

Poppy problems

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THE editorial on the opium crisis in Afghanistan ('Afghanistan's poppy problems', KT, April 6) rightly points to the need for economic development and financial aid to tackle the country's main obstacle on the road to stability and peace. The current US-led attempts to address the opium crisis have focused on forced poppy crop eradication, which has alienated farmers by destroying their only livelihoods and helping the Taleban increase both its support and recruitment base.

With parallel economic development efforts not reaching the three million Afghan currently financially dependent on opium, it is essential that such ineffective and counter-productive policies are immediately halted in favour of a pro-poor development approach that recognises opium as a potential economic resource for the country.

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