



Bolivia

UNODC assists the Government of Bolivia, the world's third largest coca-producing country, in combating illegal drugs. UNODC's surveys of coca crop, using advanced satellite surveillance techniques, help the Government to eradicate illicit coca production.

UNODC supports grass-roots development projects, pursues public and private partnerships and involves civil society in public education schemes. It has supported Bolivia's efforts to diversify crop production in the two main coca-growing areas inhabited mainly by indigenous peoples, the Cochabamba Tropics and the Yungas de La Paz.

Forest management and agro-forestry

In the Cochabamba tropics, UNODC and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have jointly developed forest management and agro-forestry systems (farming based on planting crops and trees that help to preserve the soils and watersheds) enabling farmers to earn decent incomes from wood and agricultural products.

A new project got underway in early 2006, and in just one year more than 1,000 farming families were trained to develop new forest management systems by planting 1,000 hectares of annatto (a natural colouring agent), cocoa, coffee, camu-camu (a tropical fruit) and rubber.



Alternative Development. Bolivian women growing flowers instead of coca crops



Harvesting 'camu camu' plants



An exhibition of organic honey and other products

These goods were produced in an environmentally friendly way, which was both fair to growers and commercially viable. Organically produced crops fetched higher prices in export markets. A total of 3,800 hectares were managed under community-run schemes. The UNODC-FAO project drew upon the expertise of various local institutions, including municipalities, the National Forest System, the National Parks System and universities, to help build up regional licit businesses.

Vocational training and support for small businesses

Since 2001, UNODC has been working with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to provide vocational training for young people and help them set up businesses. They have acquired skills in dress-making, confectionery, bakery, carpentry, beekeeping, gastronomy and producing indigenous foods and dairy products, and received training in computer use and business start-ups.

To date, UNODC and ILO have trained 22,200 people, of whom over 700 found stable employment. In 2006 alone, more than 2,400 young people from the Tropics of Cochabamba—more than half of whom were women—received vocational training. More than 200 received help to establish small businesses. Importantly, these schemes have helped women to become more self-reliant.

Almost 1,000 indigenous people were trained to meet local community needs, for example, setting up a village pharmacy. This UNODC project, the only one of this kind worldwide, was due to be replicated in the Yungas.

Annual coca survey

The UNODC survey *Coca Cultivation in the Andean Region 2006* showed that the surface area of coca cultivation in Bolivia was 25,400 hectares, including 12,000 hectares of traditional coca crops in the Yungas permitted by the Government. The survey also examined other data, such as yield and prices as well as sales points and the volume of coca leaf sold for traditional consumption. The survey gave a picture of the environmental impact of coca cultivation, such as deforestation caused by slash-and-burn clearing of land for coca cultivation and the illegal encroachment of coca crops on national parks.

The survey also included a national map of legal coca-growing areas. This work provided valuable information to the Government, for example, delineating coca areas allowed for traditional use and so-called expansion areas.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), one of the main funding partners in alternative development in Bolivia, approved a grant for UNODC to continue a survey of Yungas de La Paz and the Cochabamba Tropics. A coca yield study was undertaken in 2006 to determine the number of metric tonnes of coca harvested in one year per hectare of cultivation. Taking measures from 102 sample points, the study, scheduled for completion in early 2007, will give a comprehensive outlook on trends in coca crop cultivation.

Drug-abuse prevention

A nationwide prevention project in schools came to an end in 2006 after six years. A total of 4,900 teachers in 1,000 schools were trained in drug-abuse prevention methods and some 592,000 students received instruction.

Several local government entities asked UNODC to adapt the material on preventive education for use in their own municipalities. UNODC started to work with the municipality of La Paz.

Organized transnational crime and corruption

Bolivia, which ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations Convention against Corruption in 2005, followed up by ratifying the Protocol on Trafficking in Persons in May 2006. UNODC worked with the Bolivian authorities to produce a report entitled *Assessment of Organized Crime and Corruption in Bolivia*. The study focused on the characteristics of organized crime, the methods that criminals employed and the discrepancies between domestic legislation and international instruments, which hampered the performance of local law-enforcement institutions.

The assessment revealed gaps in national legislation as well as a lack of comprehensive public policies in these areas. The Government began work on an anti-corruption strategy, set up a committee on trafficking in human beings and prepared a draft law on weapons.

Brazil

The partnership between the Government of Brazil and UNODC evolved into new areas of activity, especially campaigns against corruption. UNODC teamed up with NGOs to address urban crime, drug trafficking and abuse, as well as drug-related HIV/AIDS transmission. Work on those issues extended to Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, known as the South Cone countries.

As a sign of the importance it attaches to UNODC's work, the Brazilian Government pledged \$US 36 million to the UNODC/Brazil cost-sharing programme for the period 2007-2009, the largest single national or international donor pledge made to UNODC during the past decade. The Governments of Norway and Sweden also supported the UNODC programme in Brazil with funds for major new projects.

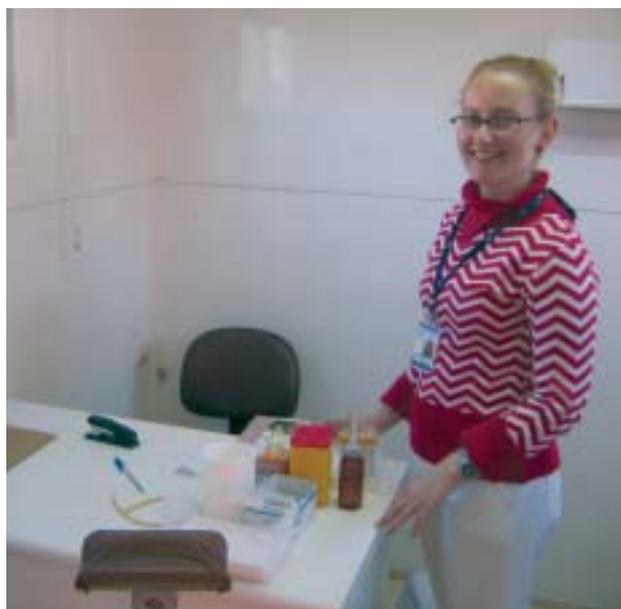
In 2006, UNODC developed new fund-raising partnerships with the private sector. The Brazilian mining company Fundação Vale do Rio Doce donated money for UNODC to sponsor a national award to elementary and high schools for the prevention of HIV/AIDS and drug abuse. The award was a joint initiative of UNODC, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNAIDS and the Brazilian Government. The Belgian and Swedish Governments also granted funding to UNODC for a project in the Public Prosecutors' Office aimed at preventing violence in the Federal District and Brasilia.

Joint work with other United Nations agencies in Brazil remained an important part of UNODC's portfolio in 2006, especially in the fields of urban crime and violence prevention, arms-trafficking control and anti-corruption.

Successful awareness-raising activities continued. With support from UNODC, TV Globo, the largest media network in Brazil, introduced topics such as human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, drug trafficking and corruption in its *telenovelas* (soap operas).

Drug abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention

Injecting drug use continued to fuel HIV/AIDS infection. UNODC's 12-year partnership with the Brazilian Government has improved efforts to provide injecting drug users with information and help to reduce their risk of contracting and spreading HIV/AIDS. The National HIV/AIDS Programme's 2006 report showed



Nurse at an HIV/AIDS prevention course jointly organized by UNODC, UNAIDS and the National Aids Programme

that the incidence of HIV/AIDS among injecting drug users had fallen 71 per cent between 1996 and 2005.

In 2006, UNODC began new activities to help prevent violence and crime among people exposed to HIV/AIDS and drug use. UNODC, UNAIDS and the National Aids Programme organized training in the regions of São Paulo, Salvador and Porto Alegre targeting professionals who work with victims of substance abuse and violence, street children and prostitutes. A training guide was under preparation to improve the services provided by governmental institutions, NGOs, the health and social sectors and the police.

Anti-corruption measures

UNODC campaigns mobilized the private and public sectors to raise awareness on the importance of purchasing legal products rather than smuggled goods. UNODC also worked to improve supervision of public spending by specialized NGOs and other institutions.

The Government's General Comptroller's Office, which has benefited from UNODC technical assistance, increased its contribution to UNODC. UNODC arranged the visit of a specialist to help prepare a national corruption survey, due to be implemented in 2007, and did the groundwork for a project to provide expertise in

modern auditing techniques and training for Brazilian auditors.

UNODC joined an innovative anti-corruption pact with over 400 signatory companies. Brazil's first *Pact for Transparency against Corruption in the Private Sector* was a joint initiative between UNODC, the Ethos Institute of Corporate Social Responsibility, UNDP and others under the umbrella of the United Nations Global Compact, the world's largest voluntary corporate citizenship initiative. A major task will be to verify the private sector's compliance with the Compact's anti-corruption principles.

Urban crime prevention

Homicide is the third leading cause of death among men in Brazil and the leading cause among males aged 15-39 years. UNODC has led the United Nations Thematic Group on the prevention of urban violence and crime since its creation in 2005. The Group invited representatives of United Nations agencies and academic experts to compile best practices from Brazil and abroad. Specialists from the Health and Justice Departments, public prosecution service, universities and the United Nations system worked to forge public policies dealing with violence prevention.

Regional cooperation

UNODC and UNDP worked to support the ratification by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay of the

Firearms Protocol of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

The successful Brazilian Workplace Drug Prevention programme was expanded to South Cone countries. It was also implemented by companies in Argentina and the University of Valparaiso, Chile, and offered to UNODC Russia.

The South Cone Governments increased cooperation to reduce drug supply and firearms trafficking with support from UNODC programmes. As projects neared completion, Government agencies and the Federal Police took over responsibility for their management. Success stories included the Six Border Operation, designed to curb the trafficking of chemical precursors to drug-producing countries.

In the state of Rio Grande do Sul in the south of Brazil, the Research and Training Centre on HIV/AIDS has developed an effective computer-based training programme for health professionals. The Centre is linked to the Brazilian HIV/AIDS Programme and the University of California AIDS Centre. UNODC supported the training programme for research into the prevention of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. Distance learning has allowed experts to acquire a low-cost and high-standard qualification, especially useful for people working in remote areas.

Colombia

In 2006, UNODC supported projects to help farmers give up coca cultivation and earn money legally in Colombia, the world's largest producer of cocaine and the third largest producer of heroin. UNODC also raised awareness of the dangers of drug abuse among young people.

UNODC launched a major report on illicit firearms trafficking and violent crime in Colombia. UNODC Colombia's anti-human trafficking programme received

the *UN21 Commendation* presented to the best United Nations projects in 2006.

Illicit Crop Monitoring Programme

UNODC helped the Colombian Government to evaluate the impact of its coca eradication campaigns. The Illicit Crop Monitoring Programme showed that the area of land being used for cocaine cultivation had risen 8 per cent in 2005, from 80,000 hectares to 86,000. This was

Colombian musician César López who invented the “Escopetarra”—part rifle, part guitar—in 2003 as part of a UNODC campaign against violence

the first annual increase after four successive years of decline, but it was still well down on the record of 163,000 hectares reported in 2000.

Using satellite imaging, UNODC monitored and evaluated alternative development programmes, the largest of which—the Colombian President’s Forest Warden Programme—resettles families living in conflict zones. As Forest Wardens, families receive incentives to give up coca production, switch to licit crops and protect the environment.

UNODC’s data showed that 80 per cent of the area under the Forest Warden Project was free of illicit crops in 2006. Families were profitably selling alternative products and reinvesting in activities such as bee-keeping and growing organic coffee and cocoa. They also conserved 2 million hectares of woodland and replanted a further 136 million hectares.

In 2006, UNODC made it possible for 200 beneficiary families to participate in a national workshop to share their experiences. With UNODC assistance, a periodical entitled *El Bosque* was published, which explains the challenges involved in becoming a Forest Warden.

UNODC opened the *Café Tienda de La Paz* in September in the UNODC office in Bogotá. The Café promotes alternative development by selling coffee from all five regions of Colombia—Andean, Amazon, Caribbean, Orinoco and Pacific—grown to replace coca crops.

Preventing crime and violence

In November, UNODC and the Colombian Ministry of Defence ran a training course on investigation techniques for the control of firearms, munitions and explosives for 60 officials from the Department for Security, Ministry of Defence, the Military University and the Home Office. It covered issues such as legislation and international cooperation to regulate firearms.

In December, UNODC published a report entitled *Violence, Crime and Illegal Arms Trafficking in Colombia*, which stated that the country needed to do more to crack down on organized crime and arms trafficking and called for stiffer penalties for carrying or dealing in illegal arms.



Although Colombia has one of the highest homicide rates in the world, the report challenged the perception that it was plagued by indiscriminate violence. Rather, the use of firearms was highly controlled and regulated by criminal gangs, rebel factions and the Government.

The report showed that although the flow of illegal weapons into Colombia was limited, weapons were constantly recycled. It was therefore important to control the circulation of weapons. The report found that law enforcement authorities lacked the operational capacity to intercept illicit arms trafficking and preventive intelligence was deficient.

UNODC campaign urges: “Turn guns into guitars”

UNODC launched a campaign entitled “Generation No Violence” with Cesar Lopez, a musician and peace

activist who was appointed UNODC Colombia's Goodwill Ambassador in June. Inspired by the biblical command to beat swords into ploughshares, Lopez turned 25 Kalashnikov rifles into guitars or "escopetarras"—part rifle (escopeta) and part guitar (guitarra)—to donate to international celebrities willing to condemn gun violence.

An escopetarra was put on display at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York as part of the permanent disarmament exhibition. UNODC and Cesar Lopez presented an escopetarra to Spanish/French musician Manu Chao and planned to approach other international stars in 2007.

Anti-human trafficking projects

UNODC helped to strengthen Colombia's ability to investigate and try traffickers through the establishment

of national legislation and public policy. It held a workshop for 14 different national authorities, which culminated in the drafting of a national policy document on dealing with traffickers and granting compensation to victims.

UNODC and the British Embassy in Bogotá also prepared an instruction manual aimed at guaranteeing the rights of child victims of human trafficking and exploitation. Those recommendations were due to be incorporated into Colombia's penal procedure code in 2007.

UNODC created highly successful awareness-raising campaigns such as: "We are going to prostitute you" (Te vamos a prostituir) launched in partnership with the advertising agency Leo Burnett. Colombian magazines such as *Semana*, *Credencial* and *Soho*, as well as daily newspapers, published campaign material depicting the tragedy of human trafficking.

UNODC and Leo Burnett advertising agency created a campaign against human trafficking in Colombia with this design



UNODC worked with the Colombian television networks RCN and Caracol to produce prime-time soap operas aired nightly to millions of viewers, including “Forbidden Games”, which showed how Internet scams lure victims for bogus modelling and other job opportunities and explained where victims could turn for help.

UNODC Colombia also worked with RCN and the Ministry of Communications to produce the “Safe Internet Programme,” a series of campaigns to alert possible victims to the dangers posed by traffickers on the Internet.

Mexico

The UNODC Regional Office for Mexico and Central America covers Mexico, the Caribbean, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

UNODC provides technical assistance to help countries fight corruption, organized crime and youth gangs, drug abuse and trafficking.

Corruption

The Mexican Confederation of Employers gave financial support to a joint UNODC/Mexican Government programme to fight crime, corruption and drugs at the state level. Agreement was reached in 2006 to extend the project from the state of Nuevo Leon, where it started in 2005, to Querétaro, Michoacán and other priority states. UNODC’s Mexican partners pledged \$US 20 million to expand the project.

The project’s main achievements included the establishment of a “crime observatory” in Nuevo León, which set up a database of assessments and recommendations to help combat corruption, drugs and crime. The recommendations were due to be implemented in 2007. A seminar on investigation techniques was organized for police in December.

Diversion of chemical precursors

Trafficking in precursor chemicals, which can be used to manufacture cocaine, heroin and other illicit drugs, from Mexico to Central America has become a serious threat.

To prevent the diversion of precursors from the legitimate pharmaceutical industry, UNODC offers technical

assistance through the National Drug Control System, which it has implemented throughout Latin America. The System authorizes the import and export of controlled substances, compiles statistics and enables information exchange at the national and international levels. A similar system was under development throughout Central America as part of a joint UNODC project with the Federal Commission for the Protection against Sanitary Risk of the Mexican Ministry of Health and the Central American Drugs Commission. It will enhance regional cooperation and national compliance with the United Nations drug conventions.

In 2006, UNODC began conducting a regional evaluation of the precursor controls and issued recommendations.

Drug abuse

Central America faces formidable challenges in drug-demand reduction, including a shortage of rehabilitation services and trained personnel.

UNODC is working to establish a regional network for the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts. Liaison centres have been established in six countries to coordinate this work. UNODC helped to draw up minimum treatment standards and develop a regional strategy to train the staff running the centres. They in turn will train other national personnel and help to address shortcomings in existing treatment services. The first workshop of the Regional Training Strategy took place in Puerto Rico. In 2006, Belize joined the network. UNODC worked with the Central Caribbean University of Puerto Rico to develop a tool for research into drug prevention and treatment.

Youth crime

Violence by youth gangs, known as “maras”, was at the top of the political agenda throughout Central America, especially in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

To help stop vulnerable young people from being sucked into crime, UNODC promoted a schools project for drug-abuse prevention and rehabilitation. In 2006, the schools prevention programme reached elementary schools in Costa Rica. An assessment of the project showed that it had exerted a positive influence on very young children by reinforcing self-esteem, social interaction and healthy lifestyles. Other Central American countries showed interest in adopting this programme.

In Honduras, UNODC offers young people at risk and former drug abusers an opportunity to stay away from criminal gangs and drugs, and provides vocational training to help them find jobs. Students also receive scholarships, work clothes and school supplies. In 2006, 80 young people

completed the programme, receiving National Training Institute certificates, and another 40 enrolled. Over 30 course graduates found jobs thanks to the Social and Labour Integration Office.



Computer workshop for street children undergoing drug treatment at the Liaison Centre in Guatemala

A former gang member's story

As a child, I grew up in a marginal area of Tegucigalpa (Honduras). My dad abandoned my mother, my two younger siblings and me when I was 12. In the second grade of junior high school I joined a “mara”. Members of the gang gave me money and introduced me to the mara “business”: assaults in buses, marijuana and alcohol consumption, muggings and so on. In 2005, I heard about the UNODC youth reintegration project. I realized that my mother could no longer afford my siblings’ school costs. In August 2005, I decided to enrol in the cookery course. In the beginning, I had many problems: I even robbed some of my classmates and nearly got expelled. I was allowed to stay in the group

provided I got help from COMPARTIR (Honduran NGO) tutors. I agreed. I started to take group and individual therapy sessions. My teacher at the National Training Institute was a great help: she gave me advice and helped me to get along again with my classmates. Almost a year later, I participated in a practical professional programme at a hotel in Tegucigalpa and worked as an assistant chef. I got the highest final grade of my group. Now I am certified and I work at a hotel where the Social and Labour Integration Office got me a job. I feel happy. This project has helped me so much; I don't drink or use drugs and I can help to support my siblings. I am back at high school, which I hope to finish and then enrol in a graduate programme.

Anonymous

Peru

Drug abuse and related crime continued to climb in Peru, the world's second largest producer of coca leaves and cocaine. Working with central and local government authorities, NGOs and international donors, UNODC develops statistics and information on coca cultivation, drug-abuse prevalence and related drugs and crime issues. In 2006, UNODC piloted a project to prevent drug-related urban crime and backed teachers' training schemes to address drug abuse and HIV/AIDS.

Alternatives to coca cultivation

Much of UNODC's work was devoted to helping coca farmers find alternative sources of income. In 2006, UNODC helped former coca growers to increase the yield, quality and export value of their coffee, cocoa and palm heart harvests. Other sustainable livelihoods promoted by UNODC in 2006 included tree-planting and protecting ecosystems in indigenous communities, raising livestock, harvesting rubber and developing the palm oil industry.

More than 6,000 farmers' families in Peru received support from UNODC. The top 12 UNODC-supported enter-

prises saw steady increases in sales and exports. In 2006, their combined sales totalled almost \$US 48 million, a 20 per cent increase over 2005. Europe accounted for 60 per cent of exports, while North America bought about 38 per cent of total output. The rest went to Asia, Australasia and Latin America.

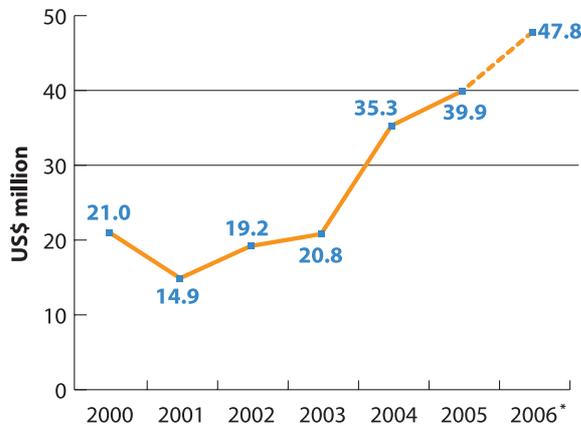
As coca cultivation ruins soil quality, alternative livelihood activities were designed with environmental conservation in mind. In the second half of 2006, work started with indigenous communities in the biodiversity-rich jungle areas of San Martin in central Peru to explore the feasibility of developing a project under the Kyoto Protocol "clean development mechanisms."

In 2006, UNODC continued supporting the NGO *Sport and Life*, which offers cultural, sporting and artistic activities to disadvantaged youngsters in Peru's capital, Lima. During the 2006 World Cup, community street football events were organized across the country to highlight the role of sports in drug-abuse prevention. Using local stars as role models, UNODC trained 50 football coaches. It also supported the Peruvian team's participation in the Street Football World Championship

The son of an ex-coca grower proudly showing the first cocoa pods harvested in Inambari Valley, Tambopata



Sustainable livelihood enterprises in Peru: Combined sales performance 2000-2006



* Estimate

that took place in Berlin in July as part of a programme to promote drug education and healthy lifestyles in poor neighbourhoods.

In Ayacucho province, a hub of drug trafficking, UNODC helped train 500 women to develop drug-awareness and prevention campaigns. The Quechua-speaking women received training and manuals in the local language and organized games and musical activities in villages to help spread the anti-drug message to children and teenagers. Two community centres were set up and equipped with audiovisual equipment and computers to help women leaders.

A third of Peru's population is under the age of 15. In 2006, UNODC and the Organization of American States (OAS) released the first comparative study on drug use among secondary school students in nine countries in South America, including Peru. The study highlighted the regions in Peru where young people faced a higher risk of substance abuse. UNODC worked closely with Peru's Ministry of Education to help vulnerable young people, training more than 400 teachers to provide guidance in communities where drug abuse was increasing. The teachers received materials on drug abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention and went on to train other teachers in a peer programme connecting more than 3,500 educators across the country.

Fighting street crime

UNODC continued to forge partnerships to fight crime. In 2006, a UNODC pilot project to curb street-level drug pushing and crime brought together 14 of Lima's municipalities. The project encouraged communities and local law-enforcement agencies to share information more effectively and helped authorities to improve their crime-fighting skills.

UNODC support helped police officers gain expertise in using sophisticated crime-fighting tools, including Geo-Reference Information Systems (GIS), to pinpoint problem neighbourhoods in Lima. Police and municipal authorities feed information into the system on locations favoured by youth gangs, along with other data on schools and even small-scale drug-production facilities. Citizens were encouraged to come forward with information on drug dealing. The system won a ringing endorsement from the mayor of Independencia municipality, who said it had made a real difference to tackling crime there.

A similar approach will be used in the country's southern region of Tacna, close to the border with Chile and a busy transit point for drug traffickers. In a recent countrywide survey, Tacna showed the highest incidence of drug use among students after Lima. Regional authorities were adopting the GIS technology and UNODC will help develop the system.

UNODC continued helping Peru's judges to speed up the investigation of criminal cases and boost their efficiency by using specialized software and mentoring services to analyse and track data. With a better understanding of complex crime cases, judges convicted more consistently and issued more orders for the seizure and confiscation of illicit assets. UNODC helped the Government to draft a new anti-human trafficking law consistent with international protocols, particularly those dealing with women and children. The draft law submitted to the Peruvian Congress in December was approved within a few weeks. It included measures to facilitate the prosecution of traffickers, provide assistance to victims and encourage programmes to prevent human trafficking.

Peru

Teachers offer first line of support to students under pressure

Rosanna Yactayo Castro has been teaching for 18 years. She works in a secondary school in Lima's port area, Callao. Her district is one of the areas recently identified as a high-risk zone for drug abuse among young people. Yactayo was one of more than 400 teachers across Peru who received training through a UNODC-supported initiative to get students talking about healthy lifestyles and conflict-resolution.

"Students have always felt comfortable approaching me with problems at home or with friends," said Yactayo. "Now, with this training, I feel better equipped to introduce these discussions in the classroom in a proactive way as opposed to waiting for someone to have a crisis."

Yactayo says her students feel stress because of drugs and gangs in the community, family conflicts and unemployed parents. She uses role-playing, art, music and group discussions as a way to talk about problems or introduce new ways of dealing with uncomfortable situations. She remains an optimist about the future of her students: "Today's young people are much more aware of what's going on around them. They're also tuned in to new forms of communications, such as the Internet. We need to capitalize on this to reach out to them."

In a classroom upstairs, another teacher, Elizabeth Gamboa Dios, is doing just this. Gamboa received the same training. Her classroom is filled with computers and the students are hooked up to "Huascarán Project" (www.evs.huascarán.edu.pe),

a website constructed by Peru's Ministry of Education as an electronic meeting and learning place for students. Developed with support from UNODC, the website provides teachers with modules for classroom discussion and suggestions for interactive games focusing on healthy lifestyles and drug awareness. Two of Gamboa's students recently took their homework assignment very seriously and wrote a rap song called "Piensa" (Think), warning students of the consequences of experimenting with drugs.



Elizabeth Gamboa and her pupils
Photo: Christine Skladany

Fidela, Felix and the chocolate factory

Rural entrepreneurs in Peru's Apurimac River Valley who used to cultivate coca are now growing cocoa beans for Swiss chocolate maker, Pronatec. The cocoa bean harvests of Fidela del Villar Baca and Felix Martinez Escribas were among the approximately 300 tonnes of cocoa beans sold in 2006. Since 2002, the company has purchased organically certified Peruvian cocoa from the Cooperativa Agraria Cafetalera del Valle Rio Apurimac (CACVRA).



Felix Martinez
Photo: Christine Skladany

The cooperative, made up of 3,000 farmers, demonstrates that it makes good economic sense for farmers to work together to produce cocoa and coffee for export markets. Israel Pisetsky, general manager of CACVRA, says cooperatives are helping the region to rebuild its economy after Shining Path guerillas and drug traffickers infiltrated the area in the 1980s and 1990s.

"Our cooperative is promoting the ideals of working together to bring investment and democracy to our region. Our members see how working together can translate into better health and education opportunities for their children," says Pisetsky.

Both del Villar and Martinez are former coca growers. They now agree that producing cocoa and coffee is much better for their long-term viability as business people and as breadwinners. Del Villar, a mother of five children, says she is proud to be producing cocoa for export: "I remember in the 1980s when we were afraid to do anything. We had no choice but to grow coca leaves because that's all we could sell. It was very difficult for us. The future can only be better."

Having recently learned about the business side of farming, Martinez, a former leader of a regional coca-growers' union, says he appreciates the support he has received from UNODC.

UNODC encourages farmers in coca-growing areas to adhere to fair-trade standards as such products fetch a higher market price.