Around the world, many of the estimated 100 million children who live and work on the streets use drugs and solvents to get high. Pictured here are Dilly Whalla and his friends in the early hours of the morning in Bombay.

UN International Drug Control Programme

facing the challenge
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Our mission is to work with the nations and people of the world to tackle the global drug problem and its consequences by:

- Alerting the world to the threats posed by drug abuse to individuals, families, communities and institutions;
- Building and supporting local, national and international partnerships to address drug issues;
- Promoting and enhancing efforts to reduce drug abuse, particularly among the young and vulnerable;
- Strengthening international action against drug production, trafficking and drug-related crime;
- Providing information, analysis and expertise on the drug issue; and
- Ensuring adequate supplies of controlled drugs for medical and scientific purposes.
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Heroin invasion
In comparison to other drugs, cocaine has a short history. Coca is indigenous to the mountainous terrain of South America and was originally used in medicines. In recent years a highly addictive form of cocaine dubbed “crack” (pictured here) was created and marketed.
In the 1950s drug abuse was still a rather uncommon phenomenon. It was a faceless, underground problem that did not produce much media attention and an industry that didn’t generate the exceedingly large profits seen today. Since then drug abuse has soared with international drug cartels and multi-billion dollar profits driving the trade. Today, there’s an estimated 190 million drug users around the globe. While the majority of illegal drugs are consumed in industrialized nations, drug addiction is no longer a rich nation’s problem or a poor man’s affliction. It crosses national, ethnic, religious, class and gender lines. Addicts range from the homeless, to white-collar professionals, college students, sex workers, rural farmers and street children. In addition to wreaking havoc on the lives of addicts and their families, drug addiction is creating a myriad of new problems for nations: increased crime and violence, unemployment, the deterioration of the social fabric, and the spread of drug-related diseases such as AIDS and hepatitis. It is a major international problem. And the trends aren’t slowing. No country, however remote, however robust its democracy, is immune to the adverse consequences of drug abuse and trafficking, although countries whose social and institutional fabric is weak are particularly vulnerable. Paradoxically, though, this crisis has served as an impetus for nations to join forces to address this multifaceted problem.

UNDCP was established in 1991 to coordinate drug control strategies on a global level. The globalization of the drug trade requires an international response and concerted efforts from nations. UNDCP coordinates drug control strategies at the regional and global level and plays an important role in foreseeing the evolution of trends with a view to recommending countermeasures. It also provides assistance to governments in the different fields of drug control. Improved transport and communications have made it easier for traffickers to move and to sell drugs. Illicit drugs produced in one country are often destined for another where there is a lucrative market. Chemicals used to make synthetic drugs might be banned in one country while freely available in the next. Drug money is moved electronically around the world in a

Deaths due to drug abuse in six Western European Countries

Although deaths due to drug abuse in Europe reached 4,500 in 1994 that figure is widely thought to understate the true number. Many deaths are not recorded as drug-related, such as accidents under the effect of drugs or many diseases that abusers are vulnerable to contracting.

Source: European monitoring centre for drugs and drug addiction.
For the next 12 years, Kunta will not see his native Nigeria. Instead, he’ll be spending most of his time trying to survive the prison system in Quetta, Pakistan, where scorching hot summer days will give way to below-freezing winter nights.

As a Nigerian serving time in a remote part of western Pakistan his predicament is surprisingly far from rare. People bearing passports from Afghanistan, Iran, Nigeria, Tanzania, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf Emirates, even Trinidad & Tobago have turned up — and been arrested — in this particular neck of the woods. The charge: drug trafficking.

Worse, although the routes are generally known they are difficult to pinpoint. And they keep changing depending on what is known about the deployment of the border patrols. The stakes in this cat-and-mouse game are high. Iran has lost over 700 of its officers and men to the drug runners over the past ten years. Drug convoys are often heavily armed -- sometimes toting rocket-propelled grenades and surface-to-air missiles.

The drivers are poor and so are the border guards who work long hours. For some it is difficult to refuse bribes. Sometimes accepting a bribe might be the only alternative to threats of violence or death.

When UNDCP was asked by both the Pakistan and Iran governments to help the border forces in 1993, it analyzed the situation and concluded that the main areas where it could provide cost-effective assistance were: (a) training the paramilitary forces in drug law enforcement procedures and techniques; (b) providing equipment for increased mobility; and (c) providing secure communications equipment. One major objective of UNDCP was to ensure good communication and cooperation between the two countries at the strategic and operational levels.

Two years after the project began, the results are significant. The number and quantity of seizures to date have increased substantially. With more training and equipment the level of operational effectiveness is expected to increase further. Aside from the immediate seizures and arrest of traffickers, to be really successful, these measures should end up deflecting the drug trafficking
matter of seconds. If one country tightens its legislation and enforces controls, the drug industry can move to another country where trading is less risky. Alone, no country can hope to stem the drug trade within its borders.

The drug industry

UNDCP confronts a ruthless and violent enemy: the estimated $400 billion per year illicit drug industry — worth nearly double the revenues of the global pharmaceutical industry or about ten times the sum of all official development assistance. The clandestine industry is well organised, particularly at the production and wholesale levels. The most profitable activities are typically controlled by cartels, often organised along ethnic lines to create cohesiveness. While drugs are a primary source of revenue, these drug trafficking organisations have increasingly diversified into other forms of criminal activities such as arms trafficking, money laundering and penetration of the legal, economic, political and administrative sectors. A brief review of the major transnational crime organisations is given in Box 7. The drug industry is adaptive — it nurtures new markets and skirts tough drug policies by constantly shifting its activities within and among countries.

Drug money is used to pay private armies, and in some cases, to "buy" politicians, judges, police and journalists. Drug lords can afford the latest and most advanced weapons and hire the brightest advisors.

Deflection imposes a significant cost to the trafficking organisations and this price will be passed onto the consumer. High prices coupled with reduced supply mean fewer street doses are available. Restricted availability means less experimentation in the short-term. And this means fewer addicts in the long-term.

Photo: Kunta from Nigeria has been imprisoned for 12 years for drug trafficking in Pakistan.

* Many estimates have been made of the total revenue accruing to the illicit drug industry — most range from US$300bn to US$500bn. However a growing body of evidence suggests that the true figure lies somewhere around the US$400bn level.

Source: Economic and Social Consequences of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (Technical Series, UNDCP/TS. 6)
Individuals who cannot be bought might be silenced by hired assassins; as they say in Latin America *plata o plomo* (silver or lead), meaning take the money or the bullet. The assassinations of leading public figures and anti-narcotics politicians, shoot-outs, bombings and military interventions underscore the brutal and ugly nature of the drug trade and the pressing need to bring it under control.

In all parts of the world organised criminal networks rely on drug money, from violent insurgencies in South America to ruthless organised crime mafias in Europe. For some groups drug trafficking augments income from other criminal activities such as kidnapping and robbery. Other groups focus their illegal activities exclusively on the drug trade.

Like many successful national corporations, the drug business has expanded its channels and gone global. New players have entered including Russian crime syndicates, Albanians and South Africans. Nigerian gangs often transport heroin produced in Asia to markets in Europe and the United States. In addition, there is increasing cooperation between cartels: a drug or a route is no longer monopolized by a single cartel.

UNDCP is the organisation spearheading international efforts aimed at fighting drug abuse and the drug trade. At the core of its activities are three international conventions (treaties) which contain drug policies that have been agreed at the international level.

- The *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)* and its 1972 Protocol calls for governments to implement policies that limit the supply of illegal drugs without interfering with licit medical requirements, treat and rehabilitate addicts and punish traffickers.

- The *Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971)* controls certain psychotropic drugs that may be useful pharmaceuticals — such as tranquilisers — that are also appealing to drug abusers. The Convention helps to ensure that there is no diversion of licit supplies to illicit purposes.

- The *Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988)* calls on governments to prevent drug trafficking, by measures such as controls on money-laundering, and to adopt measures to prevent the diversion of licit chemicals to illicit channels.

Together these treaties aim to limit the production, trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs and outline drug control measures that governments should take at national and global levels.

UNDCP helps countries adapt their national legislation and drug policies to facilitate their compliance with these conventions and to coordinate a global drug control effort.
UNDCP’s projects and coordinating activities are balanced among three areas:

- **To reduce demand for illicit drugs.** UNDCP collects and disseminates information on profiles of those people using, or likely to become drug users, and identifies policies and programmes that have effectively reduced or prevented drug abuse. Governments then use this information to develop national demand reduction policies and priorities. UNDCP also supports and initiates a number of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation projects.

- **To reduce the production of illicit drugs.** UNDCP coordinates projects to eradicate illicit drug crops and to assist farmers with finding legal and profitable alternatives. It monitors the manufacture and movement of chemicals used in the production of synthetic drugs which minimises the risks of those chemicals being diverted to the black market. It also assists governments in developing policies and priorities and to draft appropriate laws targeting the production of illicit drugs.

- **To reduce the trafficking of drugs.** It collects information on global trafficking trends, methods and routes which governments can use to target their efforts more effectively. It provides expert advice on law enforcement methods and assists governments in drafting complex laws. Training courses are often provided to law enforcement, customs, the judiciary, prosecutors, and local and national police forces. UNDCP plays an important coordination role among countries to harmonize their national drug control activities and to develop joint cross-border undertakings among neighbouring countries through subregional cooperation agreements. The Programme also monitors the movement of licit drugs to prevent diversion into illicit channels.
Sadik and Asper, aged 11 and 12, wait for their drug dealer to give them a fix.
Reducing demand

The rising demand for drugs is a major driving force behind the international drug industry. Drugs are more accessible than ever before, and in all regions of the world the number of abusers is growing.

Drug abuse continues to rise in developed countries which already have the highest rates of illegal drug consumption. The United States is the largest single market for illicit drugs — with 12.6 million regular drug users. Many Western European countries have similar per capita consumption.

In the developing countries, more and more people are becoming addicted to drugs that are often produced in their home countries. Once regarded primarily as supplier countries with little consumption, this is no longer true.

Rising demand for drugs is especially evident in countries that were previously not exposed to world trade, such as Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Their shift to market-oriented economies, the opening of borders and insufficient controls has resulted in a sharp rise in drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. Seizures of heroin in this region increased almost six-fold during 1989-1993.

While much attention has focussed on the abuse of illegal drugs, equally worrisome is the abuse of widely available consumer products, such as aerosols, glues, thinners and even gasoline. Easy access, low cost and a powerful effect make these "drugs" extremely attractive to children and youth. Glue sniffing has become particularly prevalent among children (especially street children) in the past two decades.

People who abuse drugs come from all walks of life although statistics show that some are more likely to take drugs than others. Men are more likely to abuse illicit drugs than women, single more than married, city-dwellers more than rural residents, younger more than older, and students more than workers. Prisoners and street-children also show a high incidence of drug abuse.

The use of illicit drugs is usually associated with a number of related problems. These can be financial (spending too much money on a habit), social (time spent under the influence of drugs reduces time that
can be spent with family and friends, vocational (missing days at work or performing badly while there), medical (there are a host of illnesses associated with drug abuse) and emotional (often drug addicts feel ashamed, distressed and guilty about their condition). In some countries the correlation between drug abuse and unemployment is high. A 1993 national household survey carried out in Colombia, for instance, showed that cocaine abuse among the unemployed was 10 times higher than among workers. Nevertheless many gainfully employed people use drugs and successfully hide their habit from their employers. In Europe cocaine consumers tend to be successful professionals between the ages of 20 to 40.

Costs to Society

Drug abuse costs society a great deal in economic and social terms. In addition to property losses from crimes, large amounts of tax dollars must be earmarked for costly drug enforcement programmes, prosecutions, prisons, rehabilitation, treatment and prevention programmes, and health care costs for drug-related diseases such as AIDS. Drug addiction also affects the family and the overall community in many ways: it can tear apart families due to ruined relationships, prolonged illnesses, and lost wages; it can even result in homelessness for families.

The burden on society is compounded because drug abuse is typically associated with many other criminal activities. To sustain a habit, addicts often resort to criminal activities such as prostitution, robbery and murder. A study in Liverpool, England, reveals that 90 percent of heroin abusers financed their habits through shoplifting and burglary. Another study found that almost 50 percent of the theft in England and Wales was drug-related. In total, the United Kingdom estimates that each of its 150,000 hard-core addicts impose an average cost to society of $23,000 per year. In the United States heavy drug abusers cost more than $28,000 per year. The full economic cost of drug abuse in the United States is estimated at approximately $70 billion per annum, approximately 1.3% of gross domestic profit (GDP).

Seeking Customers

Major drug dealers have proved to be shrewd marketers when seeking new consumers. To get a mass market going they use common marketing techniques. For example, in the past few years new European "consumers" were offered free heroin samples and traffickers also waived upfront payments. As they move into new markets dealers typically target the young and affluent.

Drugs wax and wane in popularity depending upon a number of factors, including availability, price, moral climate, image, the drug’s effect, and legal sanctions. In general, cocaine abuse occurs among those from higher socio-economic groups and heroin abuse is most popular among the most marginalised in society. Synthetic drugs, par-
particularly Ecstasy and other forms of amphetamines, are most often used by youth from all strata of society. The abuse of synthetic drugs, such as Ecstasy, has now supplanted cocaine and heroin in many markets as the drug of choice.

**Addressing the problem**

UNDCP tracks patterns and trends of drug abuse worldwide such as groups that are likely to become, or are, drug abusers. Armed with this information it works closely with governments and non-governmental organisations to develop prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation strategies to reduce consumption. Strategies target those who have never taken drugs, those using drugs but who are not (yet) addicted, and those who are addicted.

Analysing who is taking drugs, why they are taken, what drugs are being used and how are they being administered helps focus prevention and treatment efforts in the right areas.

UNDCP research shows that most people who become drug abusers are under the age of 30, hence prevention campaigns generally target this age group. In Europe, the abuse of drugs (particularly Ecstasy) is rising and expanding into new groups who traditionally would not have experimented with drugs. Often they try drugs because they mistakenly believe that they can control their consumption or they believe that some drugs or methods of taking drugs are less dangerous than others.

Youths often perceive drugs such as Ecstasy, and other designer drugs that come in capsule and tablet form, as "low-risk" or "no-risk". Added to this relatively benign image is the belief that these drugs enhance performance, self-confidence and communication. However the drugs can cause serious mental disturbances, including paranoia, frightening hallucinations, panic attacks and depression. Since these drugs are produced in the "laboratory", which too often is located in someone's basement, catastrophes (such as overdoses and poisoning), occur due to poor quality control. Very occasionally, Ecstasy (or, more particularly, dehydration associated with its use) can kill.

Others mistakenly think that heroin or cocaine is not addictive if they snort or smoke it. However, people's brains are wired differently. While some people may be able to take some kinds of drugs for a longer time before becoming addicted, others need only abuse a drug a few times before their craving is beyond their control. Factors such as frequency of use and dosage also influence the rate of addiction. In general, injecting users experience the drugs' effects more intensely and generally become dependent faster. The "crash" and withdrawal symptoms are much more painful too.

Another problem arises in the processing of heroin and cocaine. Dealers often dilute ("cut") these powdered drugs with other similar looking substances, such as brick dust or milk powder. As a result,
In the grip of cocaine: one man’s journey to recovery

He was a gifted musician and record producer for top bands like the Rolling Stones and Bob Marley and the Wailers. Clive Hunt was riding high in his career and had a life that shimmered like an advertisement, that is, until his coke addiction brought him tumbling down.

Like lots of people in the music industry, he smoked marijuana and partied a lot, in recording studios, at backstage parties and all-night clubs. Early in his career, on occasion, he would snort cocaine which he says, gave him “the purest high”. For Clive, drugs were part and parcel of his profession. “In New York people do drugs on a real casual basis”, Clive, 44, says. “Friends would arrive at work on Monday and say ‘we did coke this weekend’, as though it were an event, like a vacation”.

Clive grew up in rural Jamaica in the 1960s to the sounds of reggae. He was 12 and in reform school when he learned to play the trumpet. From there, he joined the army and played with the Jamaican Military Band while continuing his music studies. In 1970 he won a highly prized military scholarship to study music in England. From this point on his career soared. He moved to New York in 1976 to work with the biggest names in the music industry such as the Rolling Stones, Grace Jones and Jimmy Cliff. He worked on soundtracks for Walt Disney’s “The Lion King” and Eddie Murphy’s “Cool Runnings”. He married his long-time girlfriend from Jamaica and had a child. His life was a fairy-tale come true.

As he moved to the inner circles of the New York music scene, Clive couldn’t help but notice the effect coke had on his fellow musicians. They’d miss rehearsals, show up late for recording sessions and gigs, and on occasion, not show up at all. While some of the musicians could perform well despite their addictions, they would look terrible — pale, drawn and skinny. That trademark far-away stage look was their off-stage persona.

But no matter how many drugs he shared with his fellow musicians, Clive thought he was invincible. Sure he did drugs, but he didn’t believe he’d ever become addicted; “I even wanted to use drugs just to prove that I couldn’t get hooked”, he says.

After a couple of years of snorting coke on weekends, his habit seeped into the weekdays in the early 1980s. Clive remembers waking in the middle of the night with nose bleeds. He felt like he had a permanent cold. To remedy this he switched to smoking a cooked form of cocaine known as “crack” that’s even more addictive. His cravings became stronger, yet he still didn’t believe that he was hooked. He was in deep denial. “I still thought that I could stop tomorrow if I wanted to. I thought I was saving my nose when I switched to freebasing. But nothing was more important to me than my next fix.”

By 1982 he began to arrive at recording sessions high and unkempt. Sometimes he hadn’t showered in days. Unlike other less talented artists Clive’s musical brilliance meant that he always had some work. He lost the big studios and big name contracts. But as long as he kept performing, other colleagues in the industry would find him. They would pretend not to see that he had become a junkie, that he was bare-foot and always wore the same clothes.

Unable to help him, and frustrated with his broken promises, his wife left him with their daughter.
Eventually, he lost everything. He smoked away his house and life savings. In 1987 after getting arrested for forging checks he was deported back to Jamaica. By then, after five years of living on the edge, he could finally admit that he was addicted. “I intentionally forged the checks, I knew that I would be arrested and that I would never be allowed back into the US. You know, if I wanted to live much longer I had to get clean. I had to dump the New York music scene. I knew that the cops could make that happen, for good.”

In Jamaica a friend told Clive about Patricia House, a non-profit organisation supported by UNDCP. For four months he struggled to shed his addiction, along with 12 other addicts at Patricia House. He was inspired by roommates who overcame their addictions and was supported through the painful process of withdrawal. With trained counselors he worked on problems in his life. Initially Clive was asked not to leave the centre. When he was allowed out he knew that he would be checked upon his return for signs of drug use. If he broke a rule he would be excluded from the Programme. The rules, support and care were just what Clive needed to help him through the toughest few months of his life.

By the time he left Patricia House his life was back on track. He avoided friends who were part of the drug scene. He was working again. The staff, his family and his former roommate gave him support and he met with other former addicts at Patricia House once a week.

After four months he left clean. That was seven years ago. He hasn’t touched drugs, alcohol or tobacco since. “One beer or cigarette could have me craving crack, I can’t take that risk.”

Eventually, a pure, uncut shipment arrives unsuspecting users may inadvertently overdose and die. Typically, overdoses occur in waves following the arrival of potent shipments into a city.

Contaminated needles and syringes (“works”) compound the problem further. In their desperation to get a fix, injecting drug users may share “works” — and may also share blood-borne diseases such as hepatitis and HIV/AIDS.

Prevention plays an important role in reducing the demand for drugs. The public’s knowledge, attitudes and beliefs influence the success or failure of drug control efforts. Attitudes are formed at a very early age and are influenced by parents, teachers, peers and role models. Education plays an important role but alternatives to taking drugs are equally important. Prevention programmes need to be comprehensive and tailored to the specific needs of the target audience. UNDCP identifies strategies and helps others to implement prevention initiatives that are comprehensive and appropriate.

UNDCP collects information about the effectiveness of different prevention and rehabilitation approaches and tries to determine what will work best in a particular market. No-one knows for sure. Messages that may be appropriate for one target group might not be suitable for another. Scare tactics, such as presenting gruesome photos of overdose victims to frighten young people seldom work; even worse, they can actually encourage

**Photo:** Clive Hunt, now producing records all over the world, hopes that some junkie gets well because of this story.

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**Average amphetamine-type stimulant abuse compared to cocaine and heroin abuse in the 1990s**

Since the mid 1980s the world has faced a wave of synthetic stimulant abuse, with approximately nine times the quantity seized in 1993 than in 1978, equivalent to an average annual increase of 16%.

drug use. UNDCP identifies alternative approaches that are effective in different social and cultural contexts. It shares this information with experts from government and non-governmental organisations and helps to formulate and implement integrated prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and social integration programmes.

UNDCP encourages governments to develop multi-faceted prevention strategies that include alternatives to drug using behaviour, such as drug-free sport, leisure time and recreational activities, and the provision of resources and opportunities to develop life skills to deal with situations that may initiate drug use. It also promotes information campaigns (radio, television, posters, etc), drug education programmes geared for schools, workplace initiatives to combat drugs, and community-based approaches, such as out-reach programmes for street children. A UNDCP demand reduction project in Zimbabwe draws on the support of the local community. "Drug Action Committees" comprised of social workers, police, school teachers, local professionals and young people organise awareness raising meetings and other events to deliver drug prevention messages to the community. In Brazil, UNDCP supports a demand reduction campaign that delivers specific messages to different key groups such as school children, intravenous drug users, sex workers, families and workers.

Another focus of UNDCP is rehabilitation and social integration. Professionals approach drug dependence as a treatable multi-faceted problem which entails both physical and psychological dependence. This defines addiction as a treatable disease which destigmatizes addiction and paves the way for society to try to help rather than punish or ostracize the addict.

The Convention also allows for treatment and rehabilitation programmes in addition to, or as an alternative to conviction or punishment of an offender in minor cases. UNDCP assists governments in drafting appropriate laws, ensuring that the laws are flexible enough to allow for suitable prevention, treatment and rehabilitation alternatives.
Smoking a pipe of opium, harvested from the poppies which grow in the temperate highlands, is a daily ritual for thousands of people in villages across Laos. About one percent of the country’s 4.5 million people are addicted to opium - one of the highest rates in the world.

The cultivation of opium poppy derivative - heroin - is not only of concern to the people of Laos. The region that borders Thailand and Myanmar, referred to as the ‘Golden Triangle’, is one of the world’s major opium sources, producing about 2,000 tonnes of opium per year.

In the area of Palaveck, in Laos, a UNDCP sponsored project has virtually eliminated all opium cultivation. Annual opium production has fallen from more than 3.5 tonnes in 1990 to less than 100 kg in 1995.

A few years ago, even though it was only 88 kilometers north of the capital, Palaveck took three days of difficult travel to reach. It was an isolated area with no roads. Without access or transport to reach markets to sell produce, and with no other means to earn cash, the villagers made a living from growing opium. Without it the villagers would have been without an income. They knew from experience that insufficient income meant food shortages, little or no education, and even though malaria, diarrhea and other sicknesses were rampant, no health care. Opium was the only cash crop available to Palaveck.

Drug traffickers would collect opium on foot so access roads to markets were not needed. Opium has a long shelf-life so it could be dried and stored until collected by the traffickers. It always retained its value ensuring an income for the villagers.

In 1989 when UNDCP, the Lao Government and the villagers embarked upon a project to develop new sources of income, the drug crops were eradicated. Crops with a high profit, such as asparagus and coffee, were introduced. Simple irrigation schemes allowed higher production of rice. New roads provided access to markets. Education that related to the real-life of the people, such as sewing and agriculture, was introduced. Health care was improved and easier access to drinking water was created.

In just the six years since the project’s inception the incidence of malaria (the main cause of disability and death in the area) had been reduced from 48 percent to 4 percent. Vaccination of children, clean water and nutrition programmes have markedly improved the overall level of health. Many of the villagers, especially the women, have developed a variety of income-generating skills. Education, literacy and numeracy levels have improved and a drug rehabilitation programme has weaned more than 50 people from heroin and the number of drug abusers has decreased by 50%.

With roads in place and with the intensification of the agricultural programme, there has been significant expansion in marketing opportunities. Commercial trucks now run between Palaveck and surrounding villages on a daily basis allowing farmers to transport and sell their produce. The increase in economic activity in the area can be seen in the growth of shops and small businesses: from four in 1990 to sixty-four in 1994.

Photo: Since they stopped harvesting opium poppies, Waa Kee Xiong and Gnong Cha Xiong produce silk thread.

Alternative development in the Golden Triangle
Armed tribesmen harvesting opium. Hundreds of tonnes of opium are harvested annually in Afghanistan.
UNDCP helps limit production of two main types of illicit drugs. The first are plant-based, such as the cannabis plant (processed into marijuana and hashish), opium poppy (processed into opium, morphine and heroin) and the coca bush (from which cocaine is extracted). The second category is synthetic drugs, such as amphetamines, stimulants and hallucinogens commonly known as Ecstasy, Ice and LSD, which are manufactured from relatively low-cost and readily available chemicals. A third type of substances that are not manufactured to be used as drugs, but that do produce a “high” — glues, paints, petrol, solvents and other similar household products — are also abused but their widespread legal availability requires that efforts be targeted at limiting consumption rather than production.

Plant-based drugs

The cultivation of illicit crops typically occurs in developing countries, which often lack the resources to monitor and patrol remote areas and long borders. Coca, opium poppy and cannabis are traditional crops grown mainly by peasant farmers. In some areas the local economy has become almost entirely dependent upon illicit drug cultivation.

Around 80 percent of the world’s opium poppy is grown in two countries, Myanmar and Afghanistan. Most of the remainder is grown in other Asian countries, and to a lesser extent in Colombia and Mexico.

As for cocaine, most of it originates in the Andean region of South America. Together, the supplies from Bolivia, Colombia and Peru account for more than 98 percent of the world’s cocaine.

Despite its illegality, growing poppies, coca and cannabis provides some farmers with a basic living; for other farmers, it improves their meager standard of living and ensures economic survival. The allure of drug crops is that they usually yield substantially more revenue than legal crops.

UNDCP projects assist such farmers to find alternative crops and markets which eventually eliminates their dependence on drug crops. These projects often work closely with local communities in remote
Throughout this century drugs have funded some of the world’s fiercest religious and ethnic conflicts. They include armed insurrections and guerrilla campaigns against unpopular governments. In some countries wars began as genuine national uprisings against foreign invasion, but once the invading armies were driven away, competing factions collapsed into vicious fights for territory and resources. This intra-country warfare (which accounts for most of the current conflicts) has been a major factor in the rise in the global supply of illicit drugs. “The warlords are often also drug lords” reports one Interpol official.

Lebanon’s 16 years of war was no exception. Opium and cannabis cultivation in the Bekaa Valley was a prime source of funds for warring factions. In fact, the valley had long been one of the world’s principal centres for growing illegal drugs. After the war began in 1974, illicit cultivation expanded as government authority eroded, peaking in the mid 1980s. At that time the quantities of opium, and particularly cannabis, produced in the valley supplied a substantial portion of the world’s illegal demand.

Like many other drug-growing regions of the world the drug crops were the leading form of income, employing approximately 54,000 people in the valley. The Bekaa is one of the most remote and least developed areas in the country. Characterised by poor infrastructure, insufficient access to potable water, inadequate social and health services and the highest illiteracy rate in the country, the agricultural community was vulnerable to war. For many farmers, the cultivation of illegal crops was the only means of survival.

In 1991 the Government began an eradication campaign to clear the valley of all drug crops. This resulted in a substantial loss of income for the already impoverished farmers because, compared with other crops, illegal drug cultivation is cheaper and easier to maintain, and earns substantially more income.

By 1993, the valley was free of opium poppy and cannabis and the farmers were struggling to subsist by growing lettuce, tomatoes and potatoes, yet were losing money because of the cost of seeds, fertiliser and irrigation. Without some sort of assistance they would have had to eventually revert to clandestinely growing drug crops.

When the Government of Lebanon called upon UNDCP and other international organisations to help them assist the farmers an assessment of the area showed that permanent eradication would only be achieved if the underlying causes of the region’s impoverishment were addressed.

A UNDCP-supported project that began in 1993 and works in close participation with the local people and other partners has successfully addressed many of these issues. Eighty percent of the farmers have received training in crop replacement, irrigation, and marketing. Credit has been provided to farmers who otherwise would not have had access to loans during the establishment of their replacement crops. Marketing cooperatives have been established. More than 165 kilometres of irrigation systems are working again. Six social centres provide social, educational, recreational and first-aid facilities. Training centres for women promote income generation and entrepreneur skills and improve literacy. Overall the
rural areas where the incentives to grow illegal crops are greatest because social and economic conditions in these areas are alarmingly poor. Farmers are given assistance to work themselves out of an economy dependent upon coca or opium poppy. Many peasants are willing to harvest legal crops if their basic survival is ensured, even though their earnings are unlikely to match drug crops. Perhaps most importantly, the farmers want to rid themselves of their dependence on a single crop that links them to violent drug trafficking intermediaries, and exposes them to law enforcement measures that often destroy their crops, not always with compensation. Furthermore, many growers are tired of living under the fear and uncertainties of growing drug crops that place their lives and their livelihood at risk.

UNDCP assistance is conditional upon some type of commitment from recipient governments, communities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to prevent, reduce and eventually eliminate illicit cultivation, processing, trafficking and abuse in project areas.

Specialized crops introduced with the assistance of UNDCP projects have earned about 70-80 percent of the price a farmer could earn from a drug-crop. UNDCP initiatives often offer much broader assistance than simply providing seeds for an alternative crop. A comprehensive alternative development project will offer farmers technical expertise in selecting, harvesting, processing and marketing substitute crops. In addition, UNDCP projects

Photo: One of the twelve training centres for women which are designed to improve literacy and income generating skills.

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Estimated percentage of global cultivation eradicated, 1987 – 1994

Eradication of illicitly cultivated crops can be done by mechanical destruction (slashing or uprooting); by burning; by applying chemical herbicides or by biological elimination.

Source: Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Crops from which drugs are extracted and appropriate strategies for their reduction, Report of the Secretariat, United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1 March 1996.
often complement the work of others in the overall economic improvement of a country or region by developing its infrastructure. For instance, it has helped communities build roads, irrigation channels, develop electrification projects, obtain clean drinking water supplies, and it has assisted in the development of health centres and social service programmes.

UNDCP recognizes that no single approach to alternative development is suitable for all countries. Even within a country, each region needs a strategy carefully tailored to fit its legal, economic and cultural norms. Local community support and active participation in the implementation of a strategy are prerequisites for success.

One UNDCP supported project is the development of alternative crops in the Andes region of Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, where farmers live in poverty and the density of drug crops is amongst the highest in the world. Coca crops have been replaced with coffee, tea, palm oil, palm hearts, essential oils, rubber and fruit trees. In some areas, industrial processing plants were established to process food. The project also developed complementary services such as health care, clean water supply systems, basic sanitation, and informal basic education. Land reform was needed because farmers that did not own the land would not invest in crops that would not yield immediate income (such as fruit trees that do not mature for several years). The governments also supported projects by providing credit for agricultural production, storage and marketing facilities and road improvements to reduce the cost of transporting produce to the markets. Whenever feasible, UNDCP has invested in projects to protect and rehabilitate vegetation and ecosystems that are threatened or have been harmed by illicit crop production.

In another project in Thailand opium production has been reduced from 150 tonnes in 1975 to 17 tonnes in 1994. The authorities have successfully substituted crops with lychees and cabbages. Roads have been built to open up the growing regions which are in remote parts of northern Thailand, and new schools and health care facilities are helping to integrate the marginalised people of these isolated areas. Similar projects are under way in Laos and Myanmar, in the opium-growing Dir district of Pakistan, and in the Chapare region of Bolivia, and in Peru and Colombia.

The international conventions identify what measures governments should take, both individually and collectively, to tackle the illicit cultivation of plant-based drugs and the production of illicit drugs from them. Both the 1961 and 1988 Conventions require governments to make the production of illicit drugs a criminal offence. UNDCP helps governments to draft laws to ensure their compliance with the Conventions and also to provide for those cases where peasant farmers may rely upon illicit cultivation for their livelihoods. In those cases the sanctions for growing illicit drugs

“Junk” is the ideal product ... the ultimate merchandise, no sales talk necessary. The client will crawl through a sewer and beg to buy.

– William Burroughs, Naked Lunch
should be appropriate to the situation.

After collecting the harvest from the farmers, drug traffickers require certain chemicals, such as acetic anhydride, sulphuric acid and acetone, to process cocaine and heroin. Since those chemicals are common substances, manufactured in many countries, and have many legitimate industrial uses, it is impossible to ban them outright. However these, along with the chemicals used in the manufacture of synthetic drugs, should be closely monitored.

**Synthetic Drugs**

One of the most striking global trends in recent years has been the increase in production and consumption of synthetic drugs, including "designer" drugs, which are manufactured from a mixture of chemicals. During the 1990s, the growth rates of the production and trafficking of synthetic drugs has surpassed those of cocaine and heroin, and consumption has outstripped that of traditional drugs in an increasing number of countries. The principle synthetic drugs are the amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) that include the widely abused substances such as methamphetamine (Ice), MDMA (Ecstasy) and LSD. A multitude of inexpensive chemicals are widely and often legally available because they are used in many industrial processes. Additionally, the drugs can be synthesized in many simple ways; special skills are often not required, information about the chemical formula is readily available (for example on the internet), and the equipment needed is found in most kitchens.

Because clandestine manufacture is possible virtually anywhere, production usually takes place very close to the consumer, in the region or country that the drugs are produced. This minimizes trafficking and decreases the risk of detection. In contrast to localized outbreaks of abuse in distinct countries in the past, synthetic drugs are now consumed in practically every region of the world.

In an effort to prevent the diversion of chemicals from legitimate commerce into clandestine drug laboratories, a system of controls was devised and has been put in force under the 1988 Convention. Under the Convention, countries commit themselves to monitor the manufacture and movement of a number of chemicals frequently used in the illicit drug trade.

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), a panel of independent experts, monitors government compliance with the provisions of the international drug control treaties and assesses which chemicals used in the manufacture of all (both plant-based and synthetic) drugs should come under international control.

When a substance is placed under control, making diversions more difficult, it is often replaced by another, sometimes with only a slightly modified chemical structure, that serves a similar function but.
In South Africa they're called 'Malapipe', meaning 'those who sleep in the drainpipes'. In Tanzania they are called 'Changudooa' after the tiny, useless fish that fishermen throw back into the sea. They are also called thieves, pests and hoodlums. Everywhere they are disliked and abused. They are street children.

Ten year old Paco from Ecuador is sometimes called *pajaro frutero* meaning 'fruitbird'. He works as a professional shoe-shiner and is proud of his trade. He needs at least five clients in the morning if he is to buy lunch and another five if he is to eat dinner. If he can't make that quota he'll go hungry. Such is life for Paco and the 100 million girls and boys who live and work in the streets of the world's cities.

Paco fled abuse and neglect at home to find that the streets were just as cruel. Often hungry and cold, without the love and care of a family, Paco and his friends were frequently abused by adults and authority figures. At night they would sleep on the cold, concrete floor of the local bus terminal where the lights and movement of people provided some protection. Frequently the police would round up the boys to remove them from the terminal and sometimes they would spend the night in the lock-up. But they always returned, being more concerned with survival than a clash with the police.

One night, several years ago, Sgt. Luis Bellolio, a local policeman who was removing homeless and vagrants from the terminal, took some young boys to the lock-up. Rounding up the boys was just part of his nightly routine. But that particular night he witnessed a small boy slip into convulsions at the police lock-up. Deprived of the glue he was addicted to sniffing, the boy was in withdrawal. That was when Bellolio realized that he needed to get involved.

"Drugs are a survival strategy," Bellolio explains. "The glue numbs the hunger pains and takes away the cold. The kids have no idea that it's poisoning them. When they're high from the fumes they forget about their pains, fears, and the cold. However, it also makes them more vulnerable to street abuse such as beatings, robbery and sexual exploitation."

Bellolio began working with the Salesian Project, an organisation that assists street kids. Now instead of locking the children away for the night the police turn them over to the shelter which, among other things, teaches the boys about the dangers of drugs and sniffing glue. Paco, one of the lucky ones, was taken to the shelter by Bellolio.

The Salesian Project provides food, clothes, education and health services to the boys. A warm bed and dinner at the shelter solves many of their immediate problems. Paco and his friends are now in the first stage of the Project's programme where they continue to work in the streets by day and return to the shelter for safety at night. The workers at the Project will try to reunite some of the boys with their families if that is appropriate. If not the boys will be encouraged to give up street life and live with other children in a Salesian Centre and complete school.

However, keeping the boys off the street isn't easy. Most have been the victims of abuse both at home and as runaways. Some are addicted to glue before they reach the Centre. Often suspicious of authority figures the boys do not readily accept advice or assistance. The street workers can find them, but to
reach them and to win their trust is much more difficult, requiring the skills of highly trained street workers. After a 1992 study found that most of Ecuador’s street workers had less than one year of practical experience, UNDCP began supporting a street educators’ training programme (run by CECAFEC, the Ecuadorian Centre for the training of street educators) which emphasises drug abuse prevention. Research shows that empathy with the children and building personal connections with them is crucial for their recovery. Focusing on the anti-social or self-destructive aspects of drugs has proven to alienate street children. Fear tactics rarely work. Street workers must understand why the children accept the risks associated with drugs and must respect their needs and desires. Only then can they teach them of the dangers of sniffing glue: brain-damage, reduced coordination, harm to their internal organs and even death.

Bellolio, who still works as a policeman in Guayaquil, is one of the 650 people, most of whom are street educators, who have benefited from UNDCP street worker training. “They’re doing their best to take care of themselves. That’s why they get high. They just want to feel good,” he says. “We’re often the only adult figure in the kid’s lives who isn’t out to exploit them.”

which is not (yet) regulated. Such substitute substances are called "designer" drugs — they are designed to produce similar effects and at the same time to slip through loopholes in the law. Substance by substance control is an endless contest. UNDCP’s model legislation and advice to Governments is to draft regulations that can be quickly adapted to include a new substance within a matter of days without having to amend legislation. Under this model legislation a Minister of Health can add a new substance (with similar abuse potential) to a regulated list without further approval procedures. Some countries, such as the UK, have also successfully experimented with generic legislation which puts a defined molecule and all its possible variants automatically under control unless it is exempted.
A caravan of mules moving opium through the mountains of Afghanistan
Trafficking, the link between drug production and consumption, is the most lucrative stage of the drug business. About 90 percent of the profit is made at this step of the drug transaction. For example, one gram of pure cocaine retails for about $4 in Colombia; its final retail price in the United States is between $60 and $300. Almost all of this profit is made inside the country where the drug will be consumed, therefore most of the drug industry’s profits are made in the national distribution networks of the developed countries.

The amount of money generated by drug sales is enormous. For example, the 108 tonnes of cocaine seized in the United States in 1993 had a street value of $10 billion - $20 billion, greater than the individual gross national products of more than half of the countries in the world. The cocaine that is estimated to have reached the streets in the United States that year had a value in excess of $30 billion.

Traffickers specialize in finding the path of least resistance. They move drugs from producers to consumers and move drug money from country to country until it reaches its final destination. En route, the drugs and the money frequently travel through many countries. If one country develops a strong coordinated strategy to combat trafficking, the traffickers may then move to another country or develop more sophisticated smuggling techniques that elude the tighter controls.

As a consequence the routes and smuggling techniques used to transport drugs from the countries of origin to consumer countries are constantly changing, depending upon what routes the smugglers perceive are safest. The routes and techniques vary according to the drug type, country of origin, and the location and size of consumer markets. Most new routes are characterised by a subsequent increase in related drug-abuse in the countries along their paths.

Western Europe and the United States are the two principal destinations for international trafficking because they have the largest and most profitable consumer markets. While drug users in both markets consume most types of drugs, Western Europe is the principal consumer market for international heroin.

Price of heroin as it moves from the Golden Crescent into the consumer markets of Western Europe in the 1990s.

The approximate price of one kilogram of heroin in the producer country is negligible compared to the prices it reaches as it passes through the trafficking networks.

* Data does not include trafficking profits made due to dilutions of heroin (often it is diluted by mixing it with another substance of the same colour, such as milk powder). Actual profits in consumer countries are thus still higher.

Source: Economic and Social Consequences of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (Technical Series, UNDCP/TS. 6)
Making contact: reaching street kids with cartoons

When Canadian street worker Peter Dalglish worked with a group of street kids in Sudan in 1985 he showed them an old “Tom and Jerry” cartoon. Captivated with the images they’d never seen before the kids begged to see it again, and again, and again. That afternoon, Dalglish uncovered a powerful outreach tool: cartoons.

A year later when Dalglish returned home to Canada he founded a non-profit organisation, ‘Street Kids International’, and began setting up a cartoon project that would change the face of street outreach. He sought the expertise of the Academy Award winning filmmaking team of Derek Lamb and Kai Pindal.

Their research took them to the streets of Mexican and Guatemalan cities where they lived, ate and slept with street kids for three months. Their goal: to discover the kids’ heroes, why the kids get high and what alternatives they might have. They watched kids work the streets in the daily struggle to survive. They watched them sell trinkets, steal from vendors, and engage in street fights. And in the process, they came to understand why these kids like to get high.

They also discovered that the kids admired the same three “heroes” the world over: the hardened crime-fighting movie warriors, Rambo and Bruce Lee, topped the list, followed by President Ronald Reagan who was the United States President at the time. To vulnerable street kids these powerful figures, who could protect themselves and their friends, were superheroes.

Dalglish knew that street kids sometimes pooled their money to see an action film. They’d send the best storyteller to the movie so he could return to tell them the story, complete with demonstrations of street fights and karate chops. However, it wasn’t until Dalglish saw the children’s captivation with cartoons — which they’d never seen before — that he realised that these celluloid characters were the most powerful medium to reach street kids, who are highly sceptical of “helpers”.

Following their visit to Central America, Lamb and his team produced two cartoons. “Goldtooth”, a cartoon that teaches kids about the dangers of substance abuse, deals with the broad themes of decision-making, trust and friendship. The hero “Karate” (with traits similar to Bruce Lee and Rambo) is a former street kid who used drugs as a child and decided, after a series of devastating events, to stop. The cartoon’s villain “Goldtooth” encourages the kids to use drugs. Because Karate is a former street child the kids identify closely with him. Now grown-up and strong (after deciding he’d never use drugs again) Karate rescues kids in danger from villains and drug peddling thugs.

Street children were the most important consultants on the project, both in the story development phase and in the test-marketing phase which was carried out in ten countries. A significant element of this video is that it not only teaches street kids what they need to know, but that it entertains them. The kids can relate to the cartoon’s tough hero. And, most importantly, he doesn’t preach or lecture the children (a sure turnoff), but rather shows them a different way to deal with their problems.

An outreach tool

The cartoon is designed to be used by outreach workers as a tool to stimulate a dialogue with street kids. It is also designed to capture the kids and deliver a message. And, judging by its results, it’s a valuable starting point. After viewing the video, street kids often talk animatedly, comparing the video scenes to their lives on the street and their drug use. This gives street workers the opportunity to discuss...
the dangers of substance abuse and to present alternative ways of dealing with problems.

UNDCP supports training workshops for street workers in Asia and Eastern Europe which focus on how to use the video as a discussion tool (and not as a stand-alone educational video) to engage hard-to-reach youth in discussions about their hopes, experiences and decision-making processes. Street workers learn how to best approach children, and are taught useful techniques such as role-playing scenes from the video. One technique that works well is stopping the video at key points to ask the children how they would respond in the same situation.

Now being shown in over 100 countries in 10 different languages the cartoon has been extremely successful in connecting with street children. “Goldtooth is a favorite” says Jos Luis Goyes, a street worker in Ecuador. “The kids want to see it over and over, day after day. Sometimes we start with 10 children, the next day 15, then 20, and some days the room overflows with kids. It helps them learn different ways of dealing with a lot of their fears related to living on the street. And best of all, the kids love it.” For more information or orders, contact: Street Kids International 398 Adelaide St. W. Suite 1000 Toronto, Ontario, Canada. MTV 157 Tel:1-416-5048994 Fax:1-416-5048977 Email: ski@streetkids.org Web site: www.streetkids.org/~ski

in trafficking and the United States is the principal market for cocaine. In large part this is a result of location and trafficking routes; most heroin originates close to Europe in south-west Asia while virtually all cocaine originates in Latin America.

Drug routes to the US: The largest consumer market for cocaine is the United States. Since most cocaine is produced in South America it is often transported through Mexico and across the United States-Mexico border by land. Otherwise it is smuggled by air and sea from producer countries in South America directly to the United States or via the Caribbean or South American countries. Heroin entering the United States that originates in south-east Asia travels through Asia until it is smuggled aboard ships or aircraft. Heroin originating in Latin America and the Caribbean travels north to the United States along cocaine routes. Most synthetic drugs are manufactured domestically or within the region.

Drug routes to Europe: Heroin, which generates most of Europe’s drug-related crime and medical problems, originates primarily in Asia. The Balkan route through Turkey is a traditional route, however newer routes have recently opened up through the Commonwealth of Independent States; the diversification and combinations of these two routes are the main pipelines. Cocaine that reaches Europe is usually concealed in cargo ships transported from Latin America which often transit the Caribbean. However, new "less suspicious" rou-
tes through African ports have recently developed. As for synthetic drugs, Europe's supply is manufactured within Europe, mostly in the Netherlands, Belgium, and more recently, Poland and other former Eastern Bloc countries.

Staying one step ahead of the authorities, drug traffickers frequently change their routes, depending upon where the illicit cargo is least likely to be intercepted. A recent display of the drug barons' capacity to adapt was apparent in Europe. Ever since the borders between Eastern and Western Europe opened to free trade at the end of the 1980s, drug enforcement officials have noticed a sharp increase in drug smuggling in the region. Between 1984 and 1994, during which inter-European trade barriers were sharply reduced, European seizures of heroin increased nearly 700 percent.

Traffickers minimise risks by dividing large transactions into smaller shipments and by combining modes of transport via cars, trains, trucks, ships and planes.

In an effort to outsmart the authorities, traffickers have become increasingly sophisticated. On the border between Texas and Mexico traffickers use night-vision devices, satellite global positioning systems and walkie-talkies, while scouts patrol the area with assault rifles and radio scanners. In 1996 the United States border patrol reported 24 armed encounters with traffickers. A 1,467-foot tunnel dug under the United States—Mexico border attests to the lengths the traffickers will go. It was an elegant solution for the smugglers: they could carry drugs into the United States and cash into Mexico. However, before it was discovered most of the engineers and workers employed in its construction were reportedly murdered to prevent a leak to the authorities. Drug traffickers in the Golden Crescent protect their convoys with AK-47 assault rifles, machine guns mounted on vehicles and RPG-7 rocket launchers. In the Caribbean, traffickers use the satellite global positioning system to locate drug drops made at sea. Just recently, drug agents discovered an inventive scheme whereby Colombian drug lords planned to purchase a submarine from the Russian Mafia to transport drugs around the world underwater thereby evading the authorities altogether.

Smugglers are just as imaginative when hiding drugs in preparation for a border crossing. There are endless methods for hiding drugs. Some of the most popular are false floors in transport vehicles, secret luggage compartments and liquids (in which the drugs are dissolved). Increasing numbers of people act as human vessels, swallowing pellets of cocaine and heroin before traveling across borders. These "body packers" disgorge their packages upon arrival at their destinations. The average "swallower" carries about one kilogram of heroin in up to 100 pellets, which has a street value of up to a half a million dollars in the United States or Europe. Others undergo surgery to implant

“If you think dope is for kicks and thrills, you’re out of your mind. There are more kicks to be had in a good case of paralytic polio or by living in an iron lung. If you think you need stuff to play music or sing, you’re crazy. It can fix you so you can’t play nothing.”

– Billy Holiday, in Lady Sings the Blues (with William Duffy)
## Major organised crime groups

<table>
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<th>Major organised crime group</th>
<th>Major Activities</th>
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| Cocaine Cartels                      | Headquartered mainly in Colombia and Mexico, the cocaine cartels manage the entire cycle of cocaine from production to distribution around the world. | The cartels employ individuals in a rigid pyramid structure, with heads of various families in control of geographic areas gathered together as loose business coalitions. Their objective is to maximize profit. | Cosa Nostra  
La Cosa Nostra  
Triads  
Yakuza |
| Triads                               | The activities of the Triads are extremely diversified. They cover drugs, money lending, gambling, racketeering, service sector investment, money laundering and running of clandestine immigration systems. | The Triads employ upwards of 170,000 persons in a fairly traditional pyramid structure headed by a Boss, Underboss, and Recruiting boss. The majority of the organisation is made up of ‘soldiers’. Known Triads are: ‘Sun Yee On’ Hong Kong, ‘14K’ Hong Kong, ‘United Bamboo’ Taiwan Province of China, ‘Four-Seas Band’ Taiwan, and ‘Great Circle’ China. | The Triads are pervasive and are known to be active throughout Asia, Europe and the USA although their main activities center around Hong Kong, Myanmar, Taiwan Province of China, The Philippines and the USA. |
| Yakuza                               | The Yakuza are involved in all types of crime in Japan including racketeering, business fraud, drugs, prostitution and pornography. Within the Asian drugs scene they are very active in trafficking methamphetamine. | There are approximately 60,000 full time Yakuza and 25,000 associates. The organisational structure is extremely complex and involves thousands of small gangs, and many families. | Yakuza are known to have links to organised crime in the USA, Colombia, Germany, China and the CIS. |
| Cosa Nostra                          | Perhaps the best known organised crime group, Cosa Nostra has become mainly involved in international drug trafficking, serving as a clearing house for international agreements and drug routes. It also services the financial and laundering needs of many smaller crime groups. Other activities include extortion, loan sharking and skimming public works contracts. | A vertical organisation of roughly 5,000 members in regional and provisional commissions. | Based in the Italian island Sicily, Cosa Nostra has established networks of affiliates in every continent. It has ties with all of the major drug trafficking organisations including the cartels La Cosa Nostra, and Mafia groups headquartered in the former Soviet Union. |
| La Cosa Nostra (New York)            | La Cosa Nostra is involved in drug trafficking, illegal gambling, arms trafficking, prostitution, extortion, skimming public and private works contracts, usury, business activities, including construction and food retailing, and influencing unions, mainly in the USA. | The organization comprises 3,000 individuals, ‘soldiers’ in 25 families, five of which are based in New York and which hold the greatest prestige and influence. | The primary connections of La Cosa Nostra are the cocaine cartels and the Costa Nostra, and Mafias headquartered in the former Soviet Union. |
| Mafia groups (headquartered in the former Eastern Bloc) | Trafficking in drugs, raw materials, nuclear materials, and weapons. Also involved in money laundering, white slavery, extortion, currency smuggling and counterfeiting. | Three million members in 5,700 gangs of which at least 200 have highly sophisticated structures with dealing in 29 countries. | Groups in the USA, the cocaine cartels and the Costa Nostra. |

An ancient route, a new and dangerous trade

Centuries ago European demand for Asian products, especially silk, created a famous trading corridor from Asia to Western Europe – the Old Silk Road – which brought prosperity and wealth to those along its trail. Today, the same routes are used but the demand is new and the result is only grief and suffering. The products: opium and heroin.

For the countries of destination in Western Europe heroin is the biggest source of drug-related crime and health problems. For the countries along the way an increase in drugs passing through means an increase in spillage; all countries on the trail report increased drug abuse and addiction.

And it doesn’t end there. Cities along the trail have become rife with drug-related crimes and criminal gangs. Law enforcement officials have been unable to control the growth in corruption and violence. The situation not only undermines law and order, in some countries it is affecting political, economic and social stability.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union. Located between the world’s largest opium supply sources and the lucrative retail markets in Western Europe their geographic location has left them vulnerable. Geography combined with the sudden opening of borders and the move to market economies has far out-paced the ability of governments to control the flow of goods and people. Drug dealers enjoy easy pickings. Inadequate controls at airports, seaports and borders allow international drug traffickers to develop new supply routes and spawn smuggling rings.

The smugglers, running illicit narcotics from Asia via airplane, train, trucks, cars, motorcycles, and donkeys, will choose from numerous supply routes to the West. One main route skirts the southern border of what was formerly the Soviet Union, passing through Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, Russia and the Ukraine before entering Europe via Slovakia or Hungary. Another route passes through Moscow where it branches before entering Europe at many different points. A third new route will take you through St. Petersburg before entering Europe via the Nordic countries or after a boat journey to Germany. And another route will take you through Tajikistan and Turkmenistan to Turkey where it picks up the Balkan route.
The borders are new. Until 1991 many of these countries were part of the Soviet Union. Today they are independent countries, forced to defend long borders and address new problems.

The authorities are overwhelmed. “We have no equipment or money” reports one border control agent who was echoing an often-heard complaint. Customs control is a hut at the side of the road. A plank of wood, propped against an empty oil drum juts across the road, indicating to drivers that they should stop. There are no computers, no telephones and no power. “Take our radios, for instance, they don’t work. Our cars don’t go and we don’t have money for repairs.” To find hidden drugs he relies heavily on intuition and luck.

When Governments in the region requested assistance to combat the trafficking epidemic UNDCP first developed a regional strategy and brokered agreements to ensure that countries were cooperating fully with each other at both the strategic and operational levels.

A range of joint projects are now being supported by UNDCP. More than 2,000 law enforcement and customs officials have participated in training courses. New legislation has been passed or presented for approval to parliaments in more than a dozen countries. Laboratory, drug detection, surveillance and communications equipment worth more than $7 million has been provided.

One UNDCP project promotes “controlled deliveries” where detected drug shipments are allowed to proceed while being monitored closely by the authorities, sometimes through a series of countries. Instead of simply arresting couriers and seizing single shipments, controlled deliveries lead to the capture of more senior members of the smuggling ring and the seizure of greater quantities of drugs once it reaches its point of destination.

Another project, on information exchange between customs and police in different countries identifies new smuggling methods and routes. Information about smuggling operations, such as the nationality of couriers, the types of transport used and routes followed are pooled and analyzed. When armed with this information border control agents focus their efforts on those more likely to be traffickers.

Some positive results have been seen, particularly in the increase in drug seizures. However, the organisation and sophistication of international traffickers is not yet being matched by drug control efforts which must improve if they are to be commensurate with those of the traffickers.

Photo: Heroin trafficking through countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has increased at alarming levels since the collapse of the communist regime.

Only a minute portion of the heroin profits goes to the farmers.
packages under their skin for removal once they reach their destination. Dogs and other animals are also used for surgical implants.

**How UNDCP helps**

UNDCP assistance to prevent trafficking takes four forms: capacity building, training, equipment, and cross-border cooperation.

First, UNDCP provides expert advice, legal assistance and model approaches to governments to enhance their drug enforcement services. For example, even where there is strong political will, the drafting, approving and implementing of a comprehensive set of laws can be extremely complicated. Hence, many governments turn to UNDCP for its expert help. In assisting countries to draft appropriate legislation UNDCP ensures that the trafficking of drugs is a criminal offence and that relevant laws give strong powers to the police, customs and the judiciary (subject to appropriate checks and balances) to ensure that those systems have the authority to deal effectively with the drug problem.

The final outcome of a drug trafficking prosecution in court relies upon the results of laboratory analysis of the illicit drug. Trained professionals and proven methodologies are necessary to ensure the accuracy of the laboratory’s results. However in a large number of developing countries, specialized laboratories and skilled personnel are not available. Accordingly the UNDCP drug laboratory staff provides analysis-training and equipment to national drug testing laboratories to enable them to improve their drug testing abilities and to provide internationally acceptable data that can be used in courtrooms.

Second, UNDCP is often asked to provide training. UNDCP-supported projects provide training in drug identification, methods of use, and investigation techniques to law enforcement personnel. Judges and prosecutors also receive training in international drug control issues and in the implementation of new legislation, particularly complex legislation such as asset forfeiture. Recently, for example, in a former Soviet State, the head of the customs department attended a training programme that highlighted the use of kerosene in the production of cocaine. During the training, he realised that the approval he had given to numerous requests to export thousands of tonnes of kerosene to Colombia was most likely for this purpose.

Third, UNDCP provides equipment for drug identification, detection, surveillance, communications and transport to police, customs and coast guards. Drug identification, for example, presents a challenge to law enforcement bodies. Suspicious shipments encountered at borders or on the streets necessitate rapid, simple and reliable identification. This can be especially difficult at remote frontier crossings that are far away from well-equipped forensic narcotics laboratories. To address this problem the UNDCP laboratory developed a low-cost, portable

*Opium is often transported in the remote tribal areas of Pakistan’s border region with Afghanistan using camels as pictured here.*
rapid-identification kit to assist law enforcement personnel. Its simple step-by-step instructions make testing easy. Since its development in 1994 more than 7,000 kits have been distributed to over 130 countries.

Fourth, at the regional level UNDCP plays an important role promoting cross-border cooperation between neighbouring countries' drug control activities. Because drug traffickers often cross several countries en route to their final destination, a coordinated response yields more success than independent efforts. Coordination agreements have been established among countries in the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia, and Europe. Typically these agreements provide the basis for governments to exchange information, strengthen law enforcement capacities and cooperate closely at border controls utilizing harmonized operational approaches and legal structures. UNDCP assistance to such regional programmes also includes capacity building, training and the provision of equipment.

Because trafficking is mainly transnational in nature, UNDCP also supports information sharing and resource pooling to enhance each nation's efforts. UNDCP collaborates with Interpol and the World Customs Organisation along with regional and national law enforcement bodies in the analysis of the characteristics of couriers, modes of transportation, quantities of drugs being trafficked and the ever-changing drug trafficking routes. Called "profiling", this information on the nature and patterns of trafficking trends assist governments in the development and implementation of national and regional strategies. These strategies can help border control and customs agents focus their efforts on likely traffickers.

For example, a study of couriers arrested at European airports in the early 1990s showed that Colombian, German and West African nationals comprised the majority of cocaine couriers to Europe and, consequently, law enforcement officers focused more attention on those nationals.

UNDCP also funds computerized intelligence systems which enable enforcement agencies to share information on suspected shipments and to carry out joint operations, for example, to track "controlled deliveries". Instead of arresting traffickers and seizing their drugs, the traffickers are sometimes allowed to proceed on their journey and deliver the shipment unaware that their movements are being monitored closely by the authorities. The aim of this technique is to capture the organisers and seize greater quantities of drugs, instead of simply arresting a courier and a single shipment.

When a controlled delivery crosses many frontiers (which is often the case) authorities from each country must work together to maintain continuous surveillance. As simple as it may appear, it is sometimes very difficult to achieve. Problems begin when the law of a country states that upon detection drugs must be confiscated. Even when appropriate laws are in place it
Six months ago, at a major airport in the UK, customs officials were baffled. They had repeatedly searched for, but couldn’t find, hidden drugs in a solid Samsonite® suitcase. Yet each time they took their search dog near the case it would bark, indicating that it had detected the scent of a drug. An x-ray showed that there were no hidden compartments. So what scent could the dog be onto? After testing in a laboratory they discovered that the case was an imitation – it had been moulded from solidified heroin paste.

On another occasion the search dogs had clearly picked up a scent in some cardboard boxes. Yet again, after much searching, the customs officials couldn’t find any drugs. After laboratory analysis they discovered that cocaine had been mixed with the paste used to glue the card that made up the sides of the boxes.

In more and more cases search dogs locate drugs where other search techniques fail. Dogs identified that a “marble” statue was, in fact, plastic that had been streaked with cocaine. They can sniff out drugs that are dissolved in alcohol or perfume. In one case they detected a scent in clothes that a smuggler was wearing while passing through a check-point. The clothes had been washed in cocaine which the smuggler had planned to rinse out once he’d reached his destination.

“As drug smugglers become more sophisticated, search dogs have become more valuable in detecting drugs”, says Bob Warren, a specialist dog-trainer based in the UK. “Before, smugglers used to hide drugs inside stuffed toys, inside beads that make up a necklace, and in their clothes. Now they make the drugs look like the stuffing, the beads themselves are made from a hardened form of a drug and some smugglers will even swallow drug-filled condoms, risking death if one of them should burst. But none of these camouflages makes a difference to the dogs – they can even pick up a scent from a swallower”, he added. Dogs are not only used to detect drugs that are well camouflaged, but also to identify drugs that are well hidden, which often occurs when a great quantity of goods are being moved through a check point making detection by customs officials difficult.

One example of this is the major international seaport in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Each week more than a thousand large container ships dock to load and unload their cargo. When the Ecuadorian government asked for assistance at the port, UNDCP recommended search dogs because of their superior sense of smell. The port was a smugglers haven: large quantities of drugs could easily be hidden in containers filled with banana-filled crates or sacks of coffee.

Dogs were selected after being screened for health, strength and agility, tolerance toward people and other dogs, and strong hunting instincts. Search dog training is a grueling six-month program that not only trains top dogs in the drug sniffing business but also weeds out unsuitable candidates. The dogs are introduced to the drug-scents by concealing drugs inside objects which are thrown by a handler. They are rewarded for retrieving them, thus instilling the connection between the scent of drugs and a reward.

The game of retrieving the thrown object then develops into a hide-and-seek game in progressively lar-
is still difficult to coordinate the relevant authorities, such as border control, national and state police and coast guards, within each country to ensure that continuous surveillance is maintained.

** Trafficking in chemicals **

Drugs are not the only substances trafficked. Chemical substances needed to manufacture synthetic drugs and to process cocaine and heroin are also trafficked, but in a completely different manner. Since drug processing requires large quantities of chemicals (usually measured by the tonne) these large supplies cannot be easily hidden or smuggled. To contend with these factors, traffickers slip their products through customs channels with false labels, and by disguising their sources, destinations and purpose.

In an attempt to prevent the diversion of chemicals from legitimate commerce into the illicit drug trade, countries have agreed (under the 1988 Convention) to monitor the domestic and international movements of certain chemicals. Diversions and attempted diversions from licit commerce to the illicit market must be reported to the INCB. Under the provisions of the 1988 Convention, when authorities believe that chemicals may be destined for use in illicit drug manufacture, they can seize a shipment. Alternatively, in cooperation with law enforcement authorities, the shipment may be allowed to proceed as a "controlled delivery". Many governments are now sharing infor-
Cocaine: Production, seizures, and availability for consumption

Heroin and morphine: Production, seizures and availability for consumption

Only estimates on illicit drug production are available. These are based on estimates of land under cultivation and yields. Different methodologies, assumptions, and political interests can lead to different estimates. Nevertheless, principal trends and magnitudes can be validated through other indicators such as drug seizures, changes in demand and drug prices.

Sources: Annual reports questionnaires received by the Secretary-General; World Customs Organization; International Criminal Police Organization; and government sources.
mation to systematically check the legitimacy of shipments involving chemicals listed under the 1988 Convention and also sharing information on suspicious cases. Shipments of illicit drugs found at a border will be seized, however chemicals found at a border may be part of legitimate trade, so through the rapid exchange of information on chemicals and their intended use, often channeled through the Board, has proven to be the most effective means of preventing chemicals from being diverted from international trade.

Despite the complexity of trafficking routes and efforts by drug criminals to falsify shipping documents and conceal the intended use of chemicals, international cooperation in monitoring the trafficking of chemicals has led to significant seizures.

In 1996 the Board was able to identify previously unknown routes and transshipment points for diverted acetic anhydride, a chemical used in the production of heroin. Cooperation by countries led to the identification of attempts to divert at least 300 metric tonnes of acetic anhydride — enough to make approximately one billion street doses of heroin.

**Fighting money laundering**

The black money that is generated by drug deals can be as difficult to handle as the drugs themselves. Money is heavy and lots of money in small denominations is difficult to hide. Because it’s cumbersome to move large quantities of cash around the world, global drug cartels and drug kingpins have become experts at money laundering. Their tactics include deviously introducing drug money into the legitimate financial system and moving it about until it appears washed and clean.

Fighting money laundering is another method used to combat drug-trafficking. If the drug profits can be seized at the point in which they enter the financial system, the traffickers would be significantly hurt. The most important step is to stop drug money from entering the international banking system. After that, it is often too late.

Money launderers usually make an initial deposit to a bank in a country that will not scrutinize the transaction. This deposit is the single most important step, where it is most directly tied to the illegal source and therefore could be seized.

The drug dealers’ succeeding steps involve transferring the money to a series of other banks and countries, each not suspicious of the source, until the money has reached its destination. The series of transactions — called layering — creates a complex paper trail so that when it reaches its final destination it is difficult to trace and appears legitimate.

Because the financial networks of drug cartels are highly vulnerable at the point where the first deposit is made, some countries have introduced legislation that requires banks to report cash transactions that exceed a certain amount (usually about $10,000) and increasing numbers of

“Money laundering is now an extremely lucrative criminal enterprise in its own right. The Treasury’s investigations have uncovered members of an emerging criminal class — professional money launderers who aid and abet other criminals through financial activities. These individuals hardly fit the stereotype of an underworld criminal. This has resulted in the development of a professional criminal class of money launderers which includes accountants, bankers and lawyers. They need not become involved with the underlying criminal activity except to conceal and transfer the proceeds that result from it.”

— United States Senate Committee on Government Affairs
Haniph casts a glazed, vacant look in your direction. He is groggy and sick. But at least he can remember his name. Today is day four of his detoxification and he can’t think straight enough to lie. Ask any “dry” heroin addict when they felt at their lowest ebb and they will tell you between day three and day five. This is when the vomiting, diarrhea, hallucinations and shivers are at their worst. It will take another ten days before the process is over, and even then Haniph will be far from cured. Leave him alone at this stage and he is almost certain to wind up back in the embrace of the heroin he has been smoking for 10 years. But this time he has a chance. His mother who works as a nurse in Washington DC has sent back money to pay for his detoxification, and he has been taken by one of his 10 children to a place called “Nai-Zindagi” — “new life” — one of fewer than 200 treatment and rehabilitation centres in the whole of Pakistan. Haniph is indeed a lucky man.

The scale of his good fortune is staggering. With a population only twice as large as Pakistan’s, the United States boasts well over 10,000 treatment and rehabilitation centres. If the estimate of 1.5 million heroin addicts is true for Pakistan’s 140 million people, the country has one of the highest heroin addict populations in the world — both in actual numbers and as a percentage of the total population. To deal with the trauma and grief produced by this epidemic, Pakistan’s treatment and rehabilitation capacity is minuscule.

Most centres are small. Few can admit more than 100 people at a time. Nai-Zindagi holds a mere 24. But for 100 rupees (about US$3) per day, Haniph is getting good treatment. As he claws through his 14 days to full physical withdrawal from his craving for heroin, he draws support from other patients. “We feel it is necessary to have a supportive environment of friends at this stage. That is why we do not separate out the people undergoing detox from those being rehabilitated,” claims Ahmad Baksh, Operations Manager of the Nai-Zindagi and himself a former heroin addict.

Five years past his own battle with the demon, he helps others fight their addictions. Recognizing his potential to help others through rehabilitation, UNDCP trained Ahmad as a counselor in chemical dependency as part of an effort to develop “Community Intervention Teams” (CITs). The idea behind the teams is to provide outreach counseling and advice to groups of people at high risk of drug abuse. This is done at street-level and involves pairs of trained professionals traveling through a community and meeting drug victims and their families, counseling on the dangers of drug abuse. UNDCP has now built a network of 22 CITs in Pakistan. Ahmad was trained in how to deal with abusers and ex-abusers like himself: counseling, planning treatment, teaching communications skills, helping addicts identify what caused their substance abuse and establishing goals leading to more productive lives.

To help patients fit back into society they are provided with vocational training. Saleable items that are produced by patients during their training are sold with proceeds contributing to the running costs of the Nai-Zindagi. The centre also makes money from coaching and training other NGOs in the particular model of therapy and rehabilitation. Over
countries require banks to report unusual or suspicious transactions. Strict enforcement of such legislation, in addition to tighter banking regulations, has forced cartels out of the money laundering business in some countries. Nonetheless, laundering continues in many countries, including numerous offshore banking "havens"; it can be stopped only with global agreement and cooperation. International cooperation is also important because most of the major cases of money laundering are international in nature requiring exchange of information between authorities in those countries where the money-laundering occurred.

Until now, seizures of drugs, even in large quantities, have had a limited effect on traffickers. However the 1988 Convention, which requires governments to confiscate assets and property purchased with drug money, undermines the capacity of traffickers to organise and to maintain their logistics, as well as their power to corrupt. Financial operations are where criminals are most vulnerable. Because of the compartmentalisation of the major criminal organisations, it is usually impossible to establish a link between a seized drug shipment and couriers and the real organisers of the drug trafficking operation. Money is often the only trail that goes all the way to the organisers.

UNDCP encourages governments to take action against money laundering (which is required under the 1988 Convention). It increases

Photo: Two young boys smoking a type of heroin called 'brown sugar'.

Apparent “benefits” of illicit drug industry in the early 1990s (income generation in percent of gross domestic product).
awareness and improves understanding of money laundering and related issues. UNDCP seminars and workshops promote regional studies on money laundering issues, facilitate information exchange and encourage coordination among countries. As a consequence increasing numbers of countries are working together to fight money laundering in an effort to combat drug trafficking and other organised crime.

Additionally, UNDCP assists countries to draft or amend relevant national legislation that addresses money laundering, from regulations for banking systems to laws that allow for the seizure and confiscation of assets purchased with drug money. UNDCP supports training courses for law enforcement personnel, the judiciary and financial experts which provide advice on the establishment and implementation of anti-money-laundering procedures including the establishment of financial intelligence units. These units act as watchdogs, analysing relevant transaction reports from a country's financial systems.

UNDCP also advises countries on implementing money laundering counter measures, and in the investigation and prosecution of offences. It encourages governments to develop bilateral and regional agreements regarding the exchange of evidence and witnesses and the cooperation of police during investigations. It helps countries establish necessary institutions such as the financial intelligence units and financial investigation services.

Governments are also encouraged to sign international conventions and agreements to prevent money laundering activities. More than 70 percent of countries have become Parties to the 1988 Convention which addresses money laundering by requiring governments to criminalize activities in connection with it. The Convention calls for the establishment of identification and tracing machinery, as well as procedures for making banking, financial or commercial records available. Countries cannot decline to act on the grounds of bank secrecy. It also provides the basis for international cooperation on investigations, prosecutions, exchanging information and the confiscation of the proceeds of drug trafficking.
Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961

This Convention is an international treaty whose purpose is to prevent and combat drug addiction by means of coordinated and international action. It states that “the possession, use, trade in, distribution, import, export, manufacture and the production of drugs is exclusively limited to medical and scientific purposes”.

Essentially, the text provides for two complementary forms of intervention and control: the first, which is of a preventive nature concerns the licit, scientific and medical market; the second, of a repressive nature, concerns illicit traffic, drug abuse and drug addiction. Prevention is essentially aimed at avoiding diversion from medical or scientific channels into illicit traffic and at preserving licit supply. Repression consists in establishing international penal cooperation so as to punish and discourage drug traffickers.

This Convention was amended by the 1972 Protocol highlighting the need to provide treatment and rehabilitation to drug abusers, stressing that this should be considered as an alternative or in addition to imprisonment.

Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971

Closely resembling the 1961 Convention, this Convention establishes an international control system for psychotropic substances, which are generally produced by the pharmaceutical industry. This was a response to the diversification and expansion of the spectrum of drugs of abuse, and introduces controls over a number of synthetic drugs (hallucinogens, stimulants, hypnotics, sedatives and anxiolytics).

The Convention categorizes psychotropic substances into four schedules according to their dependence-creating properties and abuse potential on the one hand, and their varying therapeutic value on the other.

The immediate purpose of these two treaties is to codify internationally applicable control measures in order to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes, and to prevent their diversion from licit sources into illicit channels. They also include provisions of a general nature on the illicit traffic in and abuse of drugs.

Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988

This Convention reflects the response of the international community to increasing illicit cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking activities. The Convention provides for comprehensive and innovating measures against drug trafficking, such as provision against money-laundering and against illicit activities related to precursor and essential chemicals and provisions for new methods of international cooperation such as transfer of proceedings, controlled deliveries and extradition of drug traffickers.

The three major international drug control treaties are mutually supportive, and complementary. Each of them builds upon and reinforces the provisions of the others.
Member States of the United Nations

UN General Assembly
Principal body through which the United Nations adopts resolutions, conventions and protocols, approve funds, it serves as the forum through which individual governments express their views.

ECOSOC
(54 member states) The Economic and Social Council is responsible for formulating overall UN policies in the field of drug abuse control, coordinating drug control activities with the full range of economic and social programmes of the UN and making relevant recommendations to Governments.

INCB
(13 member experts serving in their personal capacity) The International Narcotics Control Board is the independent and quasijudicial control organ for the implementation and monitoring of the UN Drug Conventions. Its responsibility is to promote government compliance with the provisions of the treaties and to assist them in this effort. The INCB endeavours to ensure that adequate supplies of drugs are available for medical and scientific uses, and that leakages from licit activity do not occur. It identifies where weaknesses in the national and international control system exist and contributes to correct the situation. The INCB publishes an annual report submitted to ECOSOC through the Commission.

CND
(53 member states) The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, one of ECOSOC’s six functional commissions, assists the Council in supervising the application of international conventions and agreements dealing with narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. It considers any changes that may be required in the existing machinery, and may prepare new conventions and international instruments. It is the central policy-making body within the UN for all questions related to drug abuse control.

UNDCP
The United Nations International Drug Control Programme was established in 1991 as a single programme, integrating fully therein the structures and functions of the three former UN drug units, i.e. the Division of Narcotic Drugs (DND), the UN Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) and the INCB Secretariat, with the exclusive responsibility for coordinating and providing effective leadership for all UN drug control activities. The UNDCP advises and assists Government and specialized agencies on the implementation of the international drug control treaty system. The main objectives of the programme are: (1) to coordinate and provide effective leadership for all UN drug control initiatives; (2) to anticipate the development of phenomena which could create or aggravate illicit drug production, trafficking and abuse and to mobilize and support remedial measures in a timely fashion; (3) to be a world-wide centre of expertise and repository of information by collecting, analyzing and disseminating data, information and experience in all fields of drug control; (4) to assist CND and INCB in implementing their treaty-based functions and in promoting new instruments as needed; (5) to provide technical assistance through expertise and training to help governments in setting up adequate drug control structures and to elaborate comprehensive national and regional drug control strategies and programmes; (6) to provide technical cooperation in the different fields of drug control with a view to elaborating methodologies and approaches to be shared; and (7) to assist governments in the development of subregional initiatives and plans of action with the basic concept of joint operations between concerned countries.

Regular budget of UNDCP (in US$ million)


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