



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
Regional Office for Central Asia



Annual Report 2021

UNODC Regional Office
for Central Asia

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A decorative graphic consisting of a thin blue line that forms a circular path. Along this path, there are several light blue leaves and two pink flowers. One flower is positioned at the top right, and the other is at the bottom left. The overall design is minimalist and elegant.

Annual Report **2021**

A healthy, safe, and secure community, free from the threats posed by organized crime and drug use and confident in the integrity of the justice system to provide access to services for all

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The UNODC ROCA Annual Report for the year 2021 was prepared by the UNODC ROCA team under the close supervision of Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia.

The production of this 2021 Annual Report was coordinated by Mr. Sherzod Hoshimov, with contributions from Mr. Yusuf Kurbonov, Mr. Koen Marquering, Mr. Andrey Seleznev, Mr. Mustafa Erten, Ms. Madina Sarieva, Mr. Batyr Geldiyev, Mr. Aliaksandr Vadziyany, Ms. Reda Sirgediene, Mr. Vladimir Kozin, Ms. Aisyah Qadri Yuliani, Mr. Borikhan Shaumarov, Mr. Azizkhon Bakhadirov, Mr. Uktam Nasirov, Mr. Mirzahid Sultanov, Ms. Olga Tkachenko, and other programme colleagues throughout the region.

The design of the 2021 Annual Report was developed by Mr. Bekbolat Kubeev.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACCU	Air Cargo Control Unit
AML	Anti-Money Laundering
ARQ	Annual Report Questionnaire
ARVT	Antiretroviral Therapy
B2G	Business-to-government
BCP	Border Control Point
BLO	Border Liaison Offices
CAPVE	Central Asia Network for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
CARICC	Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for Combating Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and their Precursors
CBT	Computer-Based Training
CCL	Central Customs Laboratory
CCP	Container Control Programme
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CFT	Countering the Financing of Terrorism
COP	Conference of the Parties
COSP	Conference of the State Parties
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DCA	Drug Control Agency
DMP	Drugs Monitoring Platform
DUD	Drug Use Disorders
E4J	Education for Justice
ECC MDIA	Expert and Criminalistics Centre of the Tashkent City Department for Internal Affairs
ED	Executive Director

EU-BOMCA	European Union Border Management Programme in Central Asia
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
FTF	Foreign Terrorist Fighter
FVMUN	Fergana Valley Model United Nations Conference
GLOTIP	Global Report on Trafficking in Persons
GPO	General Prosecutor's Office
HCV	Hepatitis C Virus
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HQ	Headquarters
ICE	International Collaborative Exercises
IDS	Individual Drug Seizure Reports
IEC/ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IMT	Interagency Mobile Teams
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
INL	The U.S. State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
Interpol	The International Criminal Police Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IREN	Inter-Regional Network of Customs Authorities and Port Control Units
IT	Information Technology
MECC	Main Expert and Criminalistics Centre
MMT	Methadone Maintenance Treatment
MOI	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOT	Mobile Operational Teams

MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPTF	The Multi-Partner Trust Fund
NCDC	The National Information-Analytical Centre on Drug Control under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPS	New Psychoactive Substances
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OHCHR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OST	Opioid Substitution Treatment
PCU	Port Control Unit
PLHIV	People Living with HIV/AIDS
PPE	Personal Protection Equipment
PT	Proficiency Testing
PVE	Preventing Violent Extremism
PWID	People Who Inject Drugs
PWUD	People Who Use Drugs
PWUSD	People who use new psychoactive substances/stimulant drugs
QA	Quality assurance
RCFE	Republican Centre of Forensic Expertise
RSPC FME	Republican Scientific and Practical Centre on Forensic Medical Examination
SCC	State Customs Committee
SCDC	State Coordinating Committee on Drug Control, Psychotropic Substances, and Precursors
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SELEC	Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre
SMM	Social Media Marketing

SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TADOC	Turkish International Academy Against Drugs and Organized Crime
TOT	Training of Trainers
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UN PBF	United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCAC	United Nations Convention against Corruption
UN-CTS	United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-IAFQ	United Nations Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaire
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCT	United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNODC ROCA	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Regional Office for Central Asia
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNTOC	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
UTC	Universal Treatment Curriculum for Substance Use Disorders
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VEP	Violent Extremist Prisoner
WHO	World Health Organization

FOREWORD



This Annual Report provides an account of the main results achieved by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Regional Office for Central Asia (UNODC ROCA), in 2021.

The triple crises of conflict, environment and COVID magnified the impact of the problems of drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism in 2021, further deepening vulnerabilities and desperation. Instability around the Central Asia region has increased the number of people in need of emergency assistance, and has posed additional security threats.

UNODC has stepped up efforts to help people in these challenging times, addressing emerging threats in line with human rights and gender equality standards, and

the rule of law. Through our strategic interventions, we have contributed to strengthening peace, preventing conflict, and tackling the root causes and drivers of instability and violence.

In 2021, UNODC ROCA delivered over US\$ 14 million in technical assistance. A solid and diversified portfolio of initiatives allowed us to make progress in countering the threats of transnational organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism, including illicit financial flows, while we also fostered criminal justice reforms and strengthened anti-corruption measures. We have promoted evidence-based drug demand reduction and HIV prevention strategies, improved access to treatment services, and strengthened research and trends analysis capabilities.

UNODC's people-centred approach has prioritized the most vulnerable groups, giving access to justice for all by exploring opportunities for young women and men to voice their needs and participate in decision-making. Member States have improved their prison management in line with international standards and norms.

Women are among the foremost victims of crisis and violence, and often face greater barriers to treatment for drug use disorders, and access to justice. As such, we have made gender equality and women's empowerment integral parts of our interventions. We have been engaged in efforts to address gender-based violence and provide support to vulnerable women, while also promoting gender mainstreaming and better representation of women in law enforcement and justice sectors.

We contributed to strengthening interdiction capabilities through establishing new Border Liaison Offices (BLO), new Port Control Units, Inter-agency Mobile Teams, and the first Situation Centre at the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The first Air Cargo Control Unit (ACCU) in Central Asia was inaugurated at the Almaty International Airport, Kazakhstan.

We are very proud that, through the commitment and innovation of our staff and the strength of our partnerships, we have been able to achieve our targets, even in the midst of the global pandemic.

2021 was an important milestone year for UNODC in Central Asia. Our first Programme for Central Asia 2015-2021 was completed. In November 2021, we launched the new Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025, which is fully aligned with national priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, it reflects the established targets to achieve peaceful societies and accountable justice institutions, gender equality and health outcomes, and global partnerships within a rule of law and human rights framework.

To strengthen our cooperation with the countries of South Caucasus, we have also initiated the development of Roadmaps of Cooperation with Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. These Roadmaps will serve to better inform the relevant counterparts on the UNODC Strategy; identify and review country-specific priorities

and assess joint capacity to come up with adequate response plans; and serve as a reference point for cooperation and coordination with national authorities in UNODC-mandated areas.

In 2021, the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia welcomed UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly, who had meetings with H.E. Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of Uzbekistan, and H.E. Mr. Kokhir Rasulzoda, Prime Minister of Tajikistan, as well as, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and senior officials from all Central Asian states. She launched the new Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025 and attended a number of high-level meetings dedicated to strengthening regional security, and the protection of human rights and gender equality in the region.

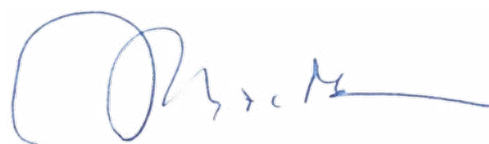
UNODC is committed to further advancing our work in the region, echoing the UNODC Global Strategy's aspirations for establishing "a healthy, safe, and secure community, free from the threats posed by organized crime and drug use and confident in the integrity of the justice system to provide access to services for all."

We look forward to advancing this work with you, in achieving our shared goal of keeping the people of Central Asia safer, and to advance peace and security, sustainable development and human rights for all in the region.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to thank government counterparts, civil society, the UN sister agencies and other partners for their continued engagement.

We are extremely grateful to our donors who have continued to demonstrate their appreciation and trust in UNODC through their voluntary contributions.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my colleagues, both at UNODC Headquarters and in the region, for their continuous support, dedication and professionalism.



Sincerely,
Ashita Mittal
UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

KAZAKHSTAN



**ED MEETING WITH
THE PRESIDENT**



Opening the first Air Cargo Control Unit (ACCU) in Central Asia at the Almaty International Airport



Inauguration of the Border Liaison Office at the B. Konysbaeva BCP at the Kazakh-Uzbek border



Launch of the research and training centre on implementation of the Nelson Mandela Rules



High-level dialogue on Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration Strategies for Returnees and their accompanying Family Members: Kazakhstan's experience

KYRGYZSTAN



UNODC supported voices of women in Police



UNODC and Kyrgyzstan's forensic service published a new dictionary to support forensic expertise in terrorism and extremism cases



UNODC supported measures to improve prison conditions and implement social rehabilitation programmes for prisoners

TAJIKISTAN





ED meeting with the Prime Minister



Opening of new BLOs located at the Pakhtaobod railway BCP on the Tajik-Uzbek border

TURKMENISTAN



UNODC engaged in developing Turkmenistan's draft law on Social Services



UNODC joined a new Joint Programme on Empowering and Engaging Youth to mitigate the multi-dimensional threats of the health pandemic

UZBEKISTAN



**ED meeting with
the President**



Opening of the first situation centre at the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan



Inauguration of two Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) at the BCP 'Yallama' at the Uzbek-Kazakh border, and at the BCP 'Kudukli' at the Uzbek-Tajik border



Establishment and operationalization of an additional seven IMTs to cover more regions of Uzbekistan



Opening of a new Port Control Unit (PCU) at the Yallama customs post

REGIONAL



SIGNING AND LAUNCH CEREMONY OF THE UNODC PROGRAMME FOR CENTRAL ASIA 2022-2025

24 November 2021

Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan

ЦЕРЕМОНИЯ ПОДПИСАНИЯ И ЗАПУСКА ПРОГРАММЫ УНП ООН ДЛЯ СТРАН ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ НА 2022–2025 ГОДЫ

24 ноября 2021 г.

Ташкент, Республика Узбекистан



Launch of the UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025



ЗАСЕДАНИЕ СОВЕТА НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ КООРДИНАТОРОВ ГОСУДАРСТВ-УЧАСТНИКОВ ЦАРИКЦ



Agreement on 'Exchange and Protection of Secret Information' reached at a high-level CARICC Council meeting

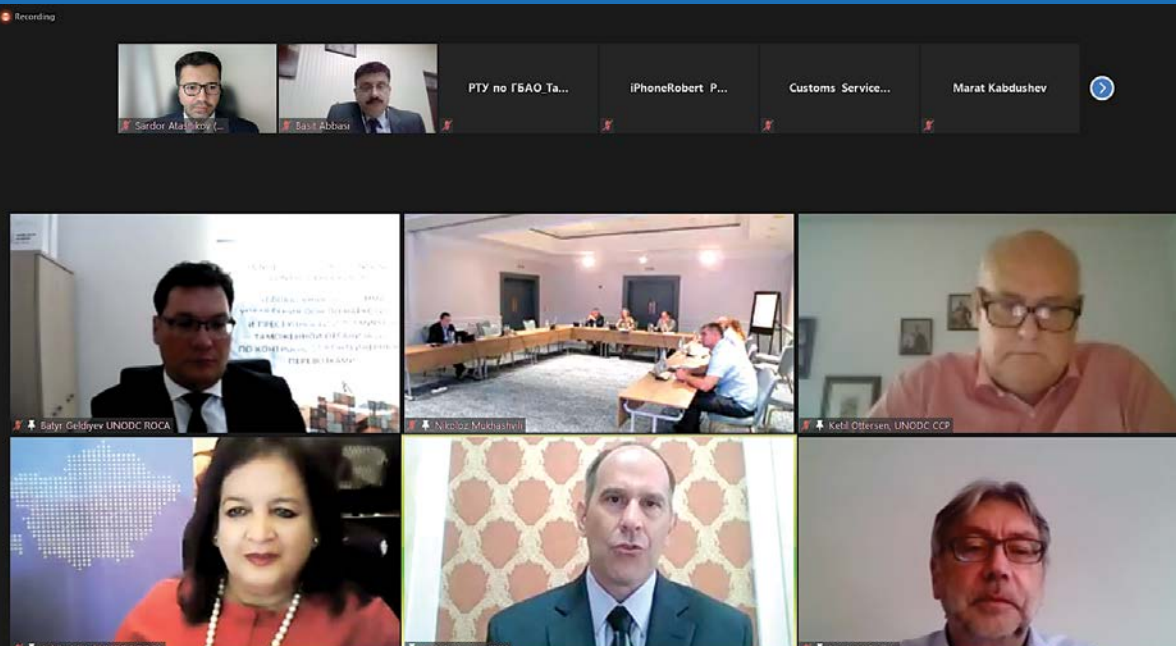


A Regional Meeting with the representatives of the Border Guard Services of Central Asian countries was organized in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, with the participation of UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly



9th session of the Conference of the State Parties to UNCAC (COSP) held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt

GEORGIA



UNODC ROCA organized an IREN Network Meeting in a hybrid format in partnership with the Georgia Revenue Service in Tbilisi

AZERBAIJAN




Inter-Regional Network of Customs Authorities and Port Control Units under the UNODC-WCO Global Container Control Programme expands to Azerbaijan

ARMENIA



Online training on "Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)"



The background features a repeating pattern of stylized pomegranates and leaves. The pomegranates are depicted in a dark red color, some whole and some cut open to reveal their seeds. The leaves are a light blue color. The pattern is arranged in a way that creates a sense of movement and depth, with some elements appearing to be in the foreground and others in the background.

**UNODC PROGRAMME
FOR CENTRAL ASIA
2022-2025 and
UNODC EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S VISIT
TO THE REGION**

The UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025 was signed on November 2021 in Tashkent by the UNODC Executive Director and representatives of the ministries of foreign affairs of five Central Asian countries. This programme focuses on the goal of building healthy, safe and secure communities, free from the threats posed by organized crime and drug use, and confident in the integrity of justice systems to provide access to services for all.

The programme is to be carried out by UNODC, under the lead of the Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA) based in Tashkent, making effective use of expertise and infrastructure available at UNODC Programme Offices across Central Asia (in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan), and at the UNODC headquarters in Vienna. The programme also aligned itself with the global UNODC Strategy 2021-2025, relevant SDGs, and national priorities.

The programme aims to support Member States in achieving priority outcomes of countering drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism in the sub-region, and increasing the responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness of UNODC's regional support. The sub-region shares a 2,387 km border with Afghanistan, and some parts of this border are vulnerable to drugs and human trafficking, and also potential spillovers of terrorist activities and the risks posed by the Afghanistan situation which has been rapidly evolving since mid-August 2021.

Following national consultations with government counterparts and different stakeholders, the UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025 was designed around the following thematic pillars:

- Sub-Programme 1 – Preventing and Countering Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Trafficking
- Sub-Programme 2 – Preventing Crime, Increasing Access to Justice and Strengthening the Rule of Law
- Sub-Programme 3 – Addressing Drug Use, Increasing Treatment of Drug Use Disorders, and Preventing HIV/AIDS
- Sub-Programme 4 – Preventing and Countering Terrorism, Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Leads to Violence

- Sub-Programme 5 – Supporting Research, Trend Analysis, Policy, Advocacy and Forensics

The results of evaluating the previous programme, national consultations and compiled lessons learned, along with gathered codified knowledge and recommendations, have all contributed to creating greater coherence between the new UNODC programme and regional UNSDCF's. This has resulted in the new programme being more closely aligned with the UNODC Strategy 2021-2025, utilizing a comprehensive Theory of Change, while also developing multi-partner partnership frameworks.

In the process of designing the new Programme, the human rights-based approach was placed at the core of all UNODC's proposed interventions, and likewise gender mainstreaming was integrated throughout all sub-programme thematic areas in line with the SDGs. The Programme promotes the culture of rule of law, zero tolerance to corruption, non-discrimination, and respect for human rights.

The Programme interventions cover all people, especially the most vulnerable populations and those left behind, with specific focus on women, children and youth, victims of violence, trafficking and abuse, and returnees from conflict zones, who are considered primary rights-holders. In terms of key duty-bearers, the Programme will advance professional capacities, competencies and skills of the staff of customs, law enforcement and drug control agencies, along with criminal justice, judicial and prison officials, and staff of health and education institutions, all in line with international standards and best practices.

The Programme Steering Committee will be the governing body of the Programme, while stakeholders hold full ownership. UNODC's international subject matter experts, communications professionals and technical support team, deployed throughout the region, will provide support for implementing the Programme. Based on consultations with Central Asian governments, country-level action plans/roadmaps will be prepared and endorsed to identify and agree on the specific areas of cooperation in key thematic pillars. This process will include engaging key counterparts for joint projects, determining key milestones and timeframes, and defining resource mobilization opportunities. The Programme's overall planned budget is US\$ 90,000,000.

During her official visit to Central Asia in November 2021, UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly met with H.E. Mr. Kassym-Jomart K. Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and H.E. Mr. Qohir Rasulzoda, Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan. During these meetings, Ms. Ghada Waly commended the engagement and openness of Central Asian governments in cooperating with UNODC in implementing its integrated mandates addressing drugs, transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism. The UNODC Executive Director presented a new Programme for Central Asia, covering five priorities of preventing and countering transnational organized crime, increasing access to justice and strengthening the rule of law, addressing drug use, preventing terrorism and violent extremism, and supporting research and analysis in these areas. The high-level discussions covered the issues of strategic partnership between UNODC and these countries, the situation in Afghanistan, cross-border cooperation, further development of CARICC, and fostering support from national governments to ensure the joint, effective implementation of the new UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025.

Ms. Ghada Waly also briefed leaders of these countries on UNODC's Strategic Stability Grid established in response to an increasingly volatile situation in Afghanistan, a country which accounts for more than 80 percent of the world's opium cultivation. The Strategic Stability Grid serves as a framework for tackling intersecting drugs, terrorism, corruption, and organized crime threats in and around the country.

The leadership of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan thanked UNODC for the long-standing partnership on addressing the issues of drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism. They appreciated the multilateralism approach and UNODC's support in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, while also stressing the importance of regional cooperation in addressing transnational threats related to drugs, especially those emanating from Afghanistan.

In bilateral meetings with MFAs and Special Envoys of Central Asian countries, Ms. Ghada Waly commended national efforts in providing transit humanitarian corridors for vulnerable groups, particularly to women

from Afghanistan, allowing them to travel to third countries to seek asylum, and supplying emergency food and COVID-19 vaccines for Afghanistan. These efforts contributed to fulfilling the UN's commitment to Afghanistan's people, in the face of the possible humanitarian crisis. Parties noted that the main areas of the new UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025 were in line with national priorities. They expressed confidence that the Programme would serve to further strengthen cooperation between UNODC and Central Asian countries, underlining the importance of countering transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, terrorism, corruption, and illicit financial flows.

At a high-level event in Tashkent, UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly joined high-level officials Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Akan Rakhmetullin, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr. Azizbek Madmarov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Muzaffar Huseinzoda, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan and Mr. Vepa Hajiyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan at a high-level event in Tashkent to sign and officially launch the UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025.

In her meetings with leaders of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan's national drug control agencies, and with CARICC representatives in Kazakhstan, Ms. Ghada Waly stressed the importance of cross-border cooperation in Central Asia, and in the wider region under the new Programme for Central Asia, through CARICC and the Inter-Regional Network of Customs Authorities and Port Control Units. She commended countries' support for implementing UNODC's counter-narcotics initiatives in Central Asia, and their contribution to countering illicit drug trafficking and cross-border crime. The parties commended CARICC, which has played a key role in developing and reinforcing capacities of respective national drug intelligence units of each Member State. Given the success of Inter-agency Mobile Teams, Port Control Units and Border Liaison Offices in coordinated law enforcement and integrated cross-border cooperation, it was noted that this practice should be further supported and rolled out in all countries of the sub-region. The UNODC Executive Director also highlighted the importance of gender balance in law









enforcement, and the need for mainstreaming gender equality and women empowerment initiatives in law enforcement, border and customs agencies.

In meetings with heads of border agencies, and with due consideration given to the long borders Central Asian countries share with Afghanistan, Ms. Ghada Waly discussed UNODC's programme priorities on border management and border security, prevention of the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, countering illicit financial flows, and AML/CFT. Parties agreed to promote further integrated border management and ensure security around emerging trade and transit corridors, while also supporting capacity-building efforts in border areas, including in the context of the recent developments in Afghanistan. UNODC's technical support will contribute to enhancing border forces' capacity to control borders through infrastructure development and capacity building, in line with national strategies.

Ms. Ghada Waly also met representatives of senates, general prosecutor offices, ministries of justice or internal affairs, anti-corruption agencies and customs

agencies in these countries. Discussions covered a wide range of issues, including women empowerment and gender equality in criminal justice institutions, prison management reforms, implementation of Nelson Mandela Rules in prisons¹, social rehabilitation of returnees from conflict zones, youth empowerment, drug use prevention, HIV/AIDS response, and social rehabilitation of offenders. Parties stressed the importance of improving conditions in prisons and vocational centres, developing vocational training programmes, preventing terrorism and violent extremism, countering HIV and TB infection, and respecting and protecting the human rights of prisoners. In view of the latest developments in Afghanistan, border control remains a priority area in Central Asia for UNODC. This situation has encouraged heads of customs services to engage closely with UNODC's cross-border initiatives, including on establishing and further developing Border Liaison Offices, and further strengthening regional and interregional cooperation between customs authorities in Central Asia and the wider region through the IREN Network. These outcomes can be achieved in part by initiating new regional operations, and boosting information exchange among PCUs.

¹ The Nelson Mandela Rules enables countries to strengthen prison management with a view to ensure the secure, safe and humane custody of prisoners. (<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/NMRules.html>)

PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES WITH STRONG INSTITUTIONS

STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION TO COUNTER DRUGS, TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME, AND TERRORISM

CARICC

The Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for combating illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors (CARICC) facilitates information exchange and analysis, and coordinates operational activities of various law enforcement agencies countering narcotics in the region and beyond. One of CARICC's objectives is to provide regional focal points in overall law enforcement efforts to counter opiates originating from Afghanistan. The centre's activities are carried out by core staff members, assigned through a competitive selection and thorough vetting process. Liaison officers at CARICC are seconded from each of the participating states. Currently, there are liaison officers from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, with the liaison officer from Afghanistan having vacated his position due to the changed political reality in his country. The provisions allow observer countries to place liaison officers in CARICC on a full-time or part-time basis.

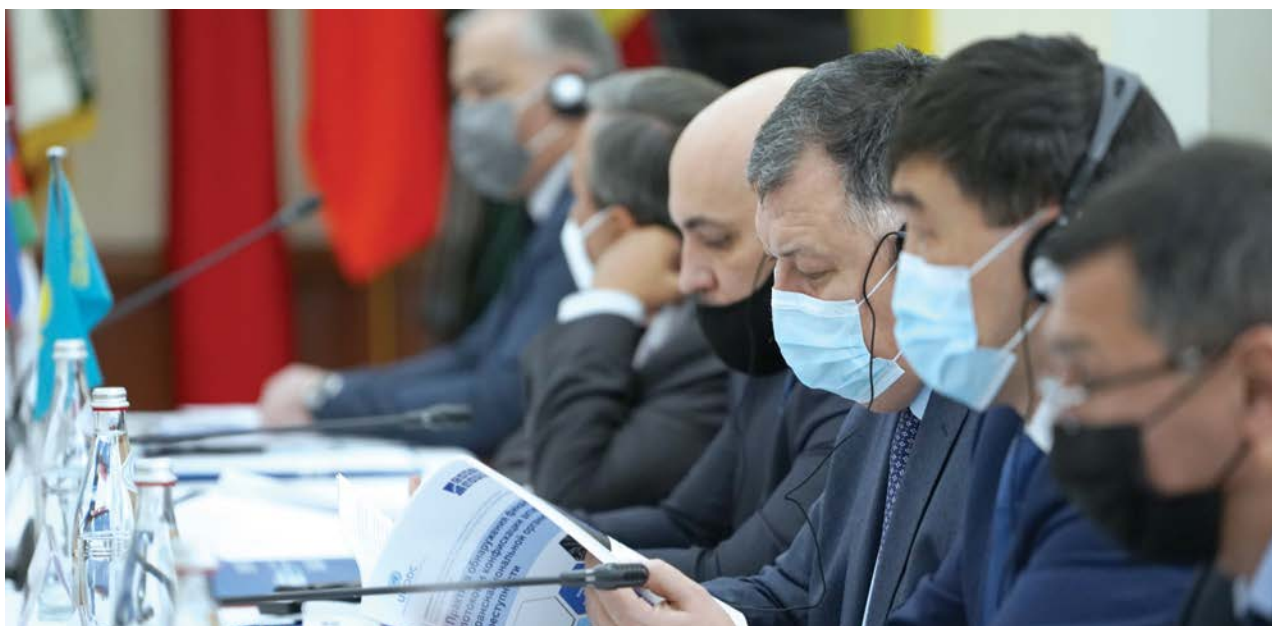
CARICC has become a facilitator for regional operations, such as Operation Substitute (on countering precursors), Operation Reflex (on countering NPS), and Operation Disruption (on countering illicit financial flows). CARICC has also become a cornerstone of the UNODC Programme for Central Asia, and a key implementing partner of UNODC in the region.

To date, as a result of information exchange and coordination between CARICC and Member States as

well as other countries, 43 transnational illicit drug trafficking cases were investigated, more than 11 tons of illicit drugs (opium, heroin, synthetic drugs) were seized, and 53 organized crime groups were arrested in different countries.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, from the second half of 2020 six internationally-controlled delivery operations were successfully conducted in cooperation with competent authorities of the CARICC Participating and Observer States. As a result, more than 170 kg of drugs were seized (heroin and methamphetamine) with an estimated street value of US\$ 16 million.

Despite the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021 CARICC successfully organized ten training courses for law enforcement agencies of Participating States in the fields of information and intelligence analysis, including on border management, and anti-money laundering and analytical products. CARICC staff members also participated in a range of professional training activities and seminars, organized by other UNODC projects, INL, INTERPOL, OSCE and other national police services. As one result of capacity development activities, to date 2,800 officers of competent authorities have been trained on different subjects. In particular, staff of CARICC and Member States' competent authorities have been trained in using IBM i2 Analyst's software to visualize intelligence data.



To ensure the safety of sharing confidential information, an agreement on 'Exchange and Protection of Secret Information' was reached at a high-level CARICC Council meeting on 23 November 2021 after almost 10 years of negotiations. This agreement will have a major impact on future CARICC operations and intelligence exchange between Member States and other international partners. Besides, CARICC has agreements or memoranda of understanding on cooperation signed with INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, the Anti-Terrorist Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. New MOUs are expected with the Southeast European Law Enforcement Center (SELEC) and the Gulf Cooperation Council-Criminal Information Center for Combat Drugs.

To date, Afghanistan, Austria, Belarus, Canada, China, Germany, Finland, France, Italy, Mongolia, Pakistan, Romania, Türkiye, UK, USA, Sweden, Iran, INTERPOL and SELEC have all been given observer status at CARICC. Afghanistan and Türkiye have both applied for membership at CARICC, and Türkiye's application is under consideration by CARICC Member States.

CARICC produces and disseminates regular information and analytical bulletins on drug seizures, trafficking routes, illicit trafficking trends and organized criminal groups. Currently there are over 500 recipients and users of CARICC's bulletins, and this number is continuously

increasing. In addition, CARICC issues periodic drug threat assessment reports, and disseminates these among law enforcement agencies of the region.

In 2021, CARICC facilitated completion of investigations by assisting with intelligence collection analysis and planning related to a number of cases of seizure of large quantities of heroin by the Customs Service of Azerbaijan, on the Azerbaijani side of the Azeri-Iranian border.

On 23 November 2021, a CARICC Council meeting was attended by the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and by UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly, in which the CARICC Member States eventually agreed to accept a regional intelligence sharing agreement after 10 years of deliberations.

In 2021, UNODC developed a "Strategic Security Grid" around Afghanistan, following the Taliban's takeover. This strategy document anticipates the establishment of an observatory for gathering data on and analysing pertinent threats related to drugs emanating from Afghanistan. CARICC is expected to play a central role in the operationalization of this strategy, through application of its expertise in collecting information, and in the analysis and dissemination of intelligence regarding the conduct of regional and inter-regional level intelligence and control delivery operations, utilizing its well-developed international networks.

INTEGRATED BORDER MANAGEMENT



Throughout the reporting period, despite COVID-19 limitations, the strengthening border cooperation initiative continued to implement activities envisaged in the work plan in close coordination with beneficiary agencies and the donor community. Travel restrictions affected arrangement of assessment missions, site visits, refurbishment works, training courses and meetings. Regardless, UNODC undertook adequate measures to minimize the pandemic's effects on project activities.

The Border Cooperation Component, with generous support from the Government of Japan, responded to the COVID-19 global pandemic by providing law enforcement officers serving at the borders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan with personal protection equipment (PPE). This PPE, including disposable gloves, KN95 respiratory masks, antiseptic liquids, antibacterial soap, protective suits, contactless thermometers face shields and shoe covers, all valued at around





US\$ 100,000, was handed over to law enforcement agencies of Central Asian countries over the period of 2020–2021.

cross-border operations and search techniques were conducted for 271 law enforcement officers (257 male and 14 female) of Central Asian countries.

In 2021, UNODC continued online and offline training programmes with the involvement of both national and international instructors, on knowledge and skills related to border control. Four regional trainings were held in varied online, offline and hybrid formats. Additionally, 25 national and regional training courses on a variety of topics related to

A series of training programmes on Expertise in Verification of the Authenticity of Travel Documents and Modern Control Techniques in Holding Searching Operations were held in all Central Asian countries. UNODC in cooperation with the Border Guards Academy of the National Security Service of the Republic of Kazakhstan conducted a regional



training course on Modern Control Techniques in Holding Search Operations in April 2021, with the involvement of an international consultant and national experts. Participants from Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan attended the training through the Zoom platform, whereas participants from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan attended in an offline format. A total of 31 participants, including 29 men and 2 women, participated in the regional training course.

On 16-17 November 2021 the annual working meeting of Steering Committees established under the Cross-Border Cooperation Component was conducted in Almaty (Kazakhstan). Forty representatives from Central Asian law enforcement agencies, donor community and UNODC staff discussed the implementation of the component activities, and developed recommendations to expand and enhance cross-border law enforcement cooperation further in the region for 2022.

On 23 November 2021, a Regional Meeting with representatives of border guard services of Central Asian countries was organized in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, with the participation of UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly. The meeting was organized in the framework of the UNODC Regional Border Cooperation Component, and served to discuss further enhancing regional cooperation on border security, and countering disruptive global and regional trends such as transnational organized crime, illicit drug trafficking, trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, and terrorism. During the meeting, parties reached joint agreements with UNODC, identifying top priority issues and needs for further cross-border cooperation. The meeting generated specific recommendations, offers and ideas on improving border management and making better use of information and intelligence platforms, as well as identifying specific capacity-building activities to tackle threats, particularly those emanating from Afghanistan as a result of the current geopolitical situation.



CONTAINER CONTROL PROGRAMME

2021 was a period of challenges, with logistical and operational limitations imposed on the Container Control Programme (CCP) as a result of COVID-19. All the while, organized crime adapted into new forms in light of the pandemic environment, which emerged in the containerized trade supply chain. Despite limitations imposed by lockdown measures during the most critical months of the pandemic, the CCP was able to transform these weaknesses into an opportunity through strengthening the law-enforcement cooperation platform, and cross-border and regional partnership.

As a result of successful consultations and advocacy performed by UNODC together with the Inter-Regional Network of Customs Authorities and Port Control Units (IREN) stakeholders, the Inter-Regional Operation 'Container Control Programme Illicit Drugs and Precursors 1' (Operation CPIDP 1) was resumed and successfully implemented in June 2021. Customs authorities and other law-enforcement agencies from Afghanistan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan were all actively involved in the operation. As per initial agreement among IREN stakeholders, Georgian

Customs acted as the Operation Coordination Unit during the operation.

Moreover, in 2021 customs and other law enforcement agencies of IREN Member States successfully conducted a number of international operations, backtracking investigations and exchanging data in real-time, which resulted in the seizure of 390 kg of drugs (including 386 kg of heroin), 55 tons of ferrosilicon, 7 million pieces of tobacco products, expired medical products, 237 tons of various types of consumer goods, and the detention of members of organized criminal groups.

Throughout the reporting period, the CCP continued to expand to prioritized airports, dry ports and seaports. It opened the first Air Cargo Control Unit (ACCU) in Central Asia at the Almaty International Airport, Kazakhstan, and a new Port Control Unit (PCU) at the Yallama customs post, Uzbekistan, both in February 2021. The process of establishing new PCUs was initiated in Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

656 officials, including 642 men and 14 women from customs and other law-enforcement agencies of





Central Asian countries, improved their knowledge and expert capacity on cargo profiling, risk management and analysis, evidence handling, seal tampering and cargo inspection. This outcome was achieved through 39 (32 online and 7 in-person) national and regional training courses, study tours and mentoring programmes conducted by the CCP. In addition, the CCP procured and handed-over computer, office and specialized equipment, and search and detection tools for inspecting containers, trucks and railway wagons for customs and other law-enforcement agencies of Central Asian countries, for a total amount of US\$ 540,000.

As a result of capacity building measures performed by the CCP, as well as the successful application of the Programme’s methodology in 2021, 124 seizure cases were made and reported by the PCUs and ACCU of the Central Asian region. Seizure amounts included 25.5 kg of drugs, 1.44 tons of precursor chemicals, 18.5 million pieces of cigarettes, 41,560 pills of falsified medical products, strategic goods, religious extremism propaganda materials, various types of consumer goods, industrial and medical equipment, machinery, construction materials, accessories, and other items, of a total value of more than US\$ 4.5 million.







STRENGTHENING NATIONAL RESPONSES TO COMBAT DRUG TRAFFICKING

BORDER LIAISON OFFICE



Kazakhstan. The Border Service of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in partnership with UNODC ROCA, opened a new Border Liaison Office (BLO) at the 24-hour international border crossing point (BCP) B. Konysbaev, situated between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, on 30 March 2021. The newly established BLO aims to enhance inter-agency and transborder cooperation and intelligence-sharing, to effectively counter illicit trafficking, and detect and intercept contraband (including narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals), while facilitating legitimate international trade. The statistics on seizures for the last two years prove the tendency among transnational organized groups to transit illegal drugs via the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan. For nine months of 2021, from April to December 2021, it's been reported that 13.7 tons of opium and cannabis narcotic drugs were seized in the Republic of Kazakhstan, along with 56.6 kg of heroine,

which demonstrates an increase of 2.6 times compared to the same period of 2020. A computer-based training class at the Saryagash BCP was inaugurated on the same day, as part of the Regional Cross-Border Cooperation Initiative. The comprehensive training programme designed classes offering continuous learning opportunities for border officers from all BCPs located on the Kazakh-Uzbek border. The training curriculum covers topics that fall within UNODC's mandate. Since the Republic of Kazakhstan joined the Cross-Border Cooperation Component in 2016, around 500 border officers of the Republic of Kazakhstan have undertaken computer-based training classes at BCP Kordai and BCP Saryagash. In 2021 alone, 92 border officers registered in the e-learning system of the CBT classes and passed trainings.

Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia, had official meetings with Lieutenant



General Darkhan Dilmanov, Director of Border Service of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Deputy Chairman of the National Security Committee, on 5 October 2021. Both parties agreed to further enhance fruitful cooperation in responding to the threats of cross-border organized crime, illicit drug trafficking and terrorism.

As a follow-up to the above meeting, an introductory trip was organized to the regional training sites of border officers, serving at the BCPs (border crossing points) at the Uralsk, Aktau and Almaty cities of Kazakhstan, over 14-15 October 2021. Along with UNODC, representatives of the European Union Border Management Programme in Central Asia (EU-BOMCA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) were invited to this mission. As an outcome of this trip, it was proposed to establish a joint initiative on developing regional training centres that will include four specific classes for border officers. This initiative will unite efforts of UNODC, EU-BOMCA and IOM in cooperating with the Border Service of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in strengthening the capacity-building of border officers for countering violations at borders, and contributing to the development of a national pool of trainers. Another outcome of this meeting was an agreement to establish

the first regional training centre at the Kuryk seaport of the Mangystau oblast. UNODC will support establishing a computer-based class at the Kuryk seaport, to provide continuous training for border officers serving at BCPs located along the state border in this area, with a particular focus on Kazakh-Uzbek and Kazakh-Turkmen borders.

In 2021 the UNODC Regional Border Cooperation Component organized a series of national analytical trainings, including seven trainings with the involvement of CARICC and TADOC experts, for border officers of the Republic of Kazakhstan. These specialized analytical courses sought to train border officers responsible for analysis and data collection to use Excel-based methods of statistical data processing and analysis, including dashboards and basic statistics. The trainings were designed for middle-rank border officers, namely analysts of the Situation Centre of the Border Service of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The training courses were divided into basic, intermediate and advanced levels. Ten middle-rank border officers-analysts of the Situation Centre of the Border Service were trained through a 5-day national analytical training, ranging from basic to advanced levels. 55 law enforcement officers (including seven female officers) were trained through the regional and national training activities



Kazakhstan

Uzbekistan

Turkmenistan

Alat

Farap

Imamnazar

Serkhetabad

Ayritom

Kudukli

Sariosiyo

Pakhtaobod

Dusti

Gulbakhor

Ayvadj

Nizhniy
Pyandj



of the UNODC Border Cooperation Component in the Republic of Kazakhstan during the reporting period.

In terms of technical support, the UNODC Regional Border Cooperation Component procured furniture and technical equipment for BLO and CBT classes at the BCP Sypatai Batyr, for a total cost of US\$ 14,000.00. The BLO office and CBT class are now fully equipped and operational. The official opening of the BLO and CBT class established at the premises of BCP Sypatai Batyr on the Kazakh–Kyrgyz border was planned in June 2022. In August 2021, the UNODC Regional Border Cooperation Component transferred a minivan for personnel of the Situation Centre of the Border Guard Service of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, with a value of almost US\$ 20,000.00.

Kyrgyzstan. Five specialized national training courses were organized, on topics including: 1) risk profiling (28 June – 02 July 2021); 2) the methodology of organizing and conducting operational data analysis (23-27 August 2021); 3) the use of specialized IBM software ‘i2 iBase’ and ‘i2 Analyst’s Notebook’, advanced level (30 August – 3 September 2021) with involvement of CARICC experts; 4) organization of search, inspection and profiling in countering transnational crime (11-15 October 2021) led by an international expert from the Republic of Latvia; and 5) advanced techniques of examination of travel documents and profiling with the participation of an international expert from the Federal Republic of Germany (22-24 November 2021 in Bishkek, and over 25-27 November 2021 in Osh). Overall, 84 law enforcement officers (including 3 female officers) were trained and certified in the Kyrgyz Republic through these courses.

To enhance the technical capacity of the key BCPs, equipment was procured for the Border Service of Kyrgyzstan in 2021 for a total sum of US\$ 102,867. This equipment included one kit of ‘Gastrol-P’ inspection, five mobile Regula passport readers and computer equipment, one Nissan minibus, plastic windows/doors, equipment for a heating system, and construction materials for refurbishing the ‘Kayindi’ BCP on the Kyrgyz-Kazakh border. This material support was provided in line with outcomes of the assessment mission conducted at the ‘Kayindi’ BCP in July 2020.

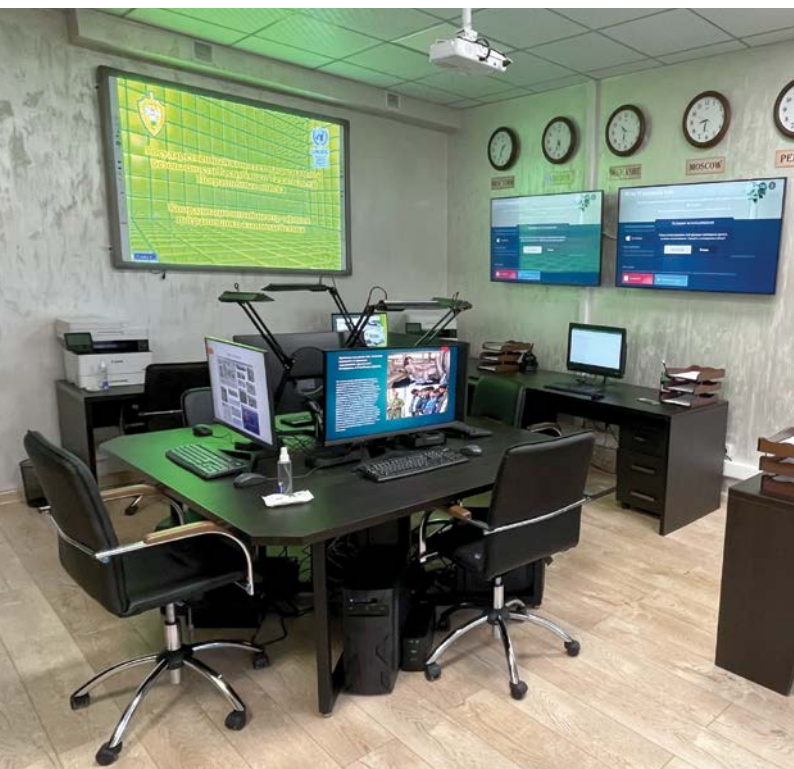




On 29-30 November 2021, in the Cholpon Ata city of Kyrgyzstan, a bilateral meeting of representatives of the border services of the Republics of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan was held with UNODC support, to discuss issues of border control and interaction between the two agencies.

Tajikistan. The first cross-border meeting after a long break caused by COVID-19 was held between Tajik and Uzbek law enforcement officers at the border crossing points Ayyaj and Gulbakhor on 11 March 2021. The meeting was conducted at the tri-border area where the boundaries of Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan intersect. The meeting participants included representatives of the customs, border and police services of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The Parties inspected border crossing points, exchanged views on building inter-agency networks at both cross-border and regional levels, and developed recommendations to establish Border Liaison Offices.

On 12 March 2021 a working meeting of analytical experts was conducted in Dushanbe in order to discuss further support of Border Guards Forces of the State Committee for National Security of Tajikistan in establishing the Coordination Centre of Border Liaison Offices. During the meeting experts identified the list of equipment required to support the BLO coordination centre.



On 18 May 2021, the Border Cooperation Component conducted the opening ceremony of two new BLOs located at the Pakhtaobod and Kudukli railway BCPs located on the Tajik-Uzbek border. The ceremony was held on both sides of the border, and was participated in by UNODC ROCA staff, high-ranked law enforcement officials, local authorities and media. Firstly the delegates of the Republic of Uzbekistan visited the BCP Pakhtaobod in Tajikistan. Then, the mission proceeded to BCP Kudukli on the Uzbek side of the border. The delegations of both countries examined the premises allocated for the BLO, and the building which was newly constructed at BCP Pakhtaobod on the Tajik side of the border. UNODC provided the required infrastructure, and procured equipment needed to ensure the effective functioning of the BLOs.

On 21-25 June 2021, the Regional Border initiative conducted a national training course on modern control

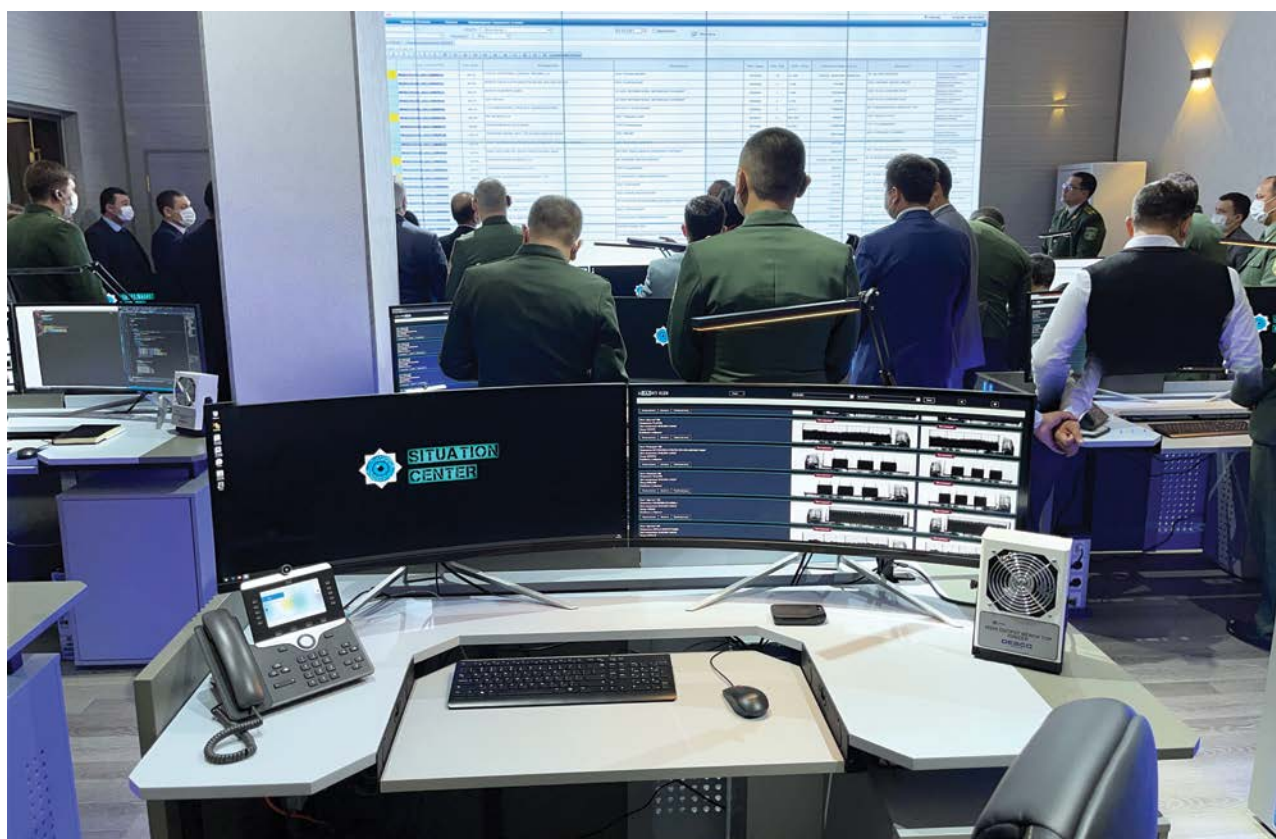
techniques for vehicles, cargo and goods inspection for 24 mid-level officers from the Border Guards, Customs Service, Drug Control Agency, and Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, serving at road and rail border crossing points. Overall 34 law enforcement officers of the Republic of Tajikistan were trained and certified through national and regional training courses within the UNODC Regional Border Initiative in 2021.

Turkmenistan. The UNODC Regional Border Initiative organized two working meetings, held in January and August 2021, attended by representatives from the State Border Service, the State Customs Service, the State Migration Service, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Turkmenistan. The meetings saw discussion of the results of activities of the UNODC Border Cooperation Component in 2020, and agreement of a 2021 working plan, which includes assessment missions, purchasing of equipment, and establishment of BLOs and interactive classes. Moreover, two interviews with representatives of the State Border Service, the State Customs Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Turkmenistan, were held as part of the independent impact evaluation to analyse ongoing developments and achievements of the Border Cooperation Component in the region.

On 15 April 2021 the Government of Turkmenistan organized the side event on ‘Fostering Sub-regional Cooperation for Drugs and NPS Control in Central Asia’ jointly with the UNODC Regional Border Initiative, during the Commission on Narcotic Drugs session. Speakers at this event shared up-to-date information and best practices on preventing illicit drug trafficking and new psychoactive substance abuse in the region, and showcased progress made in this direction. The side-event participants reiterated the importance of joint and coordinated efforts, and commitment to countering drug trafficking in the region.

UNODC organized five specialized national trainings in Turkmenistan, for law enforcement officers working at the ‘Farap’, ‘Imamnazar’ and ‘Serhetabad’ BCPs. These trainings were on the topics: 1) ‘Risk management and drug search techniques’ (31 May- 4 June 2021); 2) ‘Modern Control Techniques in Holding Search Operations on Vehicles, Trains and Goods Crossing the State Border’ (30 August - 3 September 2021); 3) ‘Cross-border transportation of cash and identification of cash couriers in improving controls and techniques’ (13-17 September 2021); 4) ‘Crime Intelligence Analysis’ (8-12 November 2021);





and 5) 'New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)' (14-17 December 2021).

On 25 June 2021, UNODC procured and handed over an off-road Nissan vehicle with an overall cost of US\$ 37,610 to the State Border Service of Turkmenistan. This vehicle is a part of technical assistance, and is intended to be used during operative activities undertaken in both urban and cross-terrain areas. On 23-24 November 2021, the UNODC Regional Border Initiative organized an assessment mission to the 'Farap' BCP on the Turkmen-Uzbek border. An assessment report on the technical capacity of the 'Farap' BCP and related training needs was developed.

Uzbekistan. Two Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) were inaugurated in 2021, including the 'Yallama' BCP on the Kazakh-Uzbek border, and the 'Kudukli' BCP on the Tajik-Uzbek border, which increased the number of BLOs in Central Asia to 19. The offices have been equipped with necessary high-tech and specialized analytical software, enabling analysis of database information, and standardizing information sharing and reporting mechanisms for inter-agency and cross-border communication.

UNODC supported establishing the first Situation Centre at the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, to enhance interagency coordination in the areas of monitoring of the operation of road, railway and airport border crossing points, and improve the analytical capacity of operative units of law enforcement agencies. The Centre is also expected to facilitate the centralized collection, processing and analysis of intelligence, and cooperation in the area of information exchange based on intergovernmental and interagency agreements in countering transnational organized crime, smuggling and violation of customs regulations. The Centre will act as an operative coordination entity in conducting joint operations between different law enforcement agencies at country, regional and international levels, contributing to building back better in post-COVID-19 Central Asia. Despite operating for only a very short period of time, the Situation Centre has proven effective. More than 200 violations of customs legislation have been detected, amounting to US\$ 10 million and the seizure of more than 140 kg of narcotic drugs, as was reported by the high-level officer of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan during the national visit of UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly in 2021.

SUPPORTING DRUG CONTROL IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC



Throughout 2021, UNODC continued providing comprehensive support to the Kyrgyz Republic's efforts to counter transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking by improving national legislation, strengthening inter-agency and international cooperation, undertaking capacity building initiatives, and improving technical infrastructure.

In June 2021, a meeting of the State Coordinating Committee on Drug Control, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors (SCDC) was chaired by the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, and supported by UNODC. Representatives from 15 ministries and agencies of Kyrgyzstan, the private sector, international organizations and donors, all discussed the drug situation in Kyrgyzstan alongside regional and global trends. In particular, the participants discussed measures taken to provide citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic with medicines containing controlled substances. The SCDC expressed support for the new version of the National Anti-Drug Programme of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, and for its Implementation Plan for the period of 2022-2025, as jointly developed by Kyrgyzstan and UNODC.

During the September meeting of the SCDC, participants focused on addressing the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) to benefit the Kyrgyz people and government agencies, in line with human rights standards. Following the meeting, Kyrgyzstan requested assistance from UNODC and donors to establish a training centre for UAV operators.

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We note that there is a great contribution by UNODC in all our endeavours and ongoing activity in the abovementioned areas of combating crime, and all the success would not be possible without the pro-active approach and support of UNODC.

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Mr. Ulan Niyazbekov, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic

Assisting the Kyrgyz Republic in implementing innovative approaches in the fight against transnational organized crime and drug trafficking was one of UNODC's priorities for 2021.

With the support of the UNODC Programme Office in Kyrgyzstan, Standard Operating Procedures for the use of UAVs by law enforcement agencies were developed, an analysis of legislation related to the use of UAVs in the Kyrgyz Republic was conducted, and recommendations for the use of UAVs in mountainous terrain were provided.

The field training on wild cannabis mapping using drones brought together scientific experts from the Lebedev Physical Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, practitioners, and representatives of law enforcement agencies, the State Forensic Science Service and the Kyrgyz Academy of Sciences. During one practical flight alone (conducted over less than 2 hours), a UAV explored 500 hectares of the surface and detected several sites of illegal cannabis cultivation. With experts' support, a methodology for detecting illegal cultivation sites of illicit drugs was developed, and further development steps were identified.

The combined use of autonomous wireless ground sensor security systems and drones was another innovative element. The integration of security systems with UAVs in countering illicit drug crops, protecting extended borders, carrying out operational activities, protecting strategic infrastructure facilities, protection of prisons, environmental protection, border protection, and anti-smuggling operations, was tested with the participation of Russian experts and UNODC in the Issyk-Kul region of the Kyrgyz Republic in July 2021.

Practical training on the use of UAVs in the fight against drug trafficking in difficult mountainous conditions in the south of Kyrgyzstan allowed



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UNODC was a catalyst for introducing UAVs into the work of Government agencies in the Kyrgyz Republic.

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Mr. A. Dzhanuzakov, Head of the Department of Defence, Law, Order and Emergency Situations of the President's Office

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UNODC is a key partner for Kyrgyzstan in the area of countering illicit drug trafficking using innovative technologies.

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Mr. N. Abdiev, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic

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Due to the need for drug control, the Government of Japan has contributed a total of approximately US\$ 400 million to UNODC's Anti-Narcotics Programmes since 2015.

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H.E. Mr. Maeda Shigeki, Ambassador of Japan to the Kyrgyz Republic

national staff to develop targeting control during the detection and tracking of moving and stationary objects using television cameras with laser range finders, and the video monitoring of roads, transport and ground facilities as a means to combat drug trafficking.

On a global scale, cyberspace and cryptocurrencies on the illicit darknet market pose significant challenges to law enforcement and counter-narcotics capacities for governance and regulation, drug supply and demand reduction, and crime prevention. Law enforcement agencies must have up-to-date knowledge and mechanisms on tracing transactions and seizing cryptocurrencies that criminals use. To enhance the capacity of staff of the competent authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic involved in countering illicit drug trafficking and legalization of drug proceeds, UNODC, together with the Counter Narcotic Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, conducted a five-day training on the ‘Specifics of identifying, documenting, qualifying and proving crimes in the field of illegal drug trafficking, committed using information and financial technologies’.

Employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Financial Intelligence Service, the General Prosecutor’s Office, the State Committee for National Security, and teachers of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs participated in this training. The programme was conducted by experts, and practitioners of the Main Directorate for the Control of Drug Trafficking of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Federal Financial Monitoring Service. The training of instructors of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs,

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The Police Academy is the main educational institution of the Republic which prepares staff not only for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but also for all law enforcement agencies. The Academy has the ability to preserve institutional memory. All materials from trainings will be accumulated, and knowledge will be passed on to students in the future, including through refresher courses.

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Mr. Bakyt Dubanaev, Deputy Head of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior of the Kyrgyz Republic



as part of the introduction of counter-narcotics and UAV operators into the cadet training curriculum, with certifications, also sought to build the capacity of national counterparts.

Among other activities, UNODC continued to work on constructing two administrative buildings for the Counter Narcotics Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and procuring mobile control platforms and UAVs for the mobile operational teams of the Counter Narcotics Service.

Financial support for implementing the above initiatives was provided by the Governments of the Russian Federation and Japan, through the projects 'Establishment of Mobile Operational Teams (MOT) for the Counter Narcotics Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic' and 'Supporting Drug Control in the Kyrgyz Republic', respectively.

The Kyrgyz Republic has repeatedly noted UNODC's contribution in combating drug trafficking. As a result of this contribution, over seven tons of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors were seized by law enforcement agencies of the Kyrgyz Republic over the first nine months of 2021.

An essential element of strengthening the interaction between the Kyrgyz Republic and UNODC was the October 2021 adoption of the National Development Programme of Kyrgyzstan until 2026, which states that cooperation with UNODC should be taken to a new, higher level.

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We all know that at present, drug trafficking through the Internet is gaining momentum with well-thought-out schemes of criminal activity. Modern technologies make it possible to exclude the meeting of persons involved in transactions, thereby providing a contactless method of drug distribution. Virtual resources of the global network, electronic payment systems, mobile communications, and many other gadgets significantly reduce the risk for drug traffickers to be detained at the time of sale.

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Mr. U. Sultanov, Head of the Counter Narcotics Service of the Ministry of Interior of the Kyrgyz Republic



INITIATIVE ON STRENGTHENING CONTROL AT THE TAJIK-AFGHAN BORDER



Afghanistan's longest land border is with Tajikistan, and as such Tajikistan remains essential for the success of efforts to counter the illicit trafficking of Afghan opiates. Although the country has made significant improvements in strengthening its border security, the Tajik Border Troops need the international community's support in order to continue intercepting drug routes through the Tajik-Afghan border stretch, which currently faces new challenges and threats.

The UNODC initiative on strengthening control along the Tajik-Afghan border has facilitated analytical capacity building for the Border Forces of the State Committee for National Security of Tajikistan. It has achieved this through delivering seven training courses on topics including: methods of intelligence data analysis; computer skills development; enhancement of information-analytical capacity and analysis of risks, challenges and threats; and information collection and analysis methods utilizing specialized software products such as IBM i2. As a result of the delivered courses, a total of 135 border officers (including 28 women) have improved their analytical skills and knowledge levels. Through these courses the participating border officers strengthened their skills in gathering, and then conducting strategic and tactical analysis

of intelligence concerning the smuggling of illicit drugs and other contraband. They also improved their abilities to assess threats to the security of borders and border areas, as posed by extremist and violent groups from the territory of Afghanistan, in order to correctly deploy resources and monitor certain border areas. To improve the technical capacity of border forces, the initiative supplied IT equipment to the information-analytical unit of the border forces at a central level.

The technical and capacity development support will ultimately enhance the border forces' workflow of information processing on analysis of risks, challenges and threats in border areas, and contribute to advancing the information-analytical support system of management bodies, units and departments of the border forces of Tajikistan.

As a result of capacity development activities for border guards, a total of 1,664 kg of drugs was seized in 2021 by the State Committee for National Security (compared to 1,097 kg in 2020). The enhanced interagency analytical cooperation resulted in the seizure of 117.5 kg of hashish and 19 kg of opium during the reporting period, as a result of one joint operation conducted with the Drug Control Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

'TAJIKISTAN DRUG CONTROL AGENCY - ESTABLISHING THE TRAINING ACADEMY: PHASE II'

This initiative was launched in accordance with the order of the Head of the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, dated 29 January 2021. Following this launch, a number of working group meetings were arranged with the Drug Control Agency (DCA), to discuss and agree on the work plan.

The National Counter Narcotics Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2021-2030, and the action plan for its implementation over 2021-2025, were approved by the decree of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan dated 20 March 2021. The 'DCA Review' on the drug control situation in the Republic of Tajikistan in 2020 was published in Tajik, English and Russian languages.

Training materials including presentations, a training manual, hand-outs, case studies and audio-visuals, created to support the delivery of the Training of Trainers (TOT) course, were produced and updated based on UNODC materials. As a follow-up to DCA advice, all the materials were translated into Tajik language with UNODC support. UNODC delivered the TOT course with follow-up refresher TOTs, which were conducted for 17 current DCA instructors on 8-12 November and 23-24 December 2021. As a follow up to the TOT course, the DCA-trained instructors developed Lesson Plans and PowerPoint presentations for use at New Recruits training sessions.

The New Recruits training for 40 new DCA officers were led by DCA instructors, who had participated in TOT courses over 26 April-12 May, and 6-21 December

2021. These trainings were delivered based on the current curriculum used by the DCA, and sought to introduce guidelines and policies to recently recruited officers. These include current police practices, court procedures, modern technologies and intelligence analysis, and serve to enhance the new officers' expertise in investigative techniques, including controlled deliveries and undercover operations in countering drug trafficking with a focus on human rights and gender-related issues. The trainings covered both theoretical and practical sessions, and were delivered by national DCA experts, experienced police officers and UNODC experts working in this field. A new curriculum will be designed to reflect results of an in-depth needs assessment planned for early 2022.

A number of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on the provision of trainings were presented to the DCA Training Centre, having been adapted to local requirements and translated into the Tajik language. DCA staff and trainers updated the SOPs, as per the established modalities of the DCA Training Centre.

In December 2021, UNODC supported installation of a fibre optic internet connection for the DCA Training Centre with necessary equipment and a one-year subscription fee. This is necessary to support the networking of Training Academies of Enforcement Agencies, and the strengthening of international cooperation through attendance of online meetings and working group discussions, as well as the integration of e-learning sessions as an element of training centre programmes.



COUNTERING ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING IN UZBEKISTAN



The drug-related situation in the Republic of Uzbekistan remains tense, with there being a tendency towards the current expansion of illicit drug trafficking, the growth of non-medical consumption of psychotropic and potent substances, and the activation of existing and formation of new channels for the transit of Afghan opiates along the Northern Route.

Given the current situation, law enforcement agencies of the Republic of Uzbekistan have utilized analysis of the emerging crime realities to carry out a wide range of preventative and operational measures. These operations have sought to identify and eliminate large channels meant for the transit and sale of drugs of foreign and local origin. Moreover, operations have contributed to enhancing the coordination and organization of comprehensive preventive measures for reducing the demand and supply of narcotic drugs, their analogues, and psychotropic and potent substances. International cooperation in the field of combating illicit drug trafficking has also been strengthened with the involvement of efforts and capacities of concerned organizations, agencies, representatives of local authorities, and the public.

The aim of the Interagency Mobile Teams (IMT) project is to ensure that UNODC's support remains

relevant and is adaptable to future challenges and risks. This initiative introduces a holistic approach to the provision of assistance by ensuring that UNODC's support continues to be delivered in a consultative and coordinated environment. This is meant to imply and reinforce increased cooperation, both internally between various delivery mechanisms, and externally with other international partners.

In 2021, UNODC continued to work closely with the National Information-Analytical Centre on Drug Control under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan (NCDC), and with law enforcement agencies of Uzbekistan, to enhance national capacities in countering drug trafficking. These capacity development efforts sought to enhance national legislation on drug control, strengthen national operational capacities on drug law enforcement, and develop the capacities of other competent authorities in maintaining the legal turnover of controlled narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors under ratified UN conventions.

In 2021 the IMT officers carried out 1,904 joint operations with the participation of officers from the State Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Customs Committee, which suppressed

1,059 drug related crimes. Among them 21 requests were sent to the Department on Combating Economic Crimes under the General Prosecutor's Office for conducting backtracking investigations, and 186 cases were analysed in total. As a result of investigative and search operations, IMT officers seized 839 kg of narcotic drugs in total, including 98.1 kg of heroin, 244.5 kg of opium, 72.6 kg of kuknar, 205.5 kg of hashish, 261.6 kg of marijuana, 12.9 kg of synthetic drugs, 6.2 kg 16,196 pieces of potent substances, and 2.6 kg and 7,419 pcs² of other narcotic drugs.

The main goal of the activity component for 2021, being the establishment and operationalization of seven more IMTs to cover additional regions of Uzbekistan to complement the existing six IMTs established in 2018, was achieved. The IMTs are composed of officers from the State Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Customs Committee. The work of the IMTs is coordinated by the Operation Coordination Team, which is based in the National Information Analytical Centre on Drug Control, being the national coordinating agency. The Department on Combating Economic Crimes under

the General Prosecutor's Office also acts as a focal point for financial backtracking of significant cases, in order to address money laundering issues.

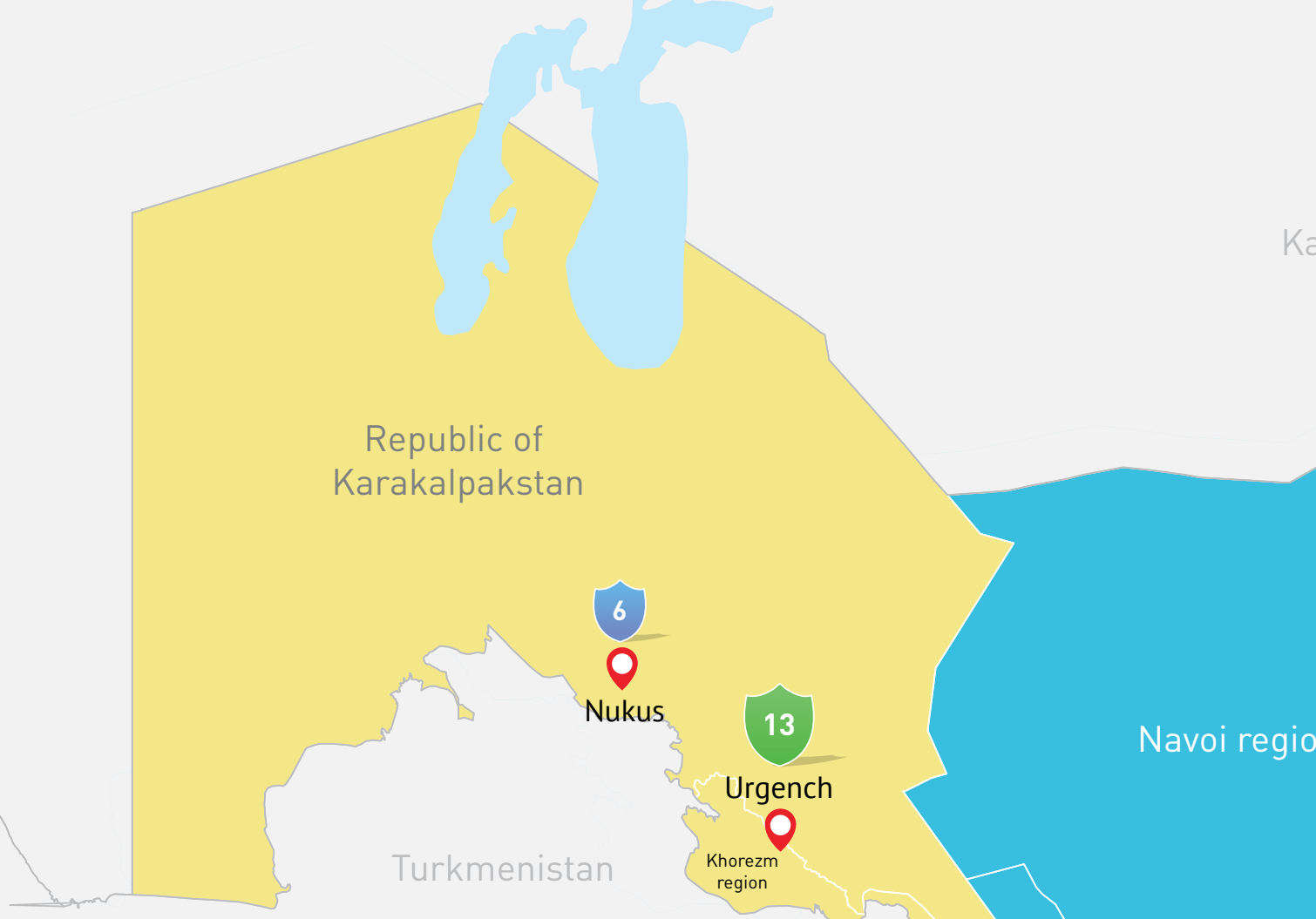
IMTs have increased the efficiency of interagency cooperation, as: 1) intelligence sharing within IMT units occurs through simplified procedures; 2) planning and organization of joint operations goes quicker and smoother, and; 3) investigations are undertaken based on the outstanding experience of each involved agency to complement their work. IMTs aim to enhance the operational capacities of Uzbekistan's law enforcement agencies, with the purpose of promoting a safe, healthy and secure society in line with Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Throughout the reporting period, the IMT project achieved the following results:

- Seven new IMT offices established in Urgench, Djizzakh, Navoi, Bukhara, Karshi, Namangan and Andijan regions, adding to six existing offices. New IMT offices are equipped with vehicles, and with office, IT



2 Analytical report on the results of IMT joint operations in 2021, NCDC.



New Interagency Mobile Team offices established in Phase II



Interagency Mobile Team offices established in Phase I

- 1 Based in Tashkent city - covers Tashkent city and Tashkent region
- 2 Based in Gulistan city – covers Syrdarya region
- 3 Based in Fergana city – covers Ferghana region
- 4 Based in Termez city – covers Surkhandarya region
- 5 Based in Samarkand city – covers Samarkand region
- 6 Based in Nukus city – covers Republic of Karakalpakstan
- 7 Based in Urgench city – covers Khorezm region
- 8 Based in Djizak city – covers Djizak region
- 9 Based in Navoi city – covers Navoi region
- 10 Based in Bukhara city – covers Bukhara region
- 11 Based in Karshi city – covers Kashkadarya region
- 12 Based in Namangan city – covers Namangan region
- 13 Based in Andijan city – covers Andijan region



Operations Coordination Team

- OCT Based in Tashkent city – Overall coordination functions

INTERAGENCY MOBILE TEAMS IN UZBEKISTAN DEPLOYMENT SITES (Phase II)





and specialized equipment, valued at more than US\$ 800,000. Currently the procurement of the second part of the special equipment is underway.

- The Standard Operating Procedures for IMT and the Operation Coordination Team was amended and updated, considering the inclusion of the Department on Combating Economic Crimes under the General Prosecutor's Office into the second phase of the project.
- Over 100 law enforcement officers have been trained in the following six training courses:
 1. Training for Trainers for lecturers of academic institutions of Law Enforcement Agencies of Uzbekistan, including Operation Coordination Team members. This practical training provided useful information on contemporary and efficient teaching techniques, including principles of adult learning, managing 'difficult' students, and effective communication and presentation skills.
 2. Training course on gender mainstreaming and upholding human rights in law

enforcement agencies. Through this course, over 60 law enforcement officers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan enhanced their knowledge on matters including: 1) the legal framework for gender equality and the international framework for ensuring human rights; 2) gender sensitivity and eliminating risks of discrimination against women in the activities of law enforcement and security agencies, and; 3) standard operating procedures for interviewing and screening women, among other matters.

3. Training on establishing effective interagency cooperation for 43 IMT officers deployed in 12 regions across Uzbekistan and the Republic of Karakalpakstan.
4. Training on risk assessment, profiling and psychological aspects of law enforcement.
5. Training on detecting drug caches in transit cargo, which improved the search, inspection and profiling skills of 43 law enforcement officers. Participants learnt about the psychological aspects of profiling, the psychological characteristics of criminals, means of establishing psychological contact,

innovative communicative technologies, interviewing methods, behaviour in difficult communicative situations, and other matters.

6. Advanced training on detecting drug-related crimes through the Internet, attended by 57 law enforcement officers from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Security Service, and the State Customs Committee, along with representatives of the General Prosecutor's Office and the NCDC. These participants enhanced their knowledge of global trends in countering money laundering, and combating the financing of terrorism in the era of financial system transformation which has included development of a virtual assets market.
- An annual bulletin on the drug situation in Central Asia in 2021, covering Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, was published jointly with the NCDC.

- Jointly with the NCDC a Side Event on Cooperation between Uzbekistan and UNODC in the Sphere of Drug Control was successfully held in the margins of the 64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

The IMT project's activities resulted in further strengthening the counter-narcotics capacities of the law enforcement agencies of Uzbekistan, in the face of the evolving drug situation as evidenced by illicit drug seizures in the country. As a result of comprehensive measures taken, the nation's law enforcement agencies revealed 5,156 crimes related to illicit drug trafficking in 2021, compared to 4,613 crimes revealed in 2020. Out of the total number of drug crimes detected, 1,500 were related to drugs sale (1,275 in 2020), 324 were related to smuggling (194 in 2020), 1,365 were related to illegal cultivation of drug-containing crops (1,310 in 2020), 33 were related to drug den maintenance compared to 4 in 2020, and 1,934 were other drug crimes (1,793 in 2020).³



³ Information on Uzbekistan's drugs crime situation in 2021 was provided by the NCDC.



ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING AND ILLICIT FINANCIAL FLOWS

During the reporting period, UNODC assisted Central Asian countries through providing technical cooperation, training and information sharing for countering money laundering and illicit financial flows. One of UNODC's primary objectives has been to increase capacity of national law enforcement and financial intelligence units (FIU) to detect and investigate money laundering and the financing of terrorism. Close cooperation was established between UNODC and national partners (Law Enforcement Agencies, FIUs and prosecutors) of Central Asian countries. Through its regional Anti-money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Advisor, based in Almaty, UNODC assisted competent authorities to increase capacity of national law enforcement and FIUs to detect and investigate money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

During the reporting period, 10 high-level meetings were conducted with heads and top management of FIUs and law enforcement agencies in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, which resulted in improved cooperation with UNODC. The high-level coordination meeting on AML/CFT activities was conducted with

national partners in Kazakhstan. During the meetings, technical and expert assistance was provided to implement amendments in the AML/CFT frameworks, in response to current needs and practical cases.

The UNODC Advisor facilitated operation of working groups in Tajikistan on enhancing the efficiency of parallel financial investigations, in Uzbekistan (on parallel financial investigations and disruption of illicit financial flows related to organized crime and drug trafficking), and in Kazakhstan (on the national IT system for professional accreditation and development of AML/CFT specialists). As a result, the instruction on parallel financial investigation was approved by the General Prosecutor's Office in Tajikistan.

UNODC proactively attended discussions on amending laws and legislative acts on further implementation of FATF recommendations in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Amendments into the Law on banking secrecy and discretion, the Law on operational search activities, and the strategy of development of the national AML/CFT system, were developed with UNODC's expert support.



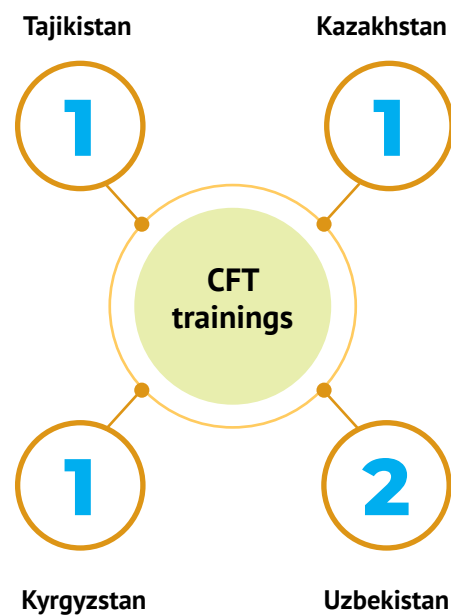
UNODC conducted regular meetings with competent authorities and the private sector, in order to enhance capacity and information sharing with the private sector on money laundering issues.

As a part of an anti-money laundering component, consultative meetings, round tables, trainings and international workshops were conducted on parallel financial investigations (eight in Kazakhstan, five in Uzbekistan and one in Turkmenistan), while workshops on AML from drug trafficking and countering illicit financial flows were also organized. UNODC provided expert support and practical recommendations on AML/CFT issues to government authorities.

As a part of the component on countering the financing

of terrorism, a multi-annual training programme on CFT was implemented in Central Asian countries. UNODC organized and delivered five CFT trainings in 2021, including one in Tajikistan, one in Kazakhstan, one in Kyrgyzstan, and two in Uzbekistan. Regional capacity to detect, investigate and disrupt terrorist networks, and to counter illegal financial flows including through reinforcing inter-agency cooperation, was strengthened.

These activities increased the effectiveness of national AML/CFT frameworks. In particular, continuously improved information cycles have led to more relevant and precise national AML/CFT Risk Assessment. Inter-agency policy, coordination and information sharing mechanisms have been enhanced. The UNODC Advisor



coordinated creation and development of a pool of national AML/CFT trainers (five trainers in Uzbekistan, four in Kazakhstan, three in Tajikistan and three in Kyrgyzstan), including representatives of the FIUs and law enforcement agencies of all Central Asian countries. Furthermore, UNODC trained more than 400 national experts in 2021. The national AML/CFT training curricula is being continuously improved, with a focus on high-risk areas, and is delivered by a team of national and international trainers.

In Uzbekistan, UNODC is engaged in a joint effort with UNDP, UNICEF and WHO, under the SDG Fund, to help the national government strengthen the overall financing framework for its national development strategies and public finance management. This initiative aims to create an enabling environment for introducing new forms of public and private finance, while also improving the efficiency of Uzbekistan's existing financial resources to meet its development priorities. At a time when important policy reforms, laws and strategies are being developed, the programme aims to facilitate establishment of an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) with financial solutions to maximize the development impact of social and environmental policies and reforms.

As part of this joint UN programme, UNODC assists national authorities in building capacity and mechanisms to recover proceeds of crime and stolen assets, and to mobilize resources for fiscal expansion, financial stability, and improved growth in a transparent and accountable manner. In 2021, UNODC completed a study which analysed the relevant regulatory and policy framework, as well as the current situation, responses and existing capacity of key national partners to manage and dispose of frozen, seized and confiscated assets. UNODC presented a related report to national stakeholders and discussed key recommendations for further improving the national system of asset management and disposal. These improvements may include establishing an asset management body, unit or other coordination mechanism, which will serve to harmonize inter-agency asset management efforts, and create a central database of seized assets. In 2022 UNODC will continue advocating for the development of standard processes and organizational structures for Uzbek authorities to effectively deliver their functions on asset management, promote inter-agency coordination, and enhance the capacity of practitioners through training workshops and development of a manual on asset management procedures.

PREVENTION OF ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

It is widely acknowledged that the connection between terrorism and organized crime, including the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, is a serious threat to international peace and security. This connection is also an obstacle to sustainable development, and a threat to the rule of law. Both the United Nations (UN) Security Council and the UN General Assembly have stressed the need to stem the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) to terrorist groups.

Member States in Central Asia have affirmed their political engagement to fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and to implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and UN Security Council resolutions against terrorism.

Throughout 2021, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and UNODC, in close cooperation with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), organized 15 related activities in the region.

In the framework of this initiative, joint UNOCT/UNODC/CTED virtual consultations have been conducted to assess Central Asia's regional situation, relevant legislation, and capacities to respond to the threat posed by firearms trafficking and related crimes. **Three national consultations** were organized in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan with the participation of representatives of national institutions and coordination bodies that are responsible for countering illicit firearms trafficking in the three countries. Following



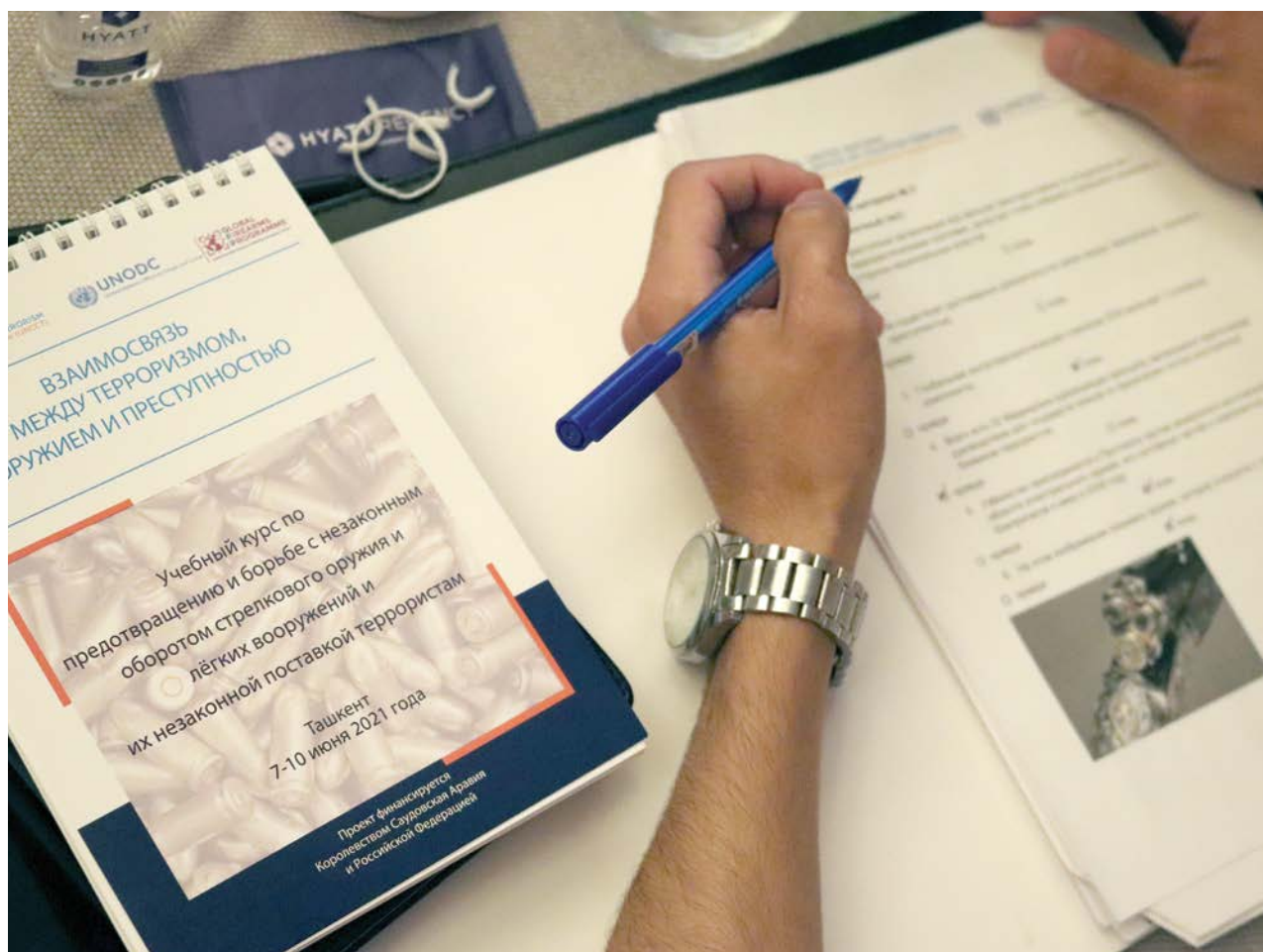
the national consultations, project partners drafted a roadmap for each country outlining findings of the joint CTED/UNOCT/UNODC/UNODA virtual consultations which included recommendations to strengthen national capacity to address the terrorism-arms-crime nexus. These documents were further disseminated to focal points in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

The Virtual Regional Workshop ‘Fostering Judicial and Law Enforcement Cooperation and Information-Sharing’ was held over 16-18 March 2021. 101 experts from Central Asian countries, Russia, and from international and regional organizations, participated the event. The three-day workshop’s presentations and discussions resulted in participants considering fostering judicial and law enforcement cooperation and information sharing, and undertaking follow-up measures in preventing and combatting the trafficking and illicit supply of SALW to terrorists by organized crime in Central Asia.

Five National Legislative Analysis reports with gap analysis and policy/legislative recommendations for action were developed for each member state in Central Asia. Furthermore, **three legislative workshops** were organized in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan

and Tajikistan. Individuals who benefited from this work included representatives from national ministries of foreign affairs, general prosecutors’ offices, supreme courts, ministries of finance, customs offices, ministries of defence, ministries of internal affairs, and academia.

During these workshops, national experts had an opportunity to discuss findings of national consultations, as well as conclusions and recommendations of legislative analysis. Participants received advice on how to update their national legislation and procedures in line with international frameworks on firearms and terrorism. National representatives had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the project implementation team, discuss success stories of similar legislative changes in other countries, and explore various possibilities of updating national legislation, especially in ways identified in legislative analysis reports. Overall, the experts agreed with recommendations and amendments discussed in several cases, to ensure proposals are adapted to the national context. Participants welcomed the contributions of UNODC and UNOCT to the Project, and expressed their willingness to continue this collaboration in the future.



Moreover, UNODC together with UNOCT organized **three thematic national workshops** to enhance national interinstitutional cooperation and information sharing, to effectively address the links between terrorism and trafficking in arms in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Representatives from ministries of foreign affairs, national security committees, general prosecutors' offices, ministries of finance, ministries of defence, and ministries of internal affairs, all participated in these workshops. In addition to national representatives, practitioners from the Russian Federation also joined the interinstitutional workshops, offering an interactive presence, engaging in discussions, and sharing their experience with other participants.

Discussions during these workshops focused on current national frameworks and level of interaction between various institutions in the field of firearms control. Cooperation between these institutions at the national level was also discussed, and suggestions were made for the eventual enhancement of interinstitutional cooperation at the national level. In

addition, the workshops benefited from the presence of international practitioners who shared good practices and lessons learned from their countries, as well as experts from partner organizations such as INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization. These experts presented various tools existing at national levels, which could be used for preventing and countering firearms trafficking and the diversion of firearms to terrorists.

In 2021, UNODC jointly with UNOCT and other implementation partners delivered **five related national** trainings in Central Asian member states, focused on effectively addressing links between terrorism and trafficking in arms. These trainings were attended by criminal justice officials, representatives of customs and border control, and arms control authorities, and strengthened these participants' knowledge and capacities on topics related to:

- measures needed for proper firearms detection in border areas, including



understanding the ‘modus operandi’ of firearms smugglers, related risk indicators, the profiling and searching of travellers, motor vehicles, trains and vessels, and

- identification and detection of terrorist suspects at borders, including matters related to border management and terrorism, Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF), preventive measures before travel of suspects, risk indicators and identification at borders, ‘modus operandi’ of parties involved, and examples.

The training also offered basic information on investigation and prosecution in preparation of further advanced trainings focused more on details of the investigation and prosecution of firearms trafficking, and expanding investigations to associated serious crimes and terrorism.

TERRORISM PREVENTION

UNODC provides Member States with international legal instruments that have laid the multilateral framework for combatting terrorism. These include 19 international legal instruments against terrorism, as well as numerous United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

UNODC delivers comprehensive technical assistance to Member States on crime prevention and criminal justice, including terrorism prevention and treatment of children affected by terrorism, in particular by the foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) phenomenon. This also includes support for implementing all UN international legal instruments against terrorism at normative, policy and operational levels.

In 2021, targeted expert support included a comparative analysis of national legislation of Central Asian countries, specifically that of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, with a focus on administrative supervision of violent extremist (VEPs) and FTF prisoners after release, and development of a

new Counter Extremism Law in Kyrgyzstan. In 2021 at least 10 research and analysis and policy papers were produced and disseminated among national partners in the Central Asian region, including:

- Background Paper: Assessing risks and needs of violent extremist prisoners and detained foreign terrorist fighters (Kazakhstan)
- Social reintegration of violent extremist prisoners after release (Kazakhstan)
- Risk and needs assessment of violent extremist prisoners and returned FTFs in detention
- Key issues in defining and criminalizing terrorism and violent extremism in Central Asian jurisdictions
- Procedural frameworks for prosecution and adjudication of terrorist and violent extremist offences in Central Asia
- Report on the Seventh Expert Forum on Criminal Justice for Central Asia (in partnership with OSCE/ODIHR, and OHCHR)

- Recommendations on Draft Rules for Social Rehabilitation of Children Affected by Terrorist Activities (Kazakhstan)
- Prison Security Audit Framework and its Checklist and Reporting Guidelines (Kazakhstan)
- Policy paper: Issues of independence of lawyers and right to protection: Recommendations for legislative reform in accordance with international standards and principles (Uzbekistan)

The Central Asia Network for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (CAPVE) and its website (www.capve.org) were consolidated and further promoted as a repository and coordination tool for the Central Asian states and their partners to share research, evidence and data to assess and respond to drivers of radicalization to violence, including within the prison context.

Regional experience in repatriating, rehabilitating and reintegrating women and child returnees from conflict zones showcased the importance of a multisectoral approach to programming, which ensures the entire range of challenges is addressed.

A joint UNODC-UNDP study on Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan's experiences in preparing for, developing and implementing repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for returnees and their accompanying family members was followed by a number of webinars conducted in Kazakhstan. These engaged over 250 justice practitioners, at least 30 per cent women, and brought together case managers and psychologists to foster a consultative process for implementing Rules and Terms of Social Rehabilitation of Children Affected by Terrorist Activities.

Furthermore, on 25-26 August 2021, the first round of the regional workshop on Cross-border Terrorism, Transnational Crime Trends and FTF's Related





«A study of return, reintegration and rehabilitation programmes for citizens from conflict zones has revealed a certain degree of stigmatisation of returnees by local communities.»

IRINA CHERNYKH

PhD in History, Professor of Kazakh-German
University (Kazakhstan)

Central Asian Network on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism www.capve.org



Investigation Techniques was held in cooperation with the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch for law enforcement agencies (border and custom services, general prosecutors' offices, and ministries of interior) of the Central Asian States – being members of the UNODC Border Cooperation Component. Thereafter the second regional workshop on Cross-border Terrorism, Transnational Crime Trends and FTF's Related Investigation Techniques was held jointly with the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch for law enforcement agencies (border and custom services, general prosecutors' offices, and ministries of interior affairs) of the Central Asian States – being members of the UNODC Border Cooperation Component for law enforcement agencies. This second workshop took place on 15-16 September 2021. In both trainings, six participants were from the Republic of Kazakhstan and ten were from the Republic of Tajikistan. They represented the border guards, customs services, ministries of interior, general prosecutors' offices, and departments of financial monitoring of national banks of both countries.

Since 2019, Central Asian governments have facilitated the return of citizens and children in particular from conflict zones, by legally recognizing these children as victims of terrorism, and translating this concept into action and providing support and services to overcome

the harm and violence that has been inflicted upon them.

In Kazakhstan, government authorities launched humanitarian operations 'Jusan' and 'Rusafa', which aimed to return Kazakhstani nationals from armed conflict zones in Syria and Iraq. 654 people have been repatriated to date, including 37 men, 164 women and 453 children (32 children having been unaccompanied over the years 2019-2021). In Kyrgyzstan, the government returned a total of 157 children from Iraq, in the framework of two humanitarian operations called Meerim (Mercy). Tajikistan conducted a one-off return operation at the end of April 2019, repatriating 84 children from the conflict zone in Syria. Uzbekistan has been organizing returns through the Mehr humanitarian operation, continuing since the end of May 2019. Its first phase resulted in the return of 155 people (48 women and 107 children), from armed conflict zones in the Middle East. The second phase in October 2019 brought home 64 children. Some of the repatriated children have mothers serving sentences in Iraq, and these children were returned to Uzbekistan in consultation with their mothers. Under special operations Mehr-1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, a total of 531 citizens (24 men, 121 women, 379 children and 7 foreign nationals) were repatriated from armed conflict zones in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, to Uzbekistan.

JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The UNODC Programme for Central Asia has demonstrated increased consideration of human rights and gender mainstreaming across different elements and activities of the programme throughout 2021.

Gender equality and women's empowerment were an integral part of UNODC's interventions. The Programme engaged in addressing gender-based violence and providing support to vulnerable women, while also promoting gender mainstreaming and better representation of women in law enforcement and justice sectors.

UNODC's focus has been on working with vulnerable populations, especially with drug users (including people who inject drugs), the HIV infected and affected population, people in detention and in prisons, victims of gender-based violence, victims of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants, children and youth. It has also engaged closely with civil society.

In Central Asia, UNODC works on developing the capacity of national partners in regards to gender-sensitive evidence-based policymaking, including through enhancing crime statistics systems, and conducting victimization surveys and gender-sensitive budgeting. Women's rights movements, associations of women in law enforcement and the judiciary, independent gender experts and research institutes were all actively consulted and involved in programme delivery during the reporting period.

In 2021, over 4,000 criminal justice practitioners (30 per cent women) increased their knowledge and skills in the areas of human rights-based and gender-sensitive community-oriented policing, criminal justice response to trafficking in persons, gender-based violence and corruption, radicalization to violence in prisons, alternatives to







incarceration, prison-based rehabilitation, and social reintegration upon release.

In Uzbekistan, UNODC conducted a regional training course on gender mainstreaming and upholding human rights in law enforcement agencies in 2021. Over 60 law enforcement officers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan attended the training course to enhance their knowledge on the legal framework for gender equality, and the international framework for ensuring human rights; on gender sensitivity and eliminating risks of discrimination against women in the activities of law enforcement and security agencies; and on standard operating procedures for interviewing and screening women, among other matters.

In November 2021, a roundtable and panel discussion to discuss the role of women in Uzbekistan and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in drug, crime and corruption policies was led by Ms. Tanzilya Narbayeva, the Chairperson of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and Ms. Ghada

Waly, the UNODC Executive Director. Attendees included some 30 women leaders of the senate, judges and prosecutors, and also representatives of the Ministry of Support of Mahallas and Families, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and UN agencies.

“Uzbekistan has undertaken significant reform efforts in key policy areas within UNODC’s mandates. Be it in the field of border management, law enforcement, criminal justice, health, education or the fight against corruption, the full success of these reforms will rely on the participation of women in their design and implementation, on an equal footing with men. Women’s rights and needs must be taken into account, every step of the way, as women and men are impacted differently by drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism,” said Ms. Ghada Waly, while addressing the roundtable participants.

UNODC, in partnership with other UN agencies, followed up on the implementation status of CEDAW committee recommendations to Central Asian states, and incorporated those in national gender



equality strategies, and analysis of national action plans on implementation of the UN Resolution 1325. National policies were analysed and reviewed to be fully aligned with international and national commitments on human rights and non-discrimination against women and girls, including a comprehensive gender expertise to explore opportunities for young women to voice their needs and participate in decision-making.

In Kyrgyzstan a number of important changes to legal and policy frameworks were further promoted by a team of UN agencies (UNODC, UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women and UNFPA) within the Spotlight Initiative, with the aim of eliminating violence against women and girls. Specifically, a review of national legislation on gender equality and violence against women and girls (VAWG) helped identify legal inconsistencies and discriminatory regulations. Also, standard operating procedures for national authorities have facilitated further support for the implementation of the national referral mechanism for victims of domestic violence and trafficking in persons.



HEALTHY AND RESILIENT YOUTH: BUILDING A CULTURE OF LAWFULNESS

UNODC is committed to empowering youth and ensuring youth engagement at all levels. In regards to its youth initiatives UNODC consults with the global UN youth strategy, being the Youth Agenda, as well as its corporate mandate.

In the Central Asian region, where around half the population is under 30, UNODC continues to work with and for young people to foster safe and healthy communities, as it does around the world. National policies have been analysed and reviewed to be fully aligned with international commitments on human rights and national action plans on implementing the UN Resolution 2250 on youth empowerment, including a comprehensive gender expertise to explore opportunities for young women and men to voice their needs and participate in decision-making. New educational tools have been made available

in local languages, including those on preventing violent extremism (PVE) among youth through sports, introducing the Education for Justice (E4J) tools in integrity training for youth, promoting lawful behaviour, and creating awareness of surrounding crime, justice and rule of law issues.

In 2021 the Central Asian government partners participated in and shared views at the 14th UN Crime Congress, during a Special Event on Promoting the Rule of Law and Justice: Innovative implementation of Doha Declaration towards the achievement of SDGs, and also during the UNTOC COP10 event on Palermo+20: 'Building on the legacy of UNTOC using quality education to prevent transnational organized crime and help the next generation create positive change'. In both cases they noted the importance of the 'Education for Justice' initiative and its successful





implementation in Central Asia. The E4J initiative received a 2020 Secretary-General Award in the 'innovation' category.

In 2021, over a million Central Asian youth, including young women and girls, were engaged in crime prevention initiatives that sought to improve sport-based life skills, and prevent youth crime through promoting education and sports. They were engaged with through UNODC's educational materials, including 'Zorbs' cartoon movies, and social sport-based videos introduced into primary and secondary school curricula.

In Kazakhstan the UNODC 'Education for Justice' (E4J) initiative promoted education for justice and crime prevention among youth. This outcome was primarily achieved by building the capacity of 503 employees (284 female and 219 male) of the Juvenile Police of the Republic of Kazakhstan and its territorial divisions, through a series of webinars on using E4J educational tools to prevent crime among youth. Through the 'integrity hours' campaign, UNODC together with the Anti-corruption Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan created five social videos intended to promote a culture of lawfulness, and E4J

initiative educational tools on ethics, integrity and corruption prevention, targeting youth and young people aged 11 to 35. This campaign reached over 8,000 views in social media.

In Kyrgyzstan, a manual on youth crime prevention through sports (Line Up Live Up Trainer's Manual) was integrated into the curriculum of the Sports Academy under the State Agency for Youth, Physical Education and Sports.

In Tajikistan, more than 31 (3 female) policymakers and practitioners from 18 state institutions built institutional capacities on the effective use of youth sport to address key drivers of violent extremism. UNODC introduced recently-developed tools, including a technical guide, an e-learning course, and a Practical Guide for practitioners on Preventing Violent Extremism through Sport. All these tools contributed to preventing youth crime by addressing push and pull factors, promoting holistic and multisectoral approaches to prevention, and discussing the role of sport as a tool in this context.

In Uzbekistan the establishment of a Youth Media Hub at the Youth Affairs Agency in Fergana city has



been launched to build the capacity of local youth centres. The Hub has been equipped with video and audio equipment, personal computers and furniture, establishing a means for organizing free training courses for young people on design, photo and video shooting, using SMM, and blogging to promote active youth engagement, entrepreneurship and leadership. Since December 2021, six jobs have been established at the Media Hub, and more than 100 people have developed professional skills required to build resilience for a positive future.

More than 100 educators have received new knowledge and skills on the principles of global

citizenship and the application of interactive training tools to instil in learners the values, attitudes and behaviours that foster creativity, innovation and commitment to peace, human rights and rule of law. The trained educators have cascaded their knowledge to more than 9,000 high school students, helping them constructively participate in community life, and act as agents of change.

UNODC has promoted sport as a tool for peace. It has launched a broad crime prevention campaign through a sport life skills programme run at schools in the Fergana Valley, specifically in the Namangan, Fergana and Kokand cities, which teaches young people to



avoid violence and resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner. More than 1,000 school students and 84 schoolteachers at 48 schools have benefited from this programme. Young people learned how to resist social pressures, cope with anxiety, and communicate effectively with peers, all taught through a set of interactive and fun exercises. The Ministry of Public Education of Uzbekistan emphasized that such campaigns involve the participation of other national organizations, and generate good results in terms of youth crime prevention. One of the school students from Andijan city said: “I am happy that together with my classmates I gained an opportunity to play in one united and friendly team.”

UNODC supported the creation of a new youth-led platform, the Fergana Valley Model United Nations Conference (FVMUN), which has promoted youth participation, civic engagement and skills development. The conference has engaged over 300 young people from universities, youth centres and associations in the Fergana Valley, in exchanging views on their role in local and international communities, political and social life. Through the conference, young people had the opportunity to develop public speaking and negotiation skills, and exercise critical thinking by finding their own solutions for global problems. FVMUN was a catalyst that encouraged young people to continue this new MUN platform into 2022 and beyond.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND DUE PROCESS



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development places focus on access to justice under Target 16.3. Access to justice for all, which is a key element of peaceful, just and inclusive societies, and a precondition for substantive equality, human rights and sustainable development.

To support countries in achieving the SDGs, UNODC in Central Asia assists national institutions in developing legislation that will allow criminal justice systems to function independently, impartially and with integrity, and uphold human rights standards and norms. In particular, UNODC assistance focuses on the adoption of new legislation and the revision of existing legislation on criminal justice, anti-corruption, penitentiary reform, prevention of violent extremism, trafficking in persons, and legal aid.

In Central Asia, UNODC has advocated for the importance of the human rights approach and gender-responsive policies at every stage of the programme implementation cycle, including via developing gender-sensitive policies, and linking women-specific issues to measuring 'access to justice' for all and for those in conflict with the law, in particular women and children. This covers such marginalized and distinct

groups as victims of violence who face multiple forms of discrimination and rights abuse. In 2021 a number of events and dialogue platforms on criminal justice reform took place to assist national authorities in moving forward the development of new criminal, criminal procedure and criminal executive legislation. These platforms include:

- The International Legal Forum 'Tashkent Law Spring' dedicated to the legal profession in the context of judicial and legal reform, with a focus on the quality assurance of legal aid services provided to vulnerable groups.
- The high-level online forum 'Penal System of Kazakhstan in the new reality', focused on establishing a humane and safe prison environment based on human rights, gender and age-sensitive approaches to effective prison-based rehabilitation programmes and social reintegration programmes.
- The VIII Expert Forum on Criminal Justice for Central Asia which brought together over 100 criminal justice practitioners in person and online, to discuss criminal justice reforms in the region in partnership with OSCE/ODIHR and OHCHR.

Three legal clinics opened by UNODC and the Youth Affairs Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the Fergana Valley in 2020, have been a basis for further expanding delivery of legal aid to the valley's population. This practice was adopted by the Law Faculty of Namangan State University, and with UNODC's support the faculty opened one more legal clinic at the university premises. Under the supervision of experienced lawyers, the faculty's students provide free consultations on civil, commercial and administrative law to young people, women and other population categories with low incomes. Mr. Otabek Narziev, a Doctor and Senior Lecturer at the Tashkent State Law University, noted that: "I am happy to see that the network of legal clinics in the Fergana Valley is widening. I have led the legal clinic at the Tashkent State University of Law for more than 20 years and consider that free legal aid allows vulnerable people including victims of violence, persons with disabilities, women and children, to have access to justice." Legal Clinic Specialist Mr. Abdulbosir Sobirxonov said that: "Young people turn to our Agency with queries of a diverse nature. They need advice on marriage issues, entrepreneurship, credit procedures and so on. During the COVID-19 pandemic, digital technologies allowed us to keep in touch with youth online. We use telegram bots, through which young people can easily contact us."

In Uzbekistan, 25 lawyers (more than 50 per cent women) built on their capacities and increased their knowledge of the role of legal defence in criminal procedure, and the gender sensitivity required in working with victims of gender-based violence. In Kyrgyzstan, 14 lawyers (11 women) gained the ability to provide pro bono legal services to victims of trafficking in persons.

Additionally, six legal aid manuals and two video clips were developed for legal aid practitioners in cooperation with the Tashkent State University of Law.

In December 2021, UNODC in cooperation with the National Center for Human Rights of the Republic of Uzbekistan invited over 100 law enforcement professionals from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the General Prosecutor's Office to participate in the workshop 'Combating torture: international practice and national experience'. This workshop put special focus on the Nelson Mandela Rules for professionals

working in the penitentiary system, serving to promote humane conditions of imprisonment, and raise awareness about prisoners being a continuous part of society. The workshop also covered the need to value the work of prison staff as a social service of particular importance.

The need for capacity building interventions in the area of community policing and crime prevention in the Fergana Valley was assessed, and this was followed by a series of cascade training sessions for 60 police officers working in local communities of the Fergana Valley as part of community policing interventions. In 2021, UNODC completed the Urban Safety Assessment in the Chilanzar district of Tashkent city in cooperation with the Academy of the General Prosecutor's Office. Mr. Evgeny Kolenko, Head of the Academy, emphasized that: "The urbanization that is taking place in the world has also affected Uzbekistan and our task now is to provide a safe urban environment in cities. Together with UNODC and a group of experts, we conducted a study of the urban environment in the big pilot district of Tashkent city, which included research on factors such as crime, criminological environment, corruption, unemployment, internal migration, road safety and many others. We developed sound evidence-based interventions for local stakeholders, and empowered them to promote healthy, safe, inclusive and resilient cities."

In Kazakhstan, UNODC assists the Ministry of Internal Affairs in reforming its police service, which is aligned with the Government Roadmap on Police Modernization for 2019-2021. A joint project aims to provide tailored advisory and capacity building activities to improve the Ministry of Internal Affairs' human resources policy, and to strengthen curricula of the national police training institutions as a cornerstone for effective modernization and building public trust in the police. Some initial activities have supported the implementation of community-oriented policing, which included components on strengthening community engagement and police-community partnerships for crime prevention. Some 90 police officers, including 34 women, enhanced their knowledge on good practices in human resources policy, building an effective and inclusive police workforce, and maintaining trust in modern policing.

UNITED AGAINST CORRUPTION



UNODC is the guardian of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which entered into force in December 2005. The UNCAC is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument.

Central Asian countries are actively expanding their anti-corruption policies, with the intention of achieving institutional and legislative improvements. The issues of promotion of zero-tolerance to corruption culture in society and business practices, also lies within the scope of anti-corruption policies. The effectiveness of policies to prevent and combat corruption in the region is largely determined by the extent to which anti-corruption measures impact the root causes of corruption, and there is a need to consider the local context of each country. Corruption is a type of criminal interaction between individuals, and understanding it requires use of various sociological research methods.

In Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, key challenges relate to the limited efficiency of: 1) internal anti-corruption control systems within the organizational frameworks of public agencies; 2) efforts to promote corruption-free legislative and decision-making process at central and regional levels, and; 3) ensuring transparency, accountability and responsibility in corporate finance and procurement of state-owned enterprises and companies with state-owned shares in authorized capital, as well as in the sector of natural resources management. In addition to those mentioned above, in Uzbekistan more challenges may occur in the areas

of civil society's engagement in the fight against corruption, and in ensuring the decisiveness of public and parliamentary oversight.

Institutional reforms in Kyrgyzstan are leading to the increased role of the nation's General Prosecutor's Office in investigating and preventing corruption. Thus, additional support is required to build capacity in anti-money laundering, financial monitoring and tracing of suspicious transactions, and investigation of corruption and economic crime related cases.

In Tajikistan, civil society organizations have lower capacities and capabilities to effectively participate in anti-corruption activities. In this regard, more efforts are needed to promote the advantages of civil society participation in anti-corruption efforts, while also developing the expert and analytical capacities of civil society in areas of anti-corruption policy analysis and implementation. Whistle-blower protection is also an important area of improvement for all countries in the region.

UNODC has delivered training and capacity building activities related to the anti-corruption proofing of legislation for experts and specialists of Uzbekistan's Anti-Corruption Agency, Ministry of Justice, and for legal experts of over 40 public agencies and regional administrations of Uzbekistan, held over June and August, 2021. Over 100 experts attended the training events.

UNODC in cooperation with Uzbekistan's Anti-corruption Agency, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Commissioner for the Protection of the Rights and Legal Interests of Business Entities, and with support from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), conducted the first business forum on 'Integrity in the business community of Uzbekistan' on 30 November 2021. This forum united over 100 participants from state regulators and the corporate sector, and private entrepreneurs, to discuss the most significant issues related to corruption and actions required for promoting business integrity. The Anti-corruption Business Charter of Uzbekistan was presented at the forum.

The Anti-corruption Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan has adopted an interactive approach to working with youth, and has designed an annual anti-corruption campaign conducted at Uzbekistan's schools. Within this campaign, professionals of the agency together with UNODC have conducted thematic educational sessions for more than 20,000 school students and 150 teachers, on means to identify and combat corruption, and to develop an active citizen position against this phenomenon. The attitudes of 10,000 university students towards corruption in higher educational institutions were analysed through the U-Report platform-based survey (<https://uzbekistan.ureport.in/story/777/>). Representatives of the anti-corruption agency, as well as those of universities and non-governmental organizations, received basic training on conducting sociological studies into corruption.

UNODC facilitated the participation of Uzbek, Tajik and Kyrgyz delegations at the 9th session of the Conference

of the State Parties to UNCAC (COSP), held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. A Special event on 'Strengthening civil society's role in anti-corruption in Uzbekistan' was conducted at the sidelines of this conference on 15 December 2021.

Over 50 masters students studying law at seven Uzbek universities gathered to participate at the model Conference of State Parties to UNCAC, organized by UNODC and the Academy of the General Prosecutor's Office of Uzbekistan on 24 December 2021. Through this conference the participants gained a greater awareness of corruption issues and the importance of UNCAC implementation, while the practical skills of the participating students was improved. In the future, the practice of running model COSPs will be expanded through involving students not only from Uzbekistan but also other Central Asian countries.

A two stage training workshop on anti-corruption review of legal acts was delivered on 28 June and 18 August 2021. The workshop participants were trained to effectively identify corruption-prone norms in legal acts and drafts. In addition, the workshop served as a consultative and policy advisory platform. Recommendations provided during the workshop were implemented through the presidential resolution #5263 of 22 October 2021. For instance, as advised, the mechanisms for engaging academia society in developing anti-corruption expertise were established, providing them with an opportunity to receive acknowledgement of their contribution to the process of undertaking an anti-corruption screening of the legislative base. In addition, the anti-corruption



research projects of academic researchers will receive financial support from the funds of the Ministry of Innovative Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

To nurture development of the coalition of civic and academia institutions that was established by the Academy of the General Prosecutor's Office, the Development Strategy Centre and the 'Yuksalish' national movement of Uzbekistan, UNODC supported implementation of a number of anti-corruption initiatives proposed by civil and academia organizations. These initiatives include: 1) the anti-corruption screening of the legal base regulating the housing utilities sector as conducted by the Humanitarian Legal Centre (NGO, Samarkand); 2) analysis of corruption at the local civic administration (mahalla) level through the 'Media data lab' (NGO, Tashkent); 3) analysis of typical corruption schemes at public schools by the Centre for Legal, Economic and Social Protection 'Istiqlol avlodi' (NGO, Jizzak region), and; 4) survey of business entities regarding level of prevalence of corruption and corruption perception in business society by academic researchers from the Centre for Economic Research and Reforms (Tashkent). This survey piloted online data collection methods, and covered over 1,800 entities and business entrepreneurs situated throughout Uzbekistan. The results demonstrated a high prevalence of corrupt practices at the stage of B2G cooperation, with 53 per cent of respondents from business society noting they regularly face corrupt behaviour, and another 25 per cent mentioning they have had the rare experience of

corrupted attitudes shown by public servants. The results of the initiatives were presented and discussed at the round table organized by the coalition on 17 November 2021, with the participation of staff of the General Prosecutor's Office and the Academy of the GPO, and also by representatives of NGOs and public agencies.

In April, May and August 2021, UNODC delivered a training on the UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism to public servants and civil society organizations in Uzbekistan, with 50 participants in attendance. These participants were active members of the Government's Task Force on UNCAC self-assessment process. As a result of this training, a self-assessment procedure was fully completed in December 2021, and in early 2022, Uzbekistan will submit a self-assessment report to UNODC.

Over November and December 2021, a number of events were organized in the region to mark International Anti-Corruption Day, including the Tashkent Forum on Anti-Corruption and Transparency, and the International Forum of Commissioners for the Protection of the Rights of Entrepreneurs (Business Ombudspersons) of Europe and Asia on the theme 'Strengthening Interregional Cooperation and Integrity in Business'. This campaign engaged over 100 participants. Meanwhile integrity videos with animated 'Zorbs' characters were shared on social media in Kazakhstan, as part of the Education for Justice (E4J) campaign. These animated clips had over 1,300 views.

PRISON REFORM AND PREVENTION OF RADICALIZATION TO VIOLENCE IN PRISONS

UNODC is the global custodian of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), the UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), and the UN Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules).

In 2021, enhancing the institutional capacities of prison systems to ensure safety and security in prisons constituted the basis for developing policies and procedures for

effectively managing violent extremist and foreign terrorist fighter prisoners. It was also identified as a means of minimizing the risk of prisoners' continuous engagement in criminal activity, including the recruitment, manipulation or intimidation of other prisoners or prison staff.

Three critical elements of the prison security framework, being physical, procedural and dynamic security, were included in capacity building initiatives undertaken in the three beneficiary countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.



Accordingly, over 300 prison staff in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (including at least 30 per cent women) were trained in the field of managing high-risk prisoners. Meanwhile over 100 prison and other law enforcement officers (25 per cent women), being representatives of national police training institutions, enhanced their skills in auditing prison security and prisoner risks, were familiarized with needs assessment tools used to assess the risks posed by violent extremist and foreign terrorist fighter prisoners, and were trained to tailor suitable prison-based disengagement programmes that include a gender perspective. As a direct result, a Prisoner Classification Framework including a Risks and Needs Assessment tool was piloted in eight prisons of

the Karaganda and Pavlodar regions of Kazakhstan, and in five prisons in Kyrgyzstan.

Additionally, over 600 prisoners in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, including high-risk violent extremists and FTF prisoners, were engaged in vocational training. Male prisoners gained new skills in welding, computer literacy, bakery, furniture-making, shoemaking, and in wood and metal production, while female prisoners took part in sewing, nail and makeup art classes. These were a key part of prison-based rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes. These efforts resulted in strengthened institutional and technical capacity of the prison and probation services in the three target



countries. At least eight pilot penitentiary institutions in Kazakhstan became able to support the implementation of prison-based rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes, in addition to four pilot penitentiary institutions in Kyrgyzstan, and two pilot penitentiary institutions in Tajikistan.

In 2021, UNODC focused its efforts on promoting interventions in the outside community to ensure public reassurance and understanding. To achieve the objective of 'strengthening the resilience of societies against violent extremism and radicalization to violence while respecting human rights standards', the media was actively engaged in fostering dialogue, cooperation and partnerships between relevant government sectors (including police, health, education and social welfare) and non-governmental actors (including civil

society organizations, academia, the private sector and communities). Participants of outreach events agreed that such partnerships were essential for conceptualizing, implementing and monitoring impactful and effective policies on reintegrating former violent extremist prisoners into communities, and supporting broader efforts to protect society from violent extremism and terrorist acts.

Through engaging media outlets (newspapers, social media and websites), the project explained to the public the purpose of disengagement interventions for violent extremist prisoners, and their essential contribution to public safety. The outreach work was undertaken in a sensitive manner, with due consideration of the beneficiary countries' unique political and public environments.

ADDRESSING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

The November 2021 international conference 'Strengthening the national and international partnership in combating trafficking in persons', held in Bukhara, Uzbekistan with the participation of UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly, was a platform for evaluating the current situation of the fight against trafficking in persons in Central Asia. 60 participants from throughout Central Asia attended this event.

"Through joint work between governments, international organizations and civil society, we can build regional capacities to advance victim-centred and human rights-based approaches to countering trafficking in persons, including detection, investigation and prosecution, as well as referral of victims," said Ms. Ghada Waly in her speech at the conference.

Addressing the conference participants, Ms. Tanzilya Narbaeva, Chairperson of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Forced Labour of the Republic of Uzbekistan, said that "the state policy in the field of combating trafficking in persons is based on such fundamental principles as legality, inevitability from responsibility, inadmissibility of discrimination of the victims of trafficking in persons, and social partnership. Concrete progress has been made in the area of combating human trafficking and

forced labour. Thus in 2021, 14 normative legal acts and a new version of the Law on Combating Trafficking in Persons were adopted. A referral mechanism for identification of victims of trafficking in persons has been approved. I would like to especially thank UNODC experts for their participation in the development of these regulatory legal acts, in accordance with international standards."

In Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, over 600 police investigators, prosecutors and judges (at least 15 per cent women) enhanced their professional skills in making an evidence-based justice response to human trafficking. Thousands of young activists have engaged with outreach campaigns and events on preventing human trafficking. In Kyrgyzstan, standard operating procedures for implementing the national referral mechanism for victims of trafficking in persons were endorsed by 14 national agencies.

Twelve key criminal justice institutions, civil society and international organizations in Kyrgyzstan signed a Memorandum of Cooperation, which will serve as a permanent platform for the professional exchange of experiences and data on identified victims of trafficking, and the subsequent provision of legal assistance. There was a joint initiation of amendments to bring

legislation in line with international standards, and professional development which served to strengthen the capacity of justice practitioners in investigating and prosecuting cases related to trafficking in persons.

In Kyrgyzstan, in 2021 UNODC partnered with the Oasis Foundation, a non-governmental organization with branches in many countries around the world, to support innovative healthcare, housing, and youth development projects with a specific focus on providing social protection to vulnerable children and women. Together with Oasis, UNODC implemented a project to strengthen social partnerships between civil society, police and local authorities, as a means of preventing and responding to trafficking in persons among vulnerable youth and children. The initiative increased the capacity of state bodies to identify victims of exploitation and abuse, and to facilitate their rehabilitation. In parallel, the project supported vulnerable youth and children in orphanages and boarding schools of the Chui and Osh regions of the Kyrgyz Republic, along with young people in conflict with the law, and youth who are seeking to migrate to other countries for employment purposes.

In Turkmenistan in 2021, UNODC continued its work in countering trafficking in persons, and facilitated implementation of the 2020-2022 National Action Plan to counter trafficking in persons. The latter programme included a series of capacity building workshops and seminars, public awareness raising activities, and also expert level coordination meetings which included engagement of the national technical working group. Online consultative meetings on international judicial cooperation and the provision of mutual legal assistance in investigating TIP cases promoted dialogue and facilitated international cooperation between relevant judiciary authorities of Turkmenistan and the Republic of Turkey, including general prosecutors' offices, ministries of justice, and supreme courts.

A series of webinars on preventing the trafficking of persons in the agricultural sector, and on the importance of labour rights observation in Ashgabat and in all provinces of Turkmenistan, were organized jointly with the Office of the Ombudsperson of Turkmenistan and partner organizations. These webinars engaged and raised awareness of over 80 representatives of Turkmenistan's public and private sectors.



Victims' Voices Lead the Way

Kyrgyz Survivors of Human Trafficking Share Their Stories

Many victims of human trafficking, and other forms of violence, experience stigma or a lack of understanding while they are seeking help. After they have been rescued or have escaped, identification interviews and legal proceedings can be traumatic. Some face punishment for crimes that their traffickers forced them to commit. Others are blamed for what happened to them, and receive inadequate support.

Survivors play a crucial role in creating an understanding of what works when seeking to prevent trafficking in persons, and when identifying and rescuing victims, and supporting them on their journey to rehabilitation. Learning from victims' experiences, and turning their suggestions into concrete actions, can lead to a more victim-centred and effective approach to combating this crime.

In Kyrgyzstan, UNODC has partnered with the Oasis Foundation in this direction. Oasis is a non-governmental organization with branches in various countries around the world, including in Kyrgyzstan. It supports innovative healthcare, housing and youth

development projects, placing specific focus on the social protection of vulnerable children and women.

Together with Oasis, UNODC has implemented a project on strengthening social partnerships between civil society, police and local authorities, to prevent and respond to trafficking in persons which particularly victimizes vulnerable youth and children. The initiative increased the capacity of state bodies to identify victims of exploitation and abuse, and to facilitate their rehabilitation. In parallel, the project supported vulnerable youth and children in orphanages and boarding schools of the Chui and Osh regions of the Kyrgyz Republic, young people in conflict with the law, and youth who are seeking to migrate to other countries for employment purposes.

As nothing can reflect the importance of this initiative more than first-hand experiences of those assisted, we invite you to read the following stories of survivors of exploitation who have received support through the UNODC project implemented together with Oasis.



**WORLD DAY AGAINST
TRAFFICKING
IN PERSONS
30 JULY**

AIDANA, AGE 18

Current legislation requires that most children in state orphanages and boarding schools leave these institutions when they are 15-16 years old. At this critical juncture, they are highly vulnerable to exploitation.

Aidana had lived in an orphanage since she was 8. At the age of 15, she had to leave and manage on her own.

“My stepfather was a heavy drinker, so living with him and my mom wasn’t an option. I had to find a job and a place to live.”

Aidana started working as a seamstress.

Then Madina, one of her friends, said she had to leave the city for a while, and asked to leave some of her belongings at Aidana’s place. Aidana agreed. When Madina returned to the city, she requested Aidana bring the belongings to her instead of picking them up herself.

“I went to see Madina to drop off her bag. On my way out, Madina asked me to pass a small matchbox-sized package to a person in a car that was parked on my way to the bus stop. I agreed, but as I was walking to the bus stop, a police officer appeared, confiscated the package, and arrested me.”

It turned out that Madina had manufactured drugs, and had tricked Aidana into distributing them. All of a sudden, Aidana faced a five-year prison sentence for illicit drug trafficking.

“I couldn’t believe what was happening to me. Police officers interrogated me. The pressure was unbearable. They beat me. At the end, I confessed, just to make it stop.”

After seven months in detention, Aidana took the advice of a lawyer and admitted her guilt. She was given a sentence of one year on probation. She was 17 at the time.

Oasis learned about Aidana’s story from her sister. Pro bono lawyers are currently working to appeal Aidana’s conviction. With support from Oasis, she is applying for new identification documents and has picked up her studies.

“When you trust people, you never expect to be deceived. I know how it feels when your rights are violated, and how helpless you are without proper legal support. This experience has inspired me to become a lawyer. I want vulnerable youth to know that they have rights and deserve protection.”



ALIYA, 22 YEARS-OLD

“I was sold like cattle for 300 dollars to absolve my parents’ debts,” says Aliya. “I was 17 when my parents took the kalym (dowry) and informed me that I was getting married to a man who was 20 years older than me.”

Aliya was the second eldest child of a large family and lived with her parents in a village. She had to work around the house and look after younger children and the family’s livestock. She attended school for the first time at the age of ten.

“I did my homework at school or in the yard. None of my family members supported me. My parents and eldest brother would yell at me and make me feel miserable. When I was 16, they forbade me to study, but I tried to come up with excuses to leave the house and I continued attending school. Most of the time I was scared to return home due to the abuse I experienced at the hands of my father and brother.”

Aliya’s dreams were shattered when she learned her parents had finalized the arrangements for her wedding.

“My relatives and parents never asked for my opinion

and made the decision for me. I didn’t want to get married. I was tired of the abuse I experienced at home. I mustered all my courage and ran away. My schoolmates helped me and so did my teachers and the school director.”

For the first month Aliya lived in a crisis centre, before she moved to a rehabilitation centre for vulnerable youth. When Oasis staff first approached her, she was frightened and confused. Soon she started participating in psychotherapy, and received help to find a job and rebuild her life.

Thanks to the free legal assistance provided through the UNODC project, Aliya’s parents returned her identification documents and stopped harassing and threatening her. She successfully completed professional courses, and is now applying for college.

“This situation taught me not to be afraid to express my opinion, and to take difficult decisions. I know it is important to ask for help. People will help when they are asked for it. I’m 22 now, and I want other girls in similar situations to know that there is help out there and people who care.”





GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

UNODC supports Central Asian countries in developing appropriate policies, strategies, programmes and interventions intended to prevent drug use and increase availability of and access to comprehensive systems of care for people affected by drug use and drug use disorders. The ultimate goal of this assistance is to contribute to the efforts of Member States in building a health-and human-rights-oriented response to the problem of drugs, and to reduce the burden caused by associated health and social consequences. With the involvement and active participation of public

governmental institutions, universities, treatment centres, civil society organizations, and prevention and health professionals, UNODC has promoted a systematic, intersectoral and multidisciplinary response to a very complex problem – one that affects large segments of the world’s population. This initiative has also supported the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 3.5, on strengthening substance use prevention and treatment, and related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



DRUG USE PREVENTION



In all countries of Central Asia, national drug strategies and other relevant documents cover activities intended to prevent drug use. In practice, these activities mostly involve the organization of different short-term, single, dynamic events such as talks, discussions, round tables, or video presentations on the risks and harm posed by psychoactive substances. Although there are a number of regional institutions with a mandate for advancing drug use prevention, their work is poorly coordinated and has little success in changing the behaviour of target groups. Resources are used ineffectively for activities that are not evidence informed, such as media campaigns, distribution of information materials, and organization of public events against drugs which lack a clearly-defined target audience.

Prevention activities intended to reduce drug use, incorporated into school curricula, are an integral part of UNODC activities designed to promote healthy

lifestyles. At the same time, national drug strategies and practical activities lack programmes that refer to evidence-based or science-based prevention, although some positive exceptions do exist.

UNODC has enhanced the capacity and skills of more than 200 young people to provide evidence-based drug use prevention interventions, through five national consultations and one regional meeting held in 2021. These events have provided a platform and facilitated exchange of ideas on how to protect the health and well-being of youth, specifically building a foundation for the science of substance use prevention, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, namely Target 3.5. As a direct result of these events, the 'Regional Network of Youth Organizations and Youth Champions of Change in Central Asia for Drug-Free, Healthy, Safe and Secure Societies' has been established.

A series of national consultations with representatives of different youth organizations, including NGOs, universities and local youth networks have been conducted in five Central Asian countries. The main goal of these national meetings has been to identify core areas for consideration, discuss the possibility of establishing a regional network of youth organizations, and decide how this network will be involved in addressing identified problems which impact youth. As a result of national meetings, a draft agenda of the regional meeting on establishing a Central Asia network of youth organizations was developed. Five youth champions from each country were nominated to be actively involved in organizing and conducting the meeting.

As a next step of the regional initiative, UNODC convened 25 young leaders of five Central Asian countries over 24-26 November 2021 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. This gathering included a discussion of the importance of evidence-based substance use prevention in the region, and the launch of a Regional Network of Youth Organizations and Youth Leaders for change in Central Asia for drug-free, healthy, safe and secure societies.

During this three-day regional meeting, participants discussed and developed a regional Youth Vision statement, drafted a Youth Network charter, and committed themselves to an action plan for preventing drug use. Youth leaders from the five countries worked together to craft a call to action related to establishing safe and healthy communities, and drew upon the UNODC/WHO International Standard on Drug Use Prevention to create a regional plan of action.

On 25 November 2021, the 'Regional Network of Youth Organizations and Youth Champions of Change in Central Asia for drug-free, healthy, safe, and secure societies' was launched with the participation of UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly.

The regional network is a platform which will provide opportunities not only for young people themselves but also for all segments of society, to engage in an active and fruitful discussion regarding the prevention of drug use, and the promotion, and implementation of evidence-based innovative ideas, as a means of combatting one of the most pressing problems of

today's society. The network is the umbrella under which UNODC intends to continue connecting young people from across Central Asia, and empower them to play a key role in evidence-based drug use prevention.

Additionally, UNODC conducted ten workshops and three training of trainers (TOTs) to strengthen the capacity of 300 prevention specialists (facilitators) in implementing evidence-based cost-effective family skills training programmes in Uzbekistan. These efforts resulted in more than 400,000 families being actively engaged, benefiting from the piloted and scaled-up family skills training programmes implemented by trained facilitators.

Within the framework of the UNODC/UNICEF/UNFPA Joint Programme 'Investing in a resilient future of Karakalpakstan by improving health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and well-being of adolescents, and by harnessing the talents of youth during and after COVID-19', as financed by the UN Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region in Uzbekistan, the UNODC team has developed materials for the 'Family United' programme. Specifically UNODC has developed a manual for facilitators, and supplementary materials, all of which have been translated into Russian, Uzbek and Karakalpak languages. A working group was established to adapt the programme's materials, considering the traditions, gender roles and local culture of the region. The group includes representatives of the Ministry of Public Education of Uzbekistan, and the Center for Vocational Guidance and Psychological and Pedagogical Diagnostics of Students under the Ministry of Public Education. The Working Group reviewed the training manual and supplementary materials of the UNODC evidence-based family skills training programme 'Family UNited' and made recommendations accordingly. These recommendations were considered in the preparation of the final versions of the programme materials.

On 12-14 October 2021, a three day-training on implementing the 'Family UNited' programme was held in Nukus, in the Republic of Karakalpakstan. This training was attended by 24 specialist teachers and psychologists from the Muynak, Bozatau and Kungrad pilot districts, as well as six methodologists of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. The training equipped participants with skills and

materials needed to implement the programme in their respective organizations and communities. This training was conducted in a hybrid format, in which participants had the opportunity to undergo training delivered by UNODC international trainers from Austria and the UK.

Subsequently in November 2021, UNODC in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Karakalpakstan piloted the 'Family UNited' programme. Some 60 families (including 7th grade adolescents and their caregivers), connected to six selected schools in the Muynak, Bozatau and Kungrad districts of Karakalpakstan, were all able to benefit from the family skills programme conducted by a team of facilitators.

Within the framework of the UN-Turkmenistan Joint Programme 'Improving the system of social protection through the introduction of inclusive quality community-based social services', UNODC successfully piloted its evidence-based 'Strong Families' and 'Treatnet Family' programmes. These two programmes are part of a new system of social services intended for youth at risk (including adolescents in conflict with the law), women facing gender-based violence, and families facing substance abuse. 60 families benefited from these

programmes in 2021. The pilot implementation provided additional evidence for developing laws and regulations, methodologies, SOPs, and guidelines for the provision and financing of social services to the state budget for 2023. A series of amendments to the Social Protection code, needed for establishing an inclusive community-based social services system in Turkmenistan alongside a new Law on Social Services, have been prepared by a team of international and national consultants. Drafted gender-sensitive and rights-based documents have been presented to national partners. The documents were adopted by both the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population and the Mejlis (parliament), and were published in local newspapers at the end of December 2021. Necessary sets of supporting documents for the two UNODC pilot specialized social services were developed, including service specifications, term of references, an ethical code, staff training plans, and others, to help ensure the timely launch of the pilot initiatives.

Additionally in 2021, UNODC joined a new UN-Turkmenistan Joint Programme aimed to enhance youth empowerment, and mitigate the impact and multi-dimensional threats the COVID-19 pandemic has on at-risk youth.



TREATMENT OF DRUG USE DISORDERS

Attention paid to drug issues at the policymaking level in the region has been limited in scope, often with a less robust focus placed on health interventions. Policy decisions are not always based on scientific evidence, particularly in regards to treatment matters. The coverage of drug dependence treatment services is limited and the quality of treatment interventions are even more problematic, while addiction medicine in the region has not been adequately developed and it is often not managed by qualified institutions. State interventions in the field of drug dependence treatment have been limited, or wrongly driven by false perceptions and misleading interpretations of the nature of the drug use phenomenon and of addictive behaviour. This misperception has generated denial, stigma and discrimination against drug users and drug use disorders, which in turn have contributed to the exclusion of prevention and treatment from education and public health systems, and to the undermining of developing addiction medicine as a medical discipline.

To address the above issues, UNODC has enhanced the skills and capacities of more than 500 addiction

professionals in Central Asia to provide evidence-based treatment and care services. This outcome has been achieved through a regional workshop on WHO/UNODC International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders, a series of trainings on the Universal Treatment Curriculum for Substance Use Disorders (UTC) training package, and the piloting of the UNODC QA mechanism and tools. Upon completing these trainings, the participating professionals were able to reach around 2,000 patients in the region. Furthermore, best practices on treating drug use disorders were shared among health care experts and policy-makers, as a means of contributing to the achievement of SDG target 3.5.

Within the framework of UTC capacity building activities, a major achievement has been the training of a total of 464 drug dependence treatment and care professionals (57 per cent women) in evidence-based treatment and care services. 439 addiction professionals were trained on UTC 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 17, over 42 in-person echo trainings conducted in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, with an average knowledge increase of 34 per cent. 15 national trainers



from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan attended in-person TOTs on advanced courses of the UTC training package, and enhanced their knowledge and skills on motivational interviewing during the Regional TOT on UTC 11 held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on 24–28 May 2021. 10 national trainers from Kyrgyzstan attended a TOT on UTC 11 held on 13–17 September 2021 in Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan, enhancing their knowledge and skills on motivational interviewing.

Over 13–14 December 2021, the UNODC/WHO Regional Workshop on International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in a hybrid format. 25 policymakers from Central Asia and high-level officials from the ministries of health of the Central Asian region, and other relevant ministries involved in policy development, planning, funding, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of treatment services and interventions for drug use disorders, all attended the event. This workshop aimed to provide information about International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders, and regional and national level discussions on strategies to increase the capacity of treatment systems to deliver ethical and evidence-based treatment services benefiting people affected by drug use disorders. Based on the discussions during the event, participants identified opportunities, challenges and strategies for implementing standards in each country, and developed country-specific action plans.

Within the framework of the provision of UNODC technical assistance in developing and institutionalizing a drug treatment services QA mechanism, the 2nd stage of piloting UNODC QA tools was initiated in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The ministries of health of these countries expressed their commitment to support teams of national expert assessors in conducting the second stage of piloting UNODC QA tools, based on recommendations provided during the last Online Regional Refresher Training for Assessors on UNODC-WHO QA Tools for Drug Dependence Treatment. As part of this initiative, a team of national expert assessors visited the Kyzylorda Regional Mental Health Centre, the Karaganda City Mental Health Centre, and the Petropavlovsk City Mental Health Centre in Kazakhstan, to assess their situations in line with the QA guidelines. A working group of national experts in Kyrgyzstan initiated development of draft national

QA standards with UNODC's technical support. A team of national expert assessors in Tajikistan visited the Sogd Regional Narcology Centre, and the Penjikent City Narcology Dispensary, to assess their situation in line with QA guidelines. A team of national expert assessors in Uzbekistan visited narcology centres of the Khorezm and Bukhara Regions, to assess them in line with QA guidelines.

To provide updated mapping of drug use disorder treatment services in the region utilizing the WHO/UNODC Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facility Survey, national focal points from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan finished entering survey data into the UNODC Drug Monitoring Platform. The UNODC/WHO facility survey is designed to assist governments in collecting information from substance use treatment providers, to better understand and plan treatment capacity. Specifically it offers information on the scope of treatment services provided, consolidated data on numbers of treatment clients, available human resources, and facilities' structural resources.

UNODC has provided overall coordination and support in conducting the Regional Training of Practitioners on the Treatnet Family training package for youth and families affected by drug use or drug use disorders. The purpose of this regional training, held on 8–12 November 2021 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, was to build capacities of national practitioners working with adolescents and their families, so that they can scale up the Treatnet Family programme in their countries. 25 regional and national experts representing health, social and justice fields (56 per cent women) attended the training. UNODC International Master Trainers provided information on the elements of family therapy for treating substance use disorders, and how to deliver training to health professionals in respective fields. Trainers also explained how to use the main practitioner's manual of the 'Treatnet Family' training package to subsequently roll the programme out in Central Asian countries. The training participants developed plans for undertaking Treatnet Family scaling up in their own countries, targeting health professionals who work with adolescents with drug use disorders and their families. They also agreed to deliver initial follow-up trainings, and to share feedback on their experiences.

HIV PREVENTION



Decreased access to traditional drugs, and increased internet sale of NPS/stimulants through the Darknet and other shadow marketplaces, including social media channels, has changed the region's drug use pattern to include an increasing amount of NPS/stimulants. New HIV cases among PWID decreased from 60 per cent in 2002 to 3.6 per cent in 2019. Meantime the sexual transmission of HIV in Uzbekistan increased from 14.5 per cent in 2002 to about 80 per cent in 2019. More than half of all new HIV cases occur among representatives of key population groups, including sex workers, men who have sex with men, prisoners, migrants, and their sexual partners.

The needs assessment study conducted by UNODC in 2020 identified a substantial gap in knowledge and understanding of health risks related to the use of NPS/stimulant drugs among people who use drugs, as well as a lack of capacity of service providers to match their needs. High criminalization and self-stigma among PLHIV prevent these individuals from accessing harm-reduction services.

Access to harm reduction services is also blocked by the presence of criminal law sanctions against the key

population groups. Laws, policies and cultural aspects do not always allow the full use of internationally-recognized strategies. Restrictions in connection with COVID-19 forced the use of new approaches in outreach work, as undertaken by peer outreach workers and other health workers delivering education, outreach, community mobilization, condoms, and other recommended low-threshold HIV services.

During the reporting period 25 health providers and representatives of NGOs working with PWUD from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, enhanced their knowledge and skills on the types of online communication their clients use, including use of emojis, at an online regional workshop on New Psychoactive Substances and Emojis. 10 representatives of NGOs and health providers from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, working with PWUD and people in prison, attended the regional training on the recently-updated 'Comprehensive Package of 15 Key Interventions for HIV prevention, testing, treatment and care for people in prison and other closed settings', which took place in Odessa, Ukraine. The aim of this training was to facilitate the effective application of the updated comprehensive package for those working with people

living in prisons and in other closed settings. Twelve law enforcement officials from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan participated in online regional consultations on 'Meaningful partnership, meaningful achievements', which were held in Prague, in the Czech Republic. The consultations sought to sensitize law enforcement officials, and build their capacity in and understanding of their role in national HIV responses.

23 providers of HIV prevention services for PWUD based in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, enhanced skills and knowledge in using web-outreach tools as an information dissemination approach on the internet, through the 'web-outreach' three-day online regional training. As follow up of this event, 15 health providers and NGO representatives from Uzbekistan were subsequently trained through a one-day 'web-outreach' national training.

133 participants from NGOs providing services to key populations, and health providers involved in providing drug dependence treatment and HIV prevention, care and support services for PWUD, attended the one-day national workshop 'HIV and HCV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support for People who use Stimulant Drugs',

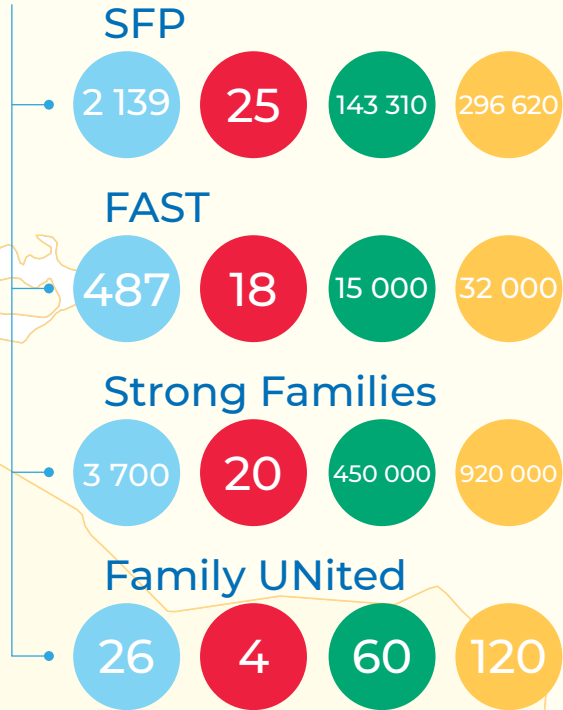
held in Uzbekistan in a hybrid format. The participants increased their knowledge and skills in providing evidence-based interventions, and implementing effective HIV and HCV programmes.

28 law enforcement officials participated in parallel one-day HIV and HCV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support for PWUD workshops held in the Tashkent and Samarkand cities of Uzbekistan. At these workshops they were informed of the new challenges faced in public health, and of the important role of law enforcement officers in protecting public health. As a direct result of the conducted activities, the piloting of a web-outreach referral model for improving access to HIV testing and immediate initiation of ARVT for PWUD was initiated in Uzbekistan.

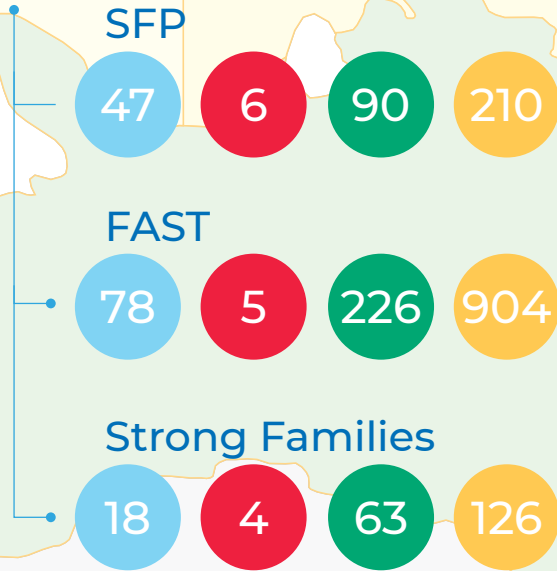
UNODC has continued advocating for increased access to Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT) for PWID in prison, detention, and in pre-trial facilities in Tajikistan. In this direction, a series of meetings have been organized with the Main Department for Penal Sanction of the Ministry of Justice. Accordingly, an agreement has been reached to establish two more new MMT sites at two prisons, and one site at a pre-trial facility.



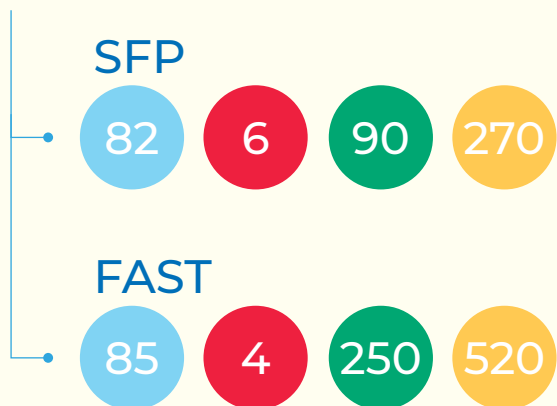
Uzbekistan



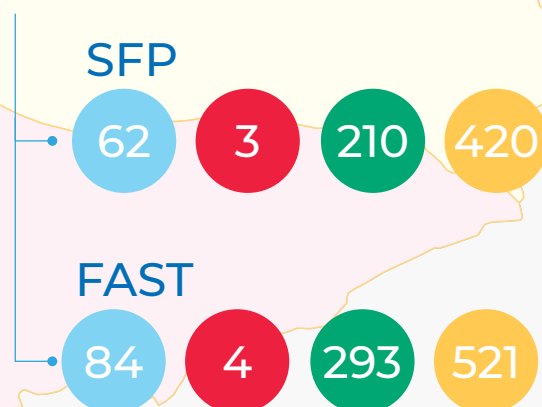
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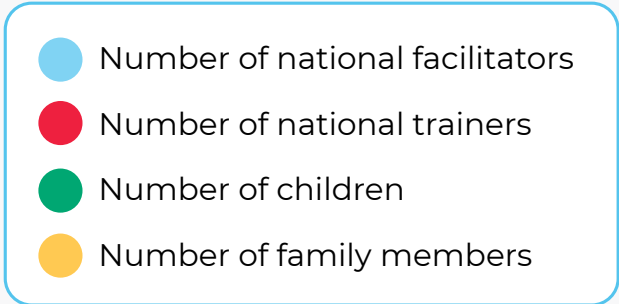
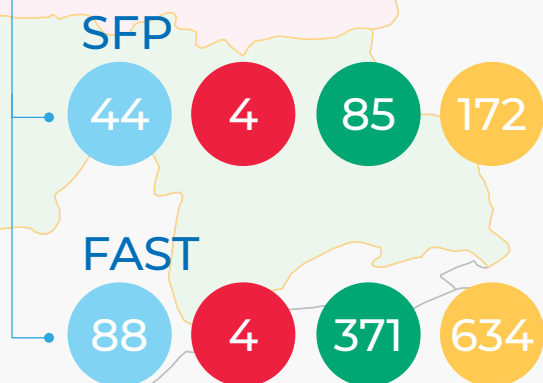
Kazakhstan



Kyrgyzstan



Tajikistan



Web outreach expands access to HIV testing and immediate HIV treatment initiation among PWUSD: Uzbekistan's experience

From 2018, research has indicated there is a growing number of specialized internet forums and websites dedicated to drug use and harm reduction. Accordingly, a pilot project has been launched with support from the UNODC Regional Offices in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, which supports service providers working with PWUSD in making best use of web outreach methods.

The project's method includes a systematic, comprehensive and targeted approach of involving PWUSD in harm reduction programmes, and implementing these via websites, social networks, messengers and specialized forums (including on both "DarkNet" platforms and open segments of the Internet).

COVID-19 has brought many changes to the nature of outreach work, both globally and in Uzbekistan.

Utkur also said that "since the beginning of the project we faced difficulties with publishing posts, as social channels and websites admins did not understand and were afraid to post them. Also, the owners of some chat rooms followed by tout target audiences were not ready to contact us, and refused to post messages with information about the project (i.e. those on the darknet, online shops in non-commercial 'nets' of the Internet, or using the so-called 'shadow' Internet communication and technology). UNODC trainings helped us with choosing the best chat rooms and post technology, which made our work easier. The web outreach team's questionnaires titled 'Do you need to take an HIV test?' were also helpful, as they encouraged followers to look at the history of their behaviour, and prompted them to take HIV tests. Posting these messages has increased the appeal of NPS/S regarding the use of these drugs, as well as on HIV."

"I would especially like to acknowledge the good work of a friendly doctor, called Farrukh Khamroev, from the Republican Centre for the Fight against AIDS (RCAIDS). His attitude towards clients inspired them to stay in the programme and get tested, start timely treatment, and

receive it comprehensively. Sometimes it wasn't easy to register some positive-status clients who didn't have a residence permit, in which case we had to delay start of treatment. Due to the support of the AIDS services management, these clients were given a chance to commence ARVT."

He also mentioned that fear of problems with law enforcement agencies held positive-status persons back from continuing online communication. For this reason, these individuals are more willing to communicate offline, and in most cases after consultations are completed, they will delete the relevant messages. Frequent questions about NPS/S consumption were: "Why do you think we're addicts? Aren't they just pills? What happens if we get caught? Is there free legal aid? What are the consequences of prolonged use of NPS/S?" Meanwhile medical questions on the complications of using NPS/S included: "What if I test positive for HIV?", "What is ARVT?", and others.

The client was given advice on HIV and STI prevention. He was also tested for HIV, HCV and RV. At the end of December, he received results indicating he was positive for HIV. After taking a commission analysis, he was redirected to the Regional AIDS Centre. He said he couldn't work because of frequent illnesses, and therefore could not get a full examination and begin ARVT. However, he has always kept in touch, and often asks for counselling and psychological support. He was also given a promotion package. At the present time, the client has started taking ARVT and has received treatment in an infectious diseases' hospital, his health has stabilized, and consultations on his adherence to therapy are ongoing.

Web outreach has engaged individuals who would not otherwise reach out for help, who would never approach support services directly, and who would not be reachable through Key Population Gathering Points. By building access to more clients, the new tool has given support professionals the opportunity to learn

new consulting skills. Being a truly innovative tool, web outreach allows the project to reach new clients and accomplish identified goals. With every post and client appeal, the outreach workers team and monitoring and evaluation specialists have obtained new knowledge and skills. For instance they have learnt about the new ways NPS/S is distributed, and expanded their knowledge of clients' concerns and problems, especially those of youth who have just turned 18 years and had begun using NPS/S at an even younger age. They are as follows: in what way the involvement has taken place, the scheme of the involvement, and what type of interest NPS/S currently arouses among young people.

The web outreach method expands the scope of counselling possibilities, because on the Internet people can be less self-conscious and more outspoken. Thanks to this pilot project, it has become possible to use links of all available partner organizations, and broaden the package of available services for beneficiaries, as well as to give a more detailed description of the organization and project. Clients' access has become so wide in geographical terms, that it has become possible to advise and assist key population representatives from other regions and cities.



Utkur shared with us a story of one of his clients:

“

The client approached us via telegram at the end of November. In one of the telegram channels he saw a post about a free consultation and the opportunity to be tested for HIV and STIs (sexually transmitted infections) anonymously. He started using NPS/S for the first time at the age of 16, while living and working in St. Petersburg, Russia. Later he used salts, tropicamide, lycrica, phenobarbital and betamethadol (new psychoactive substances and stimulants). For almost 8 years he had been periodically using these substances, and met with different partners. He returned to Uzbekistan two years ago, due to health problems. After communicating via telegram, the programme participant visited the Republican AIDS Centre and took all the tests.” According to the client: “On my way here, I was really worried about being judged, and was afraid of being detained. But when I spoke to Farrukh-aka, I realized that no one was going to harm me here, so I felt relaxed while taking all the tests and then left.

”

“

We used to work with representatives of the target group via direct contacting, in locations where they usually meet. The online format of work offered by UNODC has taught us a lot. It has expanded the scope of information and involvement not only of target group representatives into harm reduction programmes, but also the involvement of the general population,

The web outreach tool seems difficult at first, but when putting it into everyday practice, you realize the effectiveness of this method.

”

said Utkur Pulatov, Monitoring and Evaluation specialist of the web outreach pilot project in Uzbekistan. He noted that he enjoyed this work, and felt the responsibility and the need to transfer his experience to young outreach workers.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

DELIVERING BETTER RESULTS – UN COHERENCE AND COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



In 2021, the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia continued its close collaboration with sister UN agencies to deliver better results and support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. As a global custodian of several indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNODC has closely collaborated with partner organizations to ensure Member States have access to the support they require to achieve targets under the SDGs.

The UNODC Programme 2015-2021 engaged different partner organizations and stakeholders to implement grants programmes as appropriate, in consultation with donors, governments, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the private sector, regional organizations, UN sister agencies, IFIs, and other relevant stakeholders in Central Asia.

In 2021, the United Nations Country Teams in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan actively worked together to

draft their United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs). UNODC actively participated in this process, and provided timely inputs to the Common Country Analysis in each country. The Common Country Analysis in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, intended to identify national priorities to be addressed by UN Country Teams, overviewed drugs, crime and corruption issues in these countries. In Kyrgyzstan, UNODC has actively participated in strategic exercises, wherein priorities have been defined, and results have been formulated and validated with governments and CSOs. As detailed in the new Kyrgyzstan UNSDCF, UNODC will lead together with OHCHR and UNDP on one of the outcomes. This outcome specifically focuses on supporting the government in establishing and promoting fair and accountable democratic institutions that are free from corruption, and applying innovative solutions that promote respect for human rights, and strengthen peace and cohesion. This would allow UNODC to closely collaborate with other sister UN

agencies under the new UNSDCF, and contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

To strengthen coherence among UN agencies and ensure delivery as One UN, UNODC has continued to implement joint initiatives with other sister UN agencies in Central Asia. These initiatives include: 1) the Spotlight Initiative in Kyrgyzstan (implemented with UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and UN Women); 2) the ‘Improving the system of social protection in Turkmenistan’ programme (supported by the Joint SDG fund and implemented with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF); 3) the ‘Youth for Social Harmony in the Fergana Valley’ programme (supported by the UN PBF and implemented with UNDP and UNESCO); 4) the ‘Establishment of an Integrated National Financing Framework for Sustainable Development in Uzbekistan’ programme (supported by the Joint SDG Fund and implemented by UNDP, UNODC, UNICEF and WHO), and; 5) the ‘Investing in a resilient future of Karakalpakstan by improving health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and well-being of adolescents and by harnessing the talents of youth during and after COVID-19’ programme (funded by the Aral Sea MPTF and implemented by UNICEF, UNFPA and UNODC). Within these joint initiatives, UNODC has facilitated an overarching review of different laws and by-laws, generated recommendations for improving legislation and law enforcement practices in the area of violence against women and girls, and delivered other types of support to partner organizations.

On 24 November 2021, with the purpose of delivering effective, efficient and accountable technical assistance to Member States, and to support peace, security, human rights and development by making the region safer from drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism, UNODC launched its programme for Central Asia for 2022-2025. This launch was conducted with the participation of Ms. Ghada Waly, UNODC Executive Director, Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Akan Rakhmetullin, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr. Azizbek Madmarov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Muzaffar Huseinzoda, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, and Mr. Vepa Hajiyyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan.

Throughout the reporting period, UNODC ROCA’s programmatic initiatives, undertaken jointly with governments, UN agencies and development partners, have promoted gender equality and women’s empowerment at all levels of policy advice, technical assistance, capacity development, and in the introduction of innovative solutions. Through the transparent implementation of its initiatives, UNODC ROCA applied innovative solutions, promoted effective digitalization and data analytics, reinforced partnership with all stakeholders, and enhanced communication of nationally-owned sustainable results and policy level advocacy.



EVIDENCE GENERATION FOR POLICY DIALOGUE AND DEVELOPMENT



The continued relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of policy development and operational implementation depends on the use of timely, quality research and analysis. Taking an evidence-based approach to decision-making ensures planners are better informed, by putting the best available evidence at the centre of the process. Research provides the evidence needed to identify trends and threats to be tackled at national, regional and international levels, so that programmes can be better targeted towards the drug and crime problems that require the most

attention. This also ensures that UNODC and other stakeholders can properly target their actions, and have the instruments required to monitor and evaluate their results.

As an organization committed to evidence-based operational and policy responses, UNODC places great emphasis on obtaining and using quality data and analysis, and uses its research findings to feed into policy dialogue and development to address drugs, crime and terrorism related challenges.

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION

In 2021, UNODC ROCA continued its close collaboration with various government agencies responsible for gathering, analysing and reporting drugs and crime-related data, and supported them in meeting their international reporting commitments. Relevant national focal points in Central Asia were supported in completing the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ)

on drugs, Individual Drug Seizure Reports (IDS), the Questionnaire on New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), the United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (UN-CTS), the Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaire (UN-IAFQ), and the Questionnaire for the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (GLOTIP).

Status of country data submissions to UNODC (as of 31 December 2021)

Data collection	KAZ	KGZ	TJK	TKM	UZB
Drugs (ARQ)	✓	✓	✓		✓
Drugs (IDS)	✓	✓	✓		✓
Drugs (NPS)	✓	✓	✓		In process
Crime and Criminal Justice (UN-CTS)	✓		✓		✓
Firearms (UN-IAFQ)	✓		✓		✓
Trafficking in Persons (GLOTIP)	✓		✓		✓

In 2021, UNODC ROCA assisted in disseminating UNODC research products among government agencies, civil society and other stakeholders in Central Asia. These products included:

- Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (February 2021)
- Afghanistan Opium Survey 2019: socio-economic survey report: drivers, causes and consequences of opium poppy cultivation (February 2021)
- UNODC Drugs Monitoring Platform Brief: possible impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on trafficking in opiates and methamphetamine originating in Afghanistan (March 2021)
- Afghanistan Opium Survey 2020: cultivation and production – Executive Summary (May 2021)
- World Drug Report (June 2021): UNODC Drugs Monitoring Platform Brief: the reach of nationally linked trafficking groups across Afghan opiate trafficking routes (September 2021)
- Data Matters 2 – Monitoring SDG 16: key figures and trends (October 2021)
- Drug situation in Afghanistan 2021 – latest

findings and emerging threats (November 2021)

- Killings of women and girls by their intimate partner or other family members – Global estimates 2020 (November 2021)
- Assessment of the Needs and Identification of Barriers for Accessing HIV Prevention and Treatment Services by Persons Using New Psychoactive Substances/Stimulants in Central Asia

UNODC ROCA supported the publication and dissemination of 'The Central Asian Region: Information Bulletin on the Drug-related Situation in 2021', which was prepared by the National Information-Analytical Centre on Drugs Control under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, with contributions from relevant national drug control authorities of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

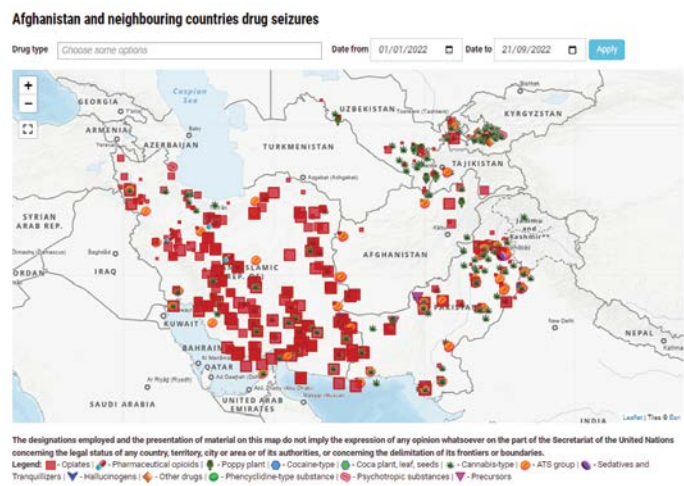
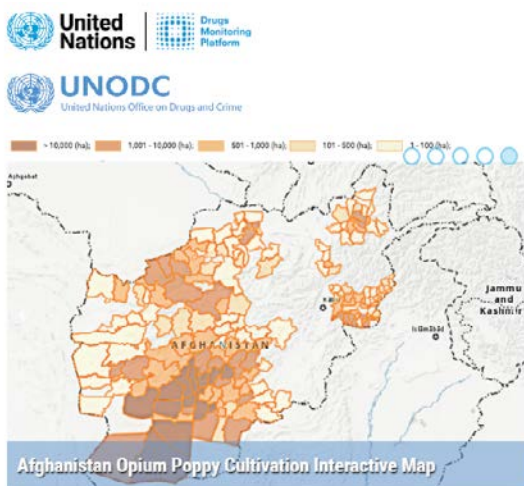
UNODC ROCA in cooperation with the Paris Pact Initiative has continued to regularly update Country Fact Sheets on all Central Asian states in 2021. The fact sheets provide key drugs and crime-related statistical data, and are shared with donors and other stakeholders in the region.

DRUGS MONITORING PLATFORM

Under the auspices of the Research and Trend Analysis Branch, UNODC's 'Drugs Monitoring Platform' (DMP) serves as a common system for collecting, visualising and sharing data. The DMP serves to provide access to real-time data on drug trafficking trends, deliver data using interactive visualizations adapted to user-specific needs, and improve early warning drug threat identification. In 2021, the DMP continued to be updated with relevant information collected through different official sources. By 31 December 2021, the total number of drug seizure cases listed in the DMP reached over 477,000 entries. During

the reporting period, 42,513 individual drug seizure cases were recorded. The number of unique visits from registered users totalled 2,936, and during the reporting period 839 new users were registered to the DMP.

The platform also contributed to the goals of drug prevention and health branch programmes, which have formed part of the UNODC/World Health Organization Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facility Survey. As of 31 December 2021, online treatment facility surveys have been put in place for 24 countries.



NATIONAL SURVEYS ON PREVALENCE AND EMERGING TRENDS OF DRUG USE

In 2021, UNODC organized preparatory consultations with national stakeholders to launch high-risk drug use surveys in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

In Kazakhstan, the draft survey protocol and questionnaire were developed and discussed with national and international counterparts. It was decided to engage the Republican Mental Health Centre for conducting a formative study, and to partner with the Kazakh Scientific Centre of Dermatology and Infectious Diseases as an implementing partner for the main field study.



Given the scale and complexity of the planned high-risk drug use survey, coupled with recent structural changes in the field of researching and monitoring Uzbekistan's drug situation, the project faced certain challenges regarding the timely identification and engagement of national implementing partners with sufficient technical capacity to implement the survey. Following

consultations with national stakeholders, UNODC ROCA has now identified and preliminary agreed to engage the National Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Centre on Narcology under the Ministry of Health, and the Republican AIDS Centre, as the project's implementing partners for launching the survey. It is planned that the survey will be launched in 2022.

FORENSICS



Through its Laboratory and Scientific Section, UNODC supports forensic science services and analysis to generate data and information that provides an objective evidence base for effective drug control and crime prevention, making it an integral part of effective criminal justice systems. It aims to ensure the world-wide availability and accessibility of internationally-accepted standards for forensic best practices, to improve national forensic capacity and capabilities to meet internally-accepted standards of performance, and to promote the use of scientific and forensic data in strategic operations, policy and decision-making processes.

In 2021, UNODC ROCA continued its technical cooperation with the forensic services of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

In Turkmenistan, UNODC supports the Central Forensic Bureau under the Ministry of Health, and the Medical Industry and Centre for Criminological Examinations under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in strengthening the capacities of forensic experts and bringing national forensic services providers into compliance with internationally-recognized standards. In 2021, UNODC provided technical support to beneficiary laboratories in developing and implementing management system documentation, including the management system guidelines and policy, standard operating procedures and instructions, in compliance with ISO 17025:2017 standard requirements.

To strengthen capacities and create a pool of trained and qualified forensic experts, UNODC has conducted

four online trainings on different topics, including on crime scene and evidence management (17-18 March), on validation of methods of forensic examinations (14-16 April), on internal audits and management review (14-15 October), and on interpretation of laboratory equipment readings/metrics and the use of control charts in laboratory examinations (30 November – 2 December).

UNODC has continued facilitating inter-agency coordination and cooperation on forensic matters, through a dedicated platform created to bring together key stakeholders in the field of forensics.

In 2021, the Central Forensic Bureau of Turkmenistan took part in two rounds of the UNODC International Collaborative Exercises (ICE) programme's proficiency testing exercises for drug testing laboratories, on identifying drugs in biological specimens.

In Uzbekistan UNODC supported the Republican Centre of Forensic Expertise named after H. Sulaymanova, under the Ministry of Justice (RCFE/MOJ), the Main Expert and Criminalistics Centre of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MECC/MOI), the Expert and Criminalistics Centre of the Tashkent city Department for Internal Affairs (ECC/DIA), the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre on Forensic Medical Examination of the Ministry of Health (RSPC FME/MOH), and the Central Customs Laboratory of the State Customs Committee (CCL/SCC), in improving their capacities to meet internationally-accepted standards. Technical assistance was provided to beneficiary laboratories in developing and implementing management system documentations, including quality manuals, standard operating procedures and instructions, in line with requirements of the ISO 17025:2017 international standard for testing and calibrating laboratories.

11 online trainings were conducted for key laboratory personnel on the topics: 1) 'ISO/IEC 17025:2019 – requirements and interpretation' (17.02.2021); 2) 'Metrological traceability' (16.03.2021); 3) 'Review of clients' requests, tenders and contracts' (23.03.2021); 4) 'Verification and validation of methods' (25.03.2021); 5) 'Ensuring validity of results' (13.04.2021); 6) 'Control of data and information management' (22.04.2021); 7) 'Actions to address risks and opportunities' (27.04.2021);

8) 'Management review' (28.04.2021); 9) 'Evaluation of measurement uncertainty' (30.04.2021); and 10) 'Internal audits and corrective actions' (04.05.2021).

UNODC international consultants visited Tashkent to provide advisory and expert support to laboratories at their premises (including Daiva Jakubauskienė, consultant on MS and forensic chemistry; Daiva Kairiene, consultant on forensic biology; Jelena Devenson, consultant on audio-phonographic examination; Izolda Zvirnaite, consultant on drug examination (28.06.2021-05.07.2021); Daiva Jakubauskienė, MS and forensic chemistry consultant; and Thomas Butrimas, ballistics and document forensics consultant (18.10.2021-23.10.2021)).

Assistance has been provided for the laboratories' participation in international proficiency testing (PT) and interlaboratory comparison (ILC) programmes. These include: 1) ILC together with the Lithuanian Forensic Centre for the laboratory of audio and phonographic examination of the RCFE MOJ (May 2021); 2) ILC together with the Lithuanian Police Forensic Science Centre for the laboratory of forensic examination of documents of the RCFE MOJ (May and October 2021); 3) ILC together with the Lithuanian Police Forensic Science Centre (May 2021) and PT through CTS 5262-2021 Firearm Examination (October 2021) for the ballistic laboratory of the MECC MOI; 4) PT through CTS 5782-2021 Body Fluid Identification and ILC together with the Lithuanian Police Forensic Science Centre (May 2021) for the laboratory of forensic biological examination of the RSPC FME MOH; 5) PT through the DRRR (Textile) and the ILC together with the Lithuanian Customs Laboratory for the Customs Laboratory of the State Customs Committee, and; 6) PT in the framework of the UNODC ICE Programme for the laboratory of RCFE MOJ, chemical laboratory of the MECC MOI, chemical laboratory ECC MDIA of Tashkent City, and the laboratory of forensic chemical examination of the RSPC FME MOH.

With UNODC's support, RCFE/MOJ and MECC/MOI maintain their ISO/IEC 17025:2017 international accreditation confirmed by the National Accreditation Centre of Kazakhstan, and while the CCL/SCC has obtained accreditation through the Uzbek Accreditation Centre (16 August 2021).

ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Communications play a vital role in UNODC programmes and support other project activities throughout the cycle. Communication activities include fundamental actions implemented for projects as a whole, such as overall planning of communication and dissemination, as well as specific communication activities like production of visibility materials, social media content, and others.

The UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia works with media and other partners, while also sharing content on official social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and the official website <https://www.unodc.org/centralasia/>, to raise awareness about UNODC ROCA's technical assistance provided to Central Asian States. The communication strategy, and the main objectives of the communication activities for UNODC ROCA Programmes, are designed to obtain the best and largest impact on the stakeholders, donors and the public, and to increase the visibility of

programmes both within and outside networks that individual partners belong to.

Over the reporting period, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions, the following activities were conducted as part of the UNODC ROCA Communications and Outreach Strategy. To increase the visibility of UNODC ROCA, branded materials were disseminated and used during key events around the region – these included diaries, notepads, folders, bags, pens and mugs. These items increased recognition of UNODC by different stakeholders. Considering the global pandemic situation, facial cloth masks were produced in line with World Drug Day activities, featuring the UNODC ROCA logo along with the WDD theme logo 'Share facts on drugs. Save lives.' A partnership was also made with the radio stations 'Oriat FM' and 'Oriat Dono' to make Russian and Uzbek broadcasts around the World Drug Day, for circulating an audiospot produced by UNODC.



MEDIA

To increase outreach on UNODC ROCA activities, its social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook have been used to inform the public on developments and activities both inside and outside the region. In 2021 the number of Facebook followers grew from 2,320 to 3,018. Twitter account followers grew from 1,119 to 1,501. All events conducted by UNODC ROCA were covered in both social media accounts through text, photo and video releases. Suggestions for expanding the audience via new channels have been submitted for including in the Communication Strategy for the new programme cycle.

To ensure better coverage, more than 100 articles (48 were replicated in Russian), 18 publications and 10 press-releases were published on the UNODC ROCA official website. Multilingualism has helped diversify the website's audience, ensuring that regional Russian-

speaking stakeholders are informed about UNODC news.

To diversify the means of communication, more than 85 videos and slideshows have been produced jointly with partners, and shared across UNODC social media accounts, to raise key stakeholders' understanding and awareness of UNODC activities. These videos have had more than 16,000 views. At least 50 TV/radio reports and articles were produced on UNODC ROCA activities in the reported period. These included news features on human interest stories, and extended interviews with the Regional Representative and International Programme Coordinators on events like World Drug Day and broader issues, broadcast through radio and TV channels. At least seven stories and news by UNODC ROCA were featured on the UNODC Global Website, and were featured in the 'UNODC in 60 seconds' series.





Partnerships were initiated with an advertising agency with corporate social responsibility for rotating video public service announcements “I choose Sports!” which were launched in December 2020 and circulated in public transport in Tashkent. In February 2021 alone, these messages were presented on 53 buses (viewed by around 100,000 passengers daily), and on 800 screens in the Tashkent metro (viewed by more than 250,000 passengers daily). The calculated potential monthly

reach could constitute more than 5,000,000 unique viewers.

Throughout the people of the COVID-19 and in abundance with necessary lockdown measures, major UN observances along with all major online, offline and hybrid events were promoted via UNODC ROCA's varied communication channels including its website and its Twitter and Facebook accounts.



SOCIAL MEDIA

TWITTER

UNODC maintains an active presence on its main social media channel, being its Twitter page (https://twitter.com/UNODC_ROCA). The main objective of this account is outreach to stakeholders and international donors who have a significant presence in Twitter.

Twitter is known for its large stream of short messages,

which can be spread quickly through the platform. Therefore, the Twitter platform serves to provide quick updates and announcements (such as new releases of components, etc.) and for attracting new interested stakeholders. It is important to note that most tweets also link to UNODC ROCA's website, as a way of directing traffic and attention there.

FACEBOOK

Facebook becomes more attractive for users if the number of content providers grows, which is an indirect network effect, and it is easier for users to communicate with others if they utilize the same platform. Facebook is the world's largest social network. Today several related applications, such as video, messaging and photos, as well as live-

streaming options for social networking, have all been integrated. Taking into consideration the various types of UNODC ROCA programme activities and campaigns, it helps to engage targeted audiences through using all these applications on the single page <https://www.facebook.com/UNODCCentralAsia/>.

AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGNS





UNODC ROCA's awards ceremony at the Technovation Girls Uzbekistan event, in the thematic nomination, engaged the imagination and interest of a particular team of young women who have sought to promote the culture of rule of law and legal literacy among youngsters, using encouraging prizes and advice.

Communications supported the Regional Youth Initiative of the UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2015-2021, engaging young people through the 'Family skills training programmes' related to UNODC's mandate areas including preventing drug use and crime in Uzbekistan.

The world conference on 'Engaging Youth in Global Action' in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, gathered more than 500 youth and other representatives from more than 30 countries. As part of the two-day conference, UNODC shared its experience with initiatives to engage young people and empower them to become active in their schools, communities and youth groups in supporting drug and crime prevention, and promoting health, safety and social cohesion.

The online competition 'Expert on Life Skills Development' was organized in Uzbekistan. The main purpose of this competition was to disseminate best practices and improve the skills of psychologists and educators in the public education system, especially class leaders, in achieving resilience in schools and families by teaching young people how to develop life skills, healthy lifestyles and positive relationships with caregivers, say "no" to harmful habits, and cope with stress.

The national awareness raising campaign 'Integrity Hours' was organized as part of the Education for Justice

(E4J) global initiative, which was an important enabler and project for achieving the 2030 Agenda in Kazakhstan, especially Goal 4 on quality education, and Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

An Awareness Raising Campaign against Trafficking in Persons was conducted in Tajikistan as part of the Global UNODC Blue Heart campaign. Over three months the campaign engaged local government bodies, police, youth organizations and civil society in a range of initiatives to harness vulnerable populations against the risk of falling victim to traffickers.

The 'Listen First' awareness-raising campaign focused on the importance of skills development and the use of science to prevent substance use in Central Asia, specifically through the evidence-based and science-based drug use prevention programmes implemented within existing prevention strategies at national and local levels. The focus was on securing the well-being of youth, families and communities, and listening to children and youth to help them grow up in a healthy way.

The abovementioned activities contributed to effective programme and sub-programme level advocacy, and both internal and external communication, while also strengthening the visibility of programme achievements. UNODC in Central Asia is continuing its activities in the field of developing knowledge products, such as training modules for prosecutors, lawyers and police, its manual of preventing trafficking in persons, and its handbook for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Practitioners on Forensic Expertise in Terrorism and Extremism in Kyrgyzstan.

FUNDRAISING AND DONOR RELATIONS

All UNODC activities in Central Asia are covered by voluntary contributions from Member States, Multi-Partner Trust Funds and other donors. UNODC delivered US\$ 14,239,110 in 2021, to implement and further strengthen initiatives focused on countering transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, preventing crime and reforming criminal justice, preventing radicalization and violence in prisons, preventing drug use and HIV infection, strengthening urban safety and forensic services, and countering firearms and human trafficking, money laundering and terrorism financing. Overall UNODC has delivered around US\$ 85 million in integrated technical assistance over 2015-2021, through the Programme for Central Asia 2015-2021, the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, and global initiatives.

In 2021, UNODC ROCA secured an additional US\$ 3.6 million in donor funding to support the region's Member States in their efforts to make Central Asia safer from drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism. The UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025 (the next regional cycle) has been launched, and its successful implementation relies on continuous contributions by the donor community.

UNODC expresses its gratitude for donor contributions provided by the governments of Germany, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States of America, as well as those from the European Union, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, UNAIDS, UNDESA, UNOCT, the UN Peacebuilding Fund, the Joint SDG Fund, and the Spotlight Initiative Fund for the implementation of activities in the region. The Regional Office also expresses its appreciation for in-kind contributions of regional governments for establishing infrastructure for ongoing programmes, without which it would not have been possible to fully operate.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic's impacts, UNODC ROCA has made all efforts to deliver programmes, ensure financial commitments are honoured in a timely manner, and continue addressing the needs and priorities of beneficiaries and people in need. The UNODC team has constantly monitored respective pledge duration dates, and implemented activities in line with donor requirements. The Regional Office is grateful to donors for their provision of no-cost extensions for several grants, to ensure they are fully utilized despite the pandemic's impacts.



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