UNODC is a custodian of different SDG indicators, mainly related to SDG 16. To support this role, the Office produces data for 16 SDG indicators for global monitoring and provides technical assistance to countries and methodologies for measuring and collecting data, among other functions. In this context, UNODC assists Member States in achieving Target 16.1 on reducing violence in all its forms by producing high-quality essential evidence to inform policymaking on gender-based violence, drugs and crime. Publications such as the World Drug Report, Monitoring SDG 16: A gender perspective, and the Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls (also referred to as “femicide/feminicide”) contribute to that end.

UNODC Global Programme to End Violence Against Children is actively engaged in supporting Member States’ efforts, particularly in Indonesia, Iraq and Nigeria, to prevent and respond to violence against children, both within the digital realm and the physical world, while ensuring equitable access to justice for and with children. The foundation of its work is built upon three interwoven pillars: i) collection of data, research and analytical work; ii) the advancement of normative frameworks that foster children's rights and well-being; and iii) operational work through the provision of specialized technical assistance.

SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

UN entities work closely together to address the different targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda.
UNODC assists Member States in achieving the following targets:

16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
16.4: By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime
16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms
By upholding children’s rights, ensuring their well-being and simultaneously safeguarding public safety, UNODC directly facilitates the attainment of Targets 16.2 and 16.3. The Office also collaborates closely with other UN entities, including the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children (OSRSG VAC), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), to collectively advance towards these critical targets.

As strengthening crime prevention and building effective criminal justice systems is one of UNODC’s five thematic areas of work, the Office also supports the establishment of effective, fair and humane criminal justice systems. It promotes penal and prison reform, as well as access to justice. These areas include access to legal aid, alternatives to imprisonment, youth crime prevention programmes, offenders’ rehabilitation, social reintegration measures as well as the overuse of pre-trial detention.

UNODC’s global collection of administrative and survey data on crime and criminal justice provides the statistical evidence base for monitoring crime patterns and trends and the criminal justice responses to crime and for evaluating policy interventions and crime prevention measures. Thus, UNODC is also well placed to monitor Target 16.3 – promoting the rule of law - through its annual United Nations Survey on Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (UN-CTS). The data collected through this survey are disseminated on UNODC Data Portal and presented in several analytical publications, including the Global Study on Homicide and short research briefs such as the Data Matters series.

Additionally, UNODC assists Member States in achieving Target 16.4 – reducing illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime - by offering a full spectrum of tools to strengthen anti-money laundering legal frameworks and develop capacities of national agencies to investigate money laundering and terrorism financing, disrupt illicit financial flows and support the recovery of stolen assets. Further, it carries out research and data collection in several areas connected to organized crime, including the illicit trafficking of drugs, wildlife crime and trafficking in persons.

For instance, UNODC tackles the illicit trafficking of firearms by assisting Member States in building adequate criminal justice systems to effectively respond to the challenges posed by organized criminality specifically related to trafficking in firearms, its parts and components.
In 2021-2022, the UNODC Global Firearms Programme (GFP) developed the Guidelines on Investigation and Prosecution of Firearms Offences, based on the principles embodied in the UN Convention against Organized Crime and the United Nations Firearms Protocol. It explains all relevant stages of the criminal justice response and provides advice to effectively tackle firearms offences using illustrative case-based examples. Recognizing the importance of effective capacity-building tools tailored to local needs, at the beginning of 2023, for example, UNODC provided support to criminal justice practitioners in the customization of the Guidelines in North Macedonia and Serbia.

The launch of the Guidelines represents an important step towards a coordinated and comprehensive global response to the challenges posed by illicit firearms trafficking and associated crimes. In turn, this helps to reduce violence caused by physical insecurity (domestic violence, street violence and criminal violence) and supports more secure societies. UNODC also releases data on the illicit trafficking of firearms in reports like the Global Study on Firearms Trafficking 2020, providing an analysis of the flows of firearms trafficking, the types of firearms trafficked, how trafficking is conducted, how it is related to other types of crime and how firearms enter the illicit market, enhancing the knowledge available, informing effective international responses to firearms trafficking and related offences, as well as facilitating the ratification and implementation of the Firearms Protocol by Member States.

Moreover, with the expansion of the online world in recent years, cybercrime and online criminal activities are an evolving form of transnational crime. UNODC is supporting Member States in negotiating a Cybercrime Convention and provides technical assistance and capacity building to raise awareness of this important issue. UNODC also works to prevent cybercrime by sensitizing educators and parents to the threats that children face online and by educating children and adolescents about safely engaging in online spaces. For instance, in coordination with the artistic group Cuenterete Teatro, UNODC has staged 150 presentations of the puppet play "The Faces of Cybercrime" in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, reaching over 50,000 spectators. The objective of this play is to raise awareness among children, adolescents, parents and public officials about the dangers present on the internet, as well as to provide preventive measures and self-care strategies to prevent children and adolescents from becoming victims of cybercrimes.
The Office further supports Member States in reducing and eliminatory all forms of money laundering – including terrorist financing and proliferation financing – through supporting legal and regulatory frameworks as well as institutions and practitioners with the skills needed to uphold UN instruments and international standards. UNODC offers a plethora of specialized training and tools to support Member States in removing the profits from illegal activities and providing financial and legal disincentives from committing them. Additionally, as custodian agencies of SDG Indicator 16.4.1, UNODC and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) jointly developed a Conceptual framework for the Statistical Measurement of Illicit Financial Flows. This work collectively promotes SDG Target 16.4 to reduce the negative implications of organized crime.

Based on the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), UNODC assists Member States in preventing, detecting, investigating and sanctioning corruption and promoting international cooperation against corruption, as well as the recovery of proceeds of corruption, both domestically and internationally. In addition, to provide guidance and assistance in the fight against corruption and economic crime, UNODC has developed several resources, including TRACK, an online platform of tools and resources for anti-corruption knowledge. These efforts directly contribute to advancing Target 16.5 on substantially reducing corruption and bribery in all their forms.

UNODC also supports efforts toward accomplishing Target 16.6 by assisting Member States to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions through the comprehensive implementation of Chapter II of the UNCAC. UNODC facilitates sharing information on lessons learned and the adaptability of good practices to prevent corruption in public and private sector institutions, including accountability measures, strengthening professionalism and integrity, and promoting public access to information and the transparency of institutional functions and services. In addition, in partnership with the United Nations Global Compact, UNODC promotes transparency and the prevention of corruption in the private sector by organizing a Global Webinar Series on Business Integrity, among other initiatives. The series provides a platform for dialogue and knowledge-sharing on good practices, current challenges, and effective approaches to business integrity and encourages peer-to-peer learning. The third session, for example, was designed for private sector representatives to take practical steps in addressing and minimizing corruption risks after identifying them.
Further, the Office encourages and facilitates the participation of a wide range of civil society organizations, contributing to an open, responsive and accountable decision-making process on crime- and drug-related matters at the international level. An example of it are the Constructive Dialogues, through which inputs and suggestions, including on ways to improve the implementation of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto (UNTOC), are collected from relevant stakeholders, such as NGOs. Another initiative contributing toward advancing Target 16.7 on ensuring participatory and representative decision-making at all levels was the Youth Consultation preceding the 11th session of the Conference of the Parties to UNTOC.

Lastly, UNODC’s work is also aligned with Target 16.a on strengthening relevant national institutions to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime. In this regard, the Office provides specialized capacity-building assistance to Member States to address the challenges that terrorism poses. While States take terrorism very seriously as a security threat, they do not necessarily always ensure adequate support to victims and their families. Thus, the Office works together with Member States to strengthen support and protection for victims of terrorism. In Iraq, UNODC’s psychosocial support programme implemented in partnership with the Lebanese Association for Victims of Terrorism (AVT-L), has been a turning point for many survivors of terrorism, as it supports their physical and mental rehabilitation and successful reintegration into communities as well as provide them with a platform to tell their own stories and inspire many victims of terrorism worldwide.

The Office is also contributing to advancing Target 16.a by conducting legislative assessments and gap analyses of existing national counter-terrorism legislation and assisting with drafting and revising legislation to harmonize national legislation and aligning it with the international legal framework against terrorism. Since 2003, as a result of UNODC’s technical assistance, 1,145 new adherences to the international legal instruments against terrorism have been recorded.