by the communities and seen as for everyone’s benefit

- **Professional Development Officers** who understand socio-economic conditions and map conflicts in the community. They ensure that conflict resolution is built into the project process

- **PPCs engaging in local conflict resolution** can be an important starting point for projects which then create conditions in which combatants may join the program

- **Projects with clear focus** seem to be more appreciated by reintegrees, especially where they provide long term job opportunities

- **Dedicated resources** for a project allow ministry staff to focus on APRP rather than having to absorb activities into their existing workplan

- **UNDP Regional Coordinators** play an important role in ensuring quality of proposals and provide timely feedback. They also facilitate relations between the province and centre, especially where the Development Officer is inexperienced

Factors limiting achievement

There are also factors that limit achievement:
• Slow processing of small grants and fund flows is overwhelmingly the biggest frustration at provincial level. This affects all stakeholders and deeply affects the peace dividend by creating disappointment among reintegrees and communities.

• Putting a ceiling on the number of grants a province can access reduces the potential to bring more insurgents into the program and demotivates PJST staff who feel they should not be held back because other provinces are performing less well.

• The absence of qualified development and technical staff in the PJST means that quality control is weak. This matters for the design and monitoring of small grants which require understanding of community dynamics and conflict as well as technical skills relevant to infrastructure. The structure of the PJST is the same in all provinces rather than being appropriate to the level of activity.

• Making decisions about target provinces and districts in the centre reduces the chance that they align closely with patterns of reintegration. Central procurement has also been problematic and prevented agricultural inputs being provided at the right point in the season.

• Line ministry staff are not always committed to reintegrees because of political or ethnic sensitivity and because they tend to be in insecure or remote districts which makes the work dangerous and difficult.

• Incentives for senior commanders have been weak and insufficiently beneficial to attract significant numbers.

• Provincial Governors who do not support APRP are significant spoilers. They can be slow to sign official documents and can be in tension with the PPCs and PJSTs.

Conclusions on Community Recovery

There are some convincing examples of good outcomes in community recovery in all provinces, even those where the insurgency is strongest and the program hardest to implement. Small grants are the most responsive to reintegree needs and are strongly supported by all stakeholders. However, they are very labour intensive, and processes for project approval, and subsequently fund flows, are slow. This has caused frustration among reintegrees as well as PJST and UNDP staff and potentially weakens the peace dividend.

Line ministry programs are very important in the theory of change because they potentially provide the sustainability that small grants cannot. At this stage of the program the design and targeting is largely centralised which has led to a mismatch between the patterns and location of reintegrees and the implementation of program
activities. There are some examples of success in reorienting activities – notably in ASPR – but others are unresponsive, such as NSP.

**Coordination between APRP and line ministry programs is difficult.** There are many reasons for this, relating to communication within and between ministries at the different levels as well as the long planning cycles which reduce program responsiveness. ASPR is the strongest program in terms of adaptation and has a better monitoring system than the others. This may be because it established a PIU with dedicated resources although such a structure runs counter to GoA directives. The MPW program is popular because of long term employment potential. But, for all programs, it is early days and there is insufficient evidence at this stage to know whether the programs can become more responsive over time.

**Community recovery and consolidation of peace is complex and complicated.** There are many stakeholders involved – PPCs, PJSTs, reintegrees, at least eight line departments, implementing partners, UNDP, civil society organisations – which make coordination extremely challenging. The Provincial Governor is critical to success or failure with some being highly supportive, others being less so, and others neither supportive nor unsupportive but otherwise engaged thus not making a difference. The quality of PJSTs ranges from excellent to poor but all have insufficient capacity for the demanding workload of the community recovery component. More staff, with the right experience and qualification, would improve the quality of proposals that are submitted, the quality of facilitation and the quality of monitoring. At present these tend to be weak in most PJSTs and reduce the opportunity for a peace dividend. The UNDP RPCs are respected locally for their role in promoting quality and by JS for their contribution to reporting.

**Overall, the ambition of the community recovery component is high.** It aims to provide immediate assistance to communities as soon as reintegrees join the program and it aims to follow up with long term development assistance. Interviews with reintegrees revealed that they want the same development opportunities for their areas as all Afghans want. However, as the Government is currently unable to provide consistent development across the country, especially in the remote and conflict affected districts, it is important for APRP to serve as a counterweight to this through its mechanisms. If APRP is to avoid being associated with disappointment and failure it will be necessary to upgrade its capacity promptly.
ANNEX III: Data Collection & M&E

Collecting information for the evaluation was a frustrating exercise because each stakeholder seems to have its own data set which often does not match with information held in other places, including in published reports. The small amount of quantitative information that is available, along with not being very reliable, is also not very revealing. It presents basic statistics on outputs (what APRP delivers) but it does not tell us anything about outcomes (what change has happened as a result of the intervention). This means that neither the successes nor the weaknesses of the program are documented in a way that makes it possible to learn or improve in a systematic way.

At present there is no qualitative data collection which would help explain what is happening. For example, we do not know how the community react to reintegration or what happens to reintegrees over time. This is particularly important because anecdotal evidence gathered during the evaluation suggests that reintegrees face many difficulties. Without understanding what these are, it is impossible to make programmatic changes to improve the chance of successful outcomes for reintegrees and communities. There is also no research program which could illuminate what is happening in the more complex aspects of the program.

In the current structure of JS there is no unit dedicated to M&E. Data is collected within each unit, especially field operations and development, but it is not aggregated across all departments so it is impossible to get a clear picture overall. This is not because JS has not tried. Efforts to recruit a qualified person to introduce an M&E system have failed three times with one of the main reasons being the relatively low salary being offered.

For Afghans with the requisite skills and experience, demand exceeds supply so they can command high salaries in the market. Efforts have also been made to contract a pre-audit company who would be responsible for data collection for the purpose of transparency and accountability. There are few companies willing to travel to insecure areas and those companies willing to apply have so far been under qualified.

At local level monitoring has been weak for reasons of capacity and security. As in JS, there is no person in the PJSTs with dedicated responsibility for M&E. The Development Officer is supposed to be responsible for monitoring but staff are already considerably overloaded. Some have the professional capacity but not the time whilst others are not recruited by merit and have neither the level of education nor experience to do monitoring. The same constraints of capacity and security apply to the line departments responsible for community recovery programs. Some do not have additional capacity to undertake monitoring and are reluctant to do it because it adds to workload. Capacity, in terms of numbers of staff available with the right qualifications, is also an issue.
Equally importantly, insecurity in the districts is a significant barrier to monitoring for all stakeholders. Reintegrees, by the nature of the insurgency, tend to be in remote and inaccessible districts and venturing to these areas can be very dangerous. UNDP RPCs have performed a valuable role in monitoring but they are also under-resourced for the number of provinces they cover and face restrictions in where they can travel.
ANNEX IV: APRP Overview & Theory of Change

The Government of Afghanistan (GoA), with technical assistance from UNDP, has developed the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme13 (APRP), a nationally led and implemented programme combining political, security and development dimensions of peace building. The APRP seeks to bring those who are willing to renounce violence peacefully back into Afghan society by reaching out to disenfranchised communities, individuals, groups and leaders, and mobilizing communities to provide stability, security, and legitimate short term livelihood opportunities for ex-combatants and members of their communities.

This programme, with sizeable donor resources and interest, has unusually high visibility throughout the country. Any perception of slow delivery by APRP risks evoking criticism and hostility from both its supporters and intended beneficiaries. To be successful, APRP must develop new and robust governance, management and organizational arrangements.

APRP is based on a very simple Theory of Change, depicted by the diagram above, where Social Outreach, Confidence-Building, and Negotiation will lead to the resolution of grievances, and mitigate the political and ideological difference that exist between those opposing the peaceful engagement with the Government. The programme focuses specifically on confidence-building activities, negotiations and grievance resolution among the Government, communities, victims and reintegrees, which focus on issues that generate violence and directly impede reintegration.

13 For more information on APRP, refer to the National program document.
This is followed by Demobilization: where the initial assessment is followed by biometrics, vetting, weapons management registration leading to formally enrolling into the peace programme. Reintegrates agree to live within the laws of the country, accept the Constitution and renounces violence and terrorism, and providing political amnesty with guaranteed freedom of movement creating an environment of trust and confidence amongst those who have embraced the peace process.

Finally these efforts should lead towards a consolidation of Peace through a series of community recovery and conflict preventive community-based activities benefiting both the reintegrees and the communities. These are initiated and implemented through a number of national programmes as part of peace dividend and bringing’s long lasting peace and harmonious society.

The UNDP’s role in this programme is to support the overarching goal that contributes to the stabilization process through effective and integrated UN support to the Government and communities by strengthening GoA capacities in the areas of peace and reintegration including local initiatives at the community level. Specifically the UNDP support focuses on two major outcomes.

a) Capacity of state and non-state institutions is developed in assessment, planning, delivery and funds management for peace and stability.

b) Local security and livelihood opportunities are improved through implementation of reintegration and community recovery initiatives

APRP has been developed on the basis of the recommendations of the 1600 broadly representative Afghan delegates to the Consultative Peace Jirga (CPJ) of June 2010. The Programme is led by the High Peace Council (HPC), comprised of state and non-state actors, who are the key owner’s of the programme and who provides guidance and strategic advices on a regular basis to the implementing organs.

The HPC execute this programme though the Joint Secretariat (JS) at the national level, who is responsible for the coordination of the programme while line ministries will be responsible for the implementation of different sub-component of the programme under the over all guidance and direction of the HPC.

At the sub national level the Provincial and District Governors play a central role in coordinating the support of the line ministries through the Provincial Joint secretariat Team (PJST) specifically established at the Provincial level.
The local peace and reintegration process is accomplished with the support and inclusion of political, tribal and religious leaders, CSOs, Women leaders and the informal local governance institutions of Afghanistan though the Provincial Peace and Reintegration Council (PRC). The UNDP technical support is provided though technical assistance at the national level and though the Regional Programme Coordinators at the regional level.

APRP has a three-pronged strategy: i) strengthening of security and civilian institutions of governance to promote peace and reintegration; ii) facilitation of the political conditions and support to the Afghan people to establish an enduring and just peace; and iii) enhancement of national, regional and international support and consensus to foster peace and stability.

In order to support the reintegration of AGEs APRP uses an integrated approach and engages with all communities with recovery needs, communities involved in the reintegration of returnees and conflict-affected communities, to find the means to secure their villages and begin the process of a return to stability. This is achieved through community-based recovery programmes and small grants schemes to provide communities with comprehensive support.

Community recovery activities are undertaken through three vehicles: i) Small Grant Projects (SGPs), which are given either directly to communities through Community Development Councils (CDCs), District Development Assemblies (DDAs) and other community bodies or through Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) ii) projects through line ministries, including Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), Ministry of Public Works (MoPW) and Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyred and Disabled (MoLSAMD); and iii) funds available for unsolicited proposals through CSOs, line ministries and other appropriate entities.

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14 See APRP Document for further details on the program strategy.