SDG 10 aims to reduce inequality within and among countries.

UNODC’s work addresses different targets of SDG 10, including Target 10.2, 10.3, 10.7 and 10.b. From empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of youth, women, prisoners, migrants and victims of trafficking in persons to contributing to effective national, regional and international responses against migrant smuggling and reducing illicit financial flows, UNODC’s initiatives are instrumental in tackling inequality within and among countries.

In line with Target 10.2, the Office is committed to empowering children and youth through the UNODC Strategy 2021-25. UNODC is expanding its technical cooperation efforts tailored to engaging and nurturing the potential of youth in supporting their communities to become more resilient against drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism and to involve them more actively in crime prevention activities.

To accelerate progress on youth mainstreaming across UNODC’s work, the Office launched the Youth Empowerment Accelerator (YEA!) Framework in December 2022. The YEA! Framework promotes best practices on meaningful youth engagement, brings together UNODC’s ongoing youth-focused initiatives and provides concrete youth mainstreaming actions to ensure that young people – both within the Office and external partners – have the opportunity to engage in our mandate areas.
UNODC has several initiatives working for and with youth, including the YouthLED Integrity Advisory Board and the Coding4Integrity hackathons under the GRACE initiative, the Youth Forum organized by the UNODC Youth Initiative on Drug Use Prevention, STRIVE Juvenile which focuses on preventing and responding to violence against children by terrorist and violent extremist groups, and programmes preventing youth crime through sport such as “Line Up Live Up” (LULU).

UNODC’s LULU uses sports-based life skills training to empower youth and enhance their resilience to violence, crime and drug use. The programme supports organizations like Turf Season, a grassroots football project in Nigeria, in their mission to help youth to access education and career opportunities and lead healthy lives. LULU curriculum has helped them to develop more emotionally aware and responsible players, better equipped to distinguish harmful behaviour and habits and deal with various life situations. The programme is currently being implemented with direct support by UNODC in Nigeria, Mexico, Colombia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine and Sudan and has benefited over 5,000 young people, boys and girls in 2022.

Furthermore, the majority of prisoners worldwide come from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds. Many live in poverty, are illiterate or have limited education and might have experienced unemployment or lack of housing, which in turn might have contributed to compromised family ties or drug/alcohol abuse, among other consequences of their socio-economic marginalization. As part of its prison and penal reform work, and in line with Target 10.3, UNODC promotes a rehabilitative approach to offender management that is oriented towards their social reintegration into society, thereby safeguarding fundamental human rights and contributing to public safety by reducing recidivism. In Lebanon, for example, the sewing skills that prisoners have developed through one of the rehabilitation activities supported by UNODC have allowed them to generate an income and save money to start their own businesses and create a better life for themselves outside prison.

Additionally, UNODC contributes to Target 10.7 concerning migration and mobility. The Office assists Member States in expanding their capacity to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons. In this regard, the Protocols of the Smuggling of Migrants and the Trafficking in Persons under the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime are tools that facilitate cooperation and provide a range of shared actions to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people.
Through its Strengthening Transregional Action and Responses against the Smuggling of Migrants (STARSOM project), the Office also supports multiple countries along the transcontinental smuggling routes from South Asia to North America to work closely to effectively respond to migrant smuggling while protecting the lives and upholding the rights of the smuggled migrants. The aim of the project is to ensure that smuggled migrants are treated fairly and humanely by authorities during operations and investigations into migrant smuggling activities.

UNODC also collects and publishes information, at the global level, on human traffickers and how they use the opportunity to exploit vulnerable people in order to maximize their profits. Similar data collection is also carried out on migrant smugglers. More information related to UNODC’s efforts on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants can also be found under SDG 8.

Lastly, UNODC’s work to reduce illicit financial flows (IFFs) also contributes to further progress on Target 10.b, which encourages official development assistance and financial flows to States where the need is greatest. Reducing IFFs can help least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, to mobilize the necessary capital to finance the achievement of the SDGs and other national priorities. UNODC, jointly with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), developed a Conceptual Framework for the Statistical Measurement of Illicit Financial Flows and methodological guidelines to measure IFFs. In parallel, UNODC leads technical assistance projects in Latin America and Asia-Pacific and conducts regional studies on IFFs dedicated to specific illegal activities, such as the Illicit Financial Flows from trafficking of opiates along the northern route. More information on the topic can also be found under SDG 16.