UNODC AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Research\(^1\) confirms that factors such as poverty, social, economic and geographical marginalization, and lack of sustainable livelihoods are manifestations of poor levels of development which, alongside governance issues, constitute root causes of large-scale illicit cultivation in rural areas. The income obtained from illicit crop cultivation is used to cover daily living expenses as well as paying debt.

UNODC, through its alternative development (AD) and sustainable livelihoods programmes, provides economically viable, legal alternatives to men and women living in poor rural communities involved in coca bush, opium poppy or cannabis cultivation. After introducing high-value crops and new technologies, AD projects consolidate farmers’ organizations, integrating them into a productive chain that leads to commercialization in quality markets and improves their opportunities for revenue generation.

Alternative development programmes emphasize implementation of viable agroforestry schemes, integrating them into a productive chain that leads to successful commercialization in quality markets, thus improving farmers’ opportunities for revenue generation. The Office has been implementing AD projects in Afghanistan, Bolivia, Colombia, Iran, Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Myanmar and Nigeria. UNODC has supported farmers to obtain land ownership certificates, helped women to access land ownership, and educated farmers on sustainable forest management and reforesting valuable forest species to remove the root causes of deforestation in project areas. Since 2020, the programmes have provided development assistance amounting to more than USD 70 million.


Target 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.
Farmers from the Green Gold cooperative in Myanmar, ASIPAEM (a Spanish acronym for the local association of agroecological producers) in Bolivia, and the Vanmai Coffee Cooperative in Lao PDR directly signed long-term commercial agreements with the French coffee roaster Malongo, respectively in 2018, 2020 and 2021. They include the provision of a roadmap for technical assistance to help ensure quality control and yields, and a plan to increase export to 400 tonnes over the next five years. In 2022, this partnership exported 300 tonnes of Fairtrade-certified coffee to Europe, generating profitable and sustainable income for thousands of farmer households in Bolivia, Myanmar and Lao PDR.

By enabling marginalized communities to reduce illicit crop cultivation and begin alternative income generation, UNODC contributes to poverty reduction and increased economic sustainability and resilience, furthering progress on SDG 1.
Before 2022, Ukraine had served as one of the world’s main “breadbaskets,” supplying around 45 million tonnes of grain annually to the global market. The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, however, disrupted the normal trade of food and fertilizers. Mountains of grain and other foods built up at Ukrainian ports, contributing to even higher staple food prices and increasing the number of people on the brink of famine.

On 22 July 2022, the Russian Federation, Türkiye, Ukraine and the United Nations launched the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI) for the safe exports of grain, related foodstuffs and fertilizer from designated Ukrainian ports to global markets. UNODC played a critical role in the functioning of the BSGI: On behalf of the Joint Coordination Centre (JCC), established to facilitate the implementation of the BSGI, UNODC inspectors examined shipments to ensure that only authorized goods and crew were leaving or entering Ukraine.

From 7 August 2022 until 17 July 2023, UNODC inspectors helped to clear over 1,967 vessels, bringing over 32.8 million metric tons of grains and foodstuffs to the world. Additionally, by helping food exports reach global supply chains, the BSGI has helped to lower prices, reducing financial burdens on consumers worldwide. These efforts directly contribute to achieving SDG 2 by 2030.

Furthermore, illicit crop cultivation goes hand in hand with poverty and food insecurity. Although growing illicit crops often helps small rural farmers cope with food shortages and the unpredictability of agricultural markets, economic dependence on illicit crops is not sustainable in the long term.

SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

UN entities work closely together to address the different targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda.

Target 2.4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.
Illicit crop cultivation affects food productivity and food security of affected communities, in that the land that could have been used for agricultural purposes is used to cultivate illicit crops, thus pushing poor farmers into a trap, where they are forced to rely on illicit crop cultivation to fulfil their basic food and financial needs.

UNODC, through its alternative development and sustainable livelihoods programmes, contributes to sustainable development by providing environmentally and economically viable, legal alternatives to illicit crops in rural communities. Alternative development programmes assist farmers in shifting to licit and sustainable alternative livelihood practices, and improve their farming techniques as well as increase their income, thus enabling them to increase their productivity and achieve food security.

In Afghanistan, a UNODC project implemented in 2022 promoted small backyard poultry farms run by women, increasing food security through the production of eggs and offering income generation support to over 1,000 female-headed households. In Myanmar, the introduction of permanent crop systems has been accompanied by short-term, high-value food crops to ensure food security for farmers and their local communities. In Lao PDR, achieving a stable food security situation through the introduction of improved agricultural development linked to markets has been a key objective of a project implemented in Phongsaly Province. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, food security has been enhanced through the introduction of local food crops, vegetable gardens and the breeding of livestock. And in Colombia, alternative development interventions under the national peace process have had a strong focus on food security by introducing food crop cultivation to beneficiaries.

On the global scale, UNODC’s initiatives increase the culture of lawfulness and global access to staple grains; at the local level, they also ensure that communities transitioning to licit crops are given adequate access to food resources, contributing thus to achieving SDG 2.
UNODC’s work on drugs and health is inextricably linked to multiple Targets of SDG 3. The Office’s mandate is fully in line with Target 3.5 on several fronts. UNODC supports a balanced public health-oriented approach to the drug problem by working to end discrimination against people who use drugs and by strengthening access to comprehensive, evidence-based and gender-responsive services for the prevention of drug use and treatment of substance use disorders, including as an alternative to conviction or punishment.

UNODC assists Member States in achieving Target 3.5 by promoting evidence-based prevention in line with the UNODC/WHO International Standards on Drug Use Prevention, which addresses vulnerabilities and builds resilience in children at different ages of development. This is done through building individuals’ skills or strengthening social institutions of influence (namely the family, the school and the community), eventually seeking to bridge such interventions in a comprehensive strategic framework of preventive response supporting the safe and healthy development of children and youth.

UNODC’s Family Skills aim at strengthening communication, trust, problem-solving skills and conflict resolution within the family. It targets families living in diverse social contexts, but specific support is provided to those caregiving in humanitarian or stressful settings.

SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

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Target 3.3: By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases

Target 3.5: Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol

UNODC particularly assists Member States in achieving target 3.5
For instance, following its engagement in the Cox Bazar region in Bangladesh, UNODC has expanded its work to support families affected by the Syria/Türkiye earthquake and the Ukraine crisis, where through interagency work, over 11.5 million people have benefited from positive parenting tools. Overall, such family skills have proven to prevent (or at worse delay) initiation to drug use, prevent violence against children, reduce early aggressive behaviour and delinquency, reduce anti-social peer affiliation and increase peer pressure resistance skills, as well as promote positive mental health in caregivers and their children.

Life and social skills through school-based programmes are also core to UNODC. For instance, in partnership with the Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF), UNODC has been implementing the Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence (LQSFA) in several countries. This programme is an effective evidence-based prevention programme for young people aimed to help them develop various social emotional skills, take responsibility, communicate effectively, make healthy decisions and resist substance abuse. Initially launched in South-Eastern Europe, it gradually expanded to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia, reaching more than 10,000 students in over 180 elementary schools across the region. Building on the successful results of the initiative in the region, the LQSFA programme was also launched in Slovenia in 2022, and currently plans of scale-up the programme are being discussed across all countries in the Western Balkan region.

Furthermore, referred to as the “torchbearers” of the 2030 Agenda, young people are critical actors to accelerate change and advance the SDGs. Launched in 2012, UNODC’s Youth Initiative on Drug Use Prevention has been connecting young people from around the globe and empowering them to become active in their schools, communities and youth groups for substance use prevention and health promotion. Throughout the decade, its flagship event in the broader context of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), the Youth Forum, has served as a platform for 445 youth from 101 countries to exchange ideas, perspectives and visions on how to safeguard the health and well-being of their peers and convey their joint message to the global level policy makers, directly contributing to SDG 3.

In addition, the Office supports Member States in addressing the global problem of synthetic drugs and achieving SDG 3 targets by implementing a comprehensive Synthetic Drug Strategy. Among other initiatives, UNODC has developed a UN Toolkit on Synthetic Drugs tailored to experts, practitioners and policymakers in the fields of health, law enforcement,
forensics and research. The platform is a one-stop shop that features more than 320 resources and tools from across the UN system and provides practical guidance towards identifying comprehensive solutions to the threats posed by synthetic drugs.

UNODC’s field activities under SDG 3 also include assisting in providing quality services to governmental and non-governmental entities on the prevention of communicable diseases; gender equity; and developing and implementing tailor-made programmes to reduce the increasing trend of drug use, HIV/AIDS, and Hepatitis C. In particular, UNODC is mandated to provide HIV prevention, treatment and care among people who use drugs or are in prisons, thus contributing towards ending AIDS by 2030, a component of Target 3.3.

Moreover, UNODC’s research work supports countries to strengthen forensic sector capacities by implementing drug monitoring systems to collect reliable data, including on the identification and/or detection of substances and new psychoactive substances of abuse. For over 25 years, UNODC has been publishing the World Drug Report (WDR), providing a science-based global perspective and overview of the world drug problem. The 2023 WDR features a special chapter on drug trafficking and crimes that affect the environment in the Amazon Basin, as well as sections on clinical trials involving psychedelics and medical use of cannabis; drug use in humanitarian settings; innovations in drug treatment and other services; and drugs and conflict. The Office’s research on drugs generates valuable information for experts and policymakers to analyse and respond to persistent and emerging challenges across the drug supply chain and examine their interconnectedness with all aspects of sustainable development, peace and security and human rights.

Lastly, the Office promotes standards and guidelines and seeks to establish effective partnerships at a country level and internationally, including with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF), and other civil society organizations.
On International Education Day in 2023, Secretary-General António Guterres reiterated that, “Education is a fundamental human right – and the bedrock of societies”.

In line with this statement, UNODC continues to support education and lifelong learning for all. UNODC’s Global Resource for Anti-Corruption Education and Youth Empowerment (GRACE) initiative seeks to promote further the role of education and youth empowerment in preventing and countering corruption. It supports Target 4.7 as well as other SDGs related to UNODC’s mandates, including SDG 16-Targets 16.3, 16.5, and 16.6- in that it seeks to create a culture of rejection of corruption among children and youth by harnessing the transformational power of education and partnership.

Within the primary and secondary education pillar of UNODC’s GRACE initiative, the Office has developed, together with UNESCO and other partners, educational resources for teachers to educate on integrity, ethics, respect and fairness to foster a better understanding of the key issues surrounding corruption, the rule of law and the importance of ethics and integrity in our societies. Further, at the university level, UNODC works with university lecturers in their efforts to equip students and young people with knowledge and skills to better understand the impact of corruption and empower them to address corruption and unethical behaviour.

**SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.**

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UNODC’s educational resources have been used to build the capacities of rural educators in Malawi on values such as ethics and integrity and for young people using Forum Theatre to become actors for a day, performing real-life corruption scenarios on stage and discussing with their peers at the European Youth Event 2023 (EYE), held at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France.

Furthermore, UNODC Teaching Module Series under the EDU4U (Education for Universities) initiative also contributes to achieving SDG 4 through a series of teaching modules aimed to support tertiary level educators and academics in their efforts to transmit knowledge and create a deeper understanding of rule of law related issues, with a focus on the subject areas of organized crime, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, firearms, cybercrime, wildlife crime as well as counter-terrorism. The UNODC Teaching Module Series is available under the SHERLOC (Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime) knowledge management portal.
Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls make a crucial contribution to progress across all the SDGs. Understanding the interrelationship between gender and transnational organized crime, drug-related policies, counter-terrorism and corruption is vital in ensuring that policies, programmes and activities are effective for the population as a whole. This means that UNODC programmes need to take into account how men and women, girls and boys, including variations in gender, sexual orientation, or bodily characteristics, are impacted differently by drugs, crime and terrorism.

UNODC supports Member States to reach the targets under SDG 5 by promoting access to justice for women and girls; supporting the development of legislation and policies that protect their rights and prevent as well as respond to violence against women and girls; developing institutional and professional capacities relevant to respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of women and girls; and creating the conditions for women and girls to be in a position to claim their rights and be active agents of change. Further, UNODC monitors violence against women by collecting data from Member States and assisting them in conducting surveys on the topic. This data can provide important evidence to address violence against and the intentional killing of women.

The Women in Justice/for Justice campaign, launched on the first International Day of Women Judges on 10 March 2022, takes into account that women have been historically underrepresented in the field of justice, the campaign seeks to highlight the role of women and raise awareness on the importance of greater representation of women across the justice sector. Ensuring equitable gender representation in criminal justice institutions is a crucial step to ensuring women’s access to gender-responsive justice.
It also strengthens the judiciary and its ability to deliver fair decisions and it can lead to more effective, victim-centered responses to crime, as well as greater accountability.

The Office’s global work on drug use prevention and treatment of drug use disorders specifically addresses the unique needs of women and girls within a framework of human rights. Its HIV programmes advocate for gender-responsive HIV services for women who inject drugs and women in prisons and address the special needs of women who inject drugs.

Although women remain a minority of the worldwide prison population, their numbers have increased by 60 per cent since 2000 and have grown at a much faster pace compared to men. Incarceration has a particularly negative impact on women and their dependants in terms of safety, exposure to gender-based violence, mental health and stigma. As the custodian of the UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), UNODC promotes a gender-responsive approach to prison and offender management and to enhancing the use of non-custodial measures. UNODC’s efforts have resulted in, the launch of the first of its kind Gender Responsive Centre for incarcerated women in South Africa in December 2022 at Atteridgeville, Gauteng Region, in partnership with the South African National Department of Justice and Correctional Services.

UNODC also works to improve the protection of women and girls through its work in tackling trafficking in persons, the majority of whom are women and girls. Trafficking in persons is a vicious crime that violates the rights of its victims, but over time and with the appropriate support, some survive their ordeal and are prepared to take action to prevent this crime.

Since 2011, the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking (UNVTF), established by the General Assembly and managed by UNODC, has provided essential funding to more than 155 projects in over 60 countries, directly supporting over 5,000 victims a year, most of whom are women and children. In Kenya, for example, the grant that the NGO HAART received allowed a 32-year-old single mother the opportunity to have a life after trafficking. She now operates a successful chicken rearing business that provides her family with an income and has become a HAART Survivor Advocate, raising awareness among communities on the existence and dangers of trafficking.
Moreover, in 2020, UNODC established the Women’s Network of Gender Champions against Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling to address the gendered nature of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants. The network spotlights the active participation of female officials and male champions working to prevent and combat trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants. Their work is profiled through the “Women Can” campaign. The Office has also produced a toolkit for mainstreaming human rights and gender equality into criminal justice interventions addressing trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants to support States’ related efforts.

As an Office, UNODC developed the UNOV/UNODC Strategy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2022–2026), which outlines how the Office will contribute to global efforts to promote just, inclusive and resilient societies over the coming five years. The implementation of the Strategy will continue to strengthen the work of UNODC throughout its five thematic areas by ensuring a more robust analysis of stakeholders and improving understanding of the different impacts of criminal justice, organized crime, terrorism and corruption on the whole of society.

The Strategy also recognizes that women are disproportionately underrepresented at the policy, decision-making and managerial levels, particularly in the criminal justice and law enforcement sector and legislative and parliamentary bodies. UNODC will therefore continue to engage with Member States to remedy instances of gender inequality and exclusion.

This Strategy provides an up-to-date institutional framework and priority areas for guiding UNOV/UNODC to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by building on the progress made through the previous Strategy and addressing the remaining gaps.
Illegal trade in waste (or waste trafficking) is a type of crime that affects the environment and is a growing problem across the world. Once it reaches destination countries, illegal waste often ends up in illegal landfills and illegal storage sites or is burnt in the open, causing harm to the environment and human health, undermining the achievement of the SDGs and the transition toward a circular economy.

In 2021, UNODC and the European Union (EU) launched the Unwaste project, aiming to fight trafficking in waste between the EU and Southeast Asia by promoting enhanced EU-ASEAN Member States partnerships. In addition, in 2022, the Office developed a legislative guide on combating waste trafficking to support states in enacting or strengthening domestic legislation against waste trafficking and participated actively in the 27th Conference of the Parties to the UN Conference on Climate Change (COP27), including by co-organizing side events on waste trafficking and the world’s plastic waste problem.

Furthermore, illicit crop cultivation and drug manufacture may affect the quality of (drinking) water, the behaviour of aquatic organisms as well as aquatic ecosystems in general. Most drug manufacture happens in remote areas with either no or poor water treatment systems, so remnants of the illicit manufacture of drugs and their metabolites remain in the water, potentially impacting aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity.

**SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.**

**Target 6.3:** By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.
UNODC supports the environmentally responsible disposal of chemicals used in illicit drug manufacture to protect and maintain clean accessible water resources, reduce pollution, protect aquatic environments, reduce or prevent land degradation and protect local environments and their biodiversity.

By implementing these initiatives, UNODC contributes to further progress on SDG 6 and the 2030 Agenda.
Although growing illicit crops often helps small rural farmers cope with food shortages and the unpredictability of agricultural markets, economic dependence on illicit crops is not sustainable in the long term. Moreover, the carbon footprint of illicit crop cultivation can be substantial. This is especially the case with indoor cannabis cultivation, which is energy intensive. Outdoors, the carbon footprint of illicit crops can be extensive, especially when land use change, such as the clearing of forests to introduce coca crops, is involved. In general, the total carbon footprint of illicit crop cultivation and drug production depends to a significant extent on the mix of energy sources used throughout the process.

Alternative development also has an impact on the environment. If not managed well, alternative crops could have an even higher carbon footprint than the illicit crops they are replacing. Using clean energy in alternative development projects is one way to decrease the carbon footprint of alternative crops. For example, in Afghanistan, solar energy has been used to operate water pumps and other irrigation systems in UNODC projects. Similarly, in coordination with other entities, clean energy is used for the cold storage of the products after the harvest or for transportation to markets.

UNODC’s Alternative Development Programmes implement strategies tailored to the specific priorities of different illicit crop cultivation regions with a view to providing farmers with sustainable, self-sufficient, economically viable alternatives to illicit crop cultivation.
As part of its initiatives, UNODC also assists Member States in implementing electrification projects to address the underlying problem of geographical and infrastructural marginalization of regions where illicit crops are cultivated, thus permanently restructuring the economy of such regions and opening doors to shift to licit and income generating alternatives. In general, the introduction of solar power to often isolated, underserved communities in rural areas has increased access to the basic service of electricity and has improved their quality of life.

Through these programmes, UNODC contributes to further progress on SDG 7 and the 2030 Agenda.
The Office’s work on combating trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants is directly relevant to Targets 8.7 and 8.8. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are global and widespread crimes that use men, women and children for profit. UNODC strives to eradicate these crimes by dismantling the criminal enterprises that trade in people and through conviction of the main perpetrators. Ultimately, our work safeguards people from the abuse, neglect, exploitation or even death associated with these crimes.

UNODC assists Member States in expanding their capacity to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons to protect trafficking victims and smuggled migrants and ensure that their rights are respected, as well as to promote cooperation between Member States. 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.

Furthermore, the Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants - Bangladesh (GLO.ACT Bangladesh) is a joint initiative by the European Union (EU) and UNODC, being implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Bangladesh.

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

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Target 8.7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking, and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms

Target 8.8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment
The project builds on a global community of practice set in motion in GLO.ACT I (2015-2019) and assists governmental authorities and civil society organizations in targeted, innovative and demand-driven interventions: sustaining effective strategy and policy development, legislative review and harmonization, capability development and regional and trans-regional cooperation. The project also provides direct assistance to victims of human trafficking and vulnerable migrants through strengthening identification, referral and protection mechanisms.

In 2022, GLO.ACT, in close collaboration with the government of Bangladesh and the International Labour Organization (ILO), spearheaded the creation of the first-ever National Study on Trafficking in Persons in Bangladesh. This ground-breaking study provides a comprehensive national overview of trafficking trends, patterns and flows into and within Bangladesh. The study not only sheds light on trafficking within Bangladesh’s borders but also on the movement of victims to other parts of the world. Furthermore, it lays the foundation for establishing a recurring reporting mechanism on human trafficking, a crucial step in the fight against this heinous crime.

With the valuable support of GLO.ACT, the Government of Bangladesh, is now actively engaged in implementing the recommendations stemming from this study, with a particular focus on combatting trafficking for forced labour. These recommendations stress the need to integrate efforts to prevent and address trafficking for forced labour into Bangladesh’s broader Development Strategy, recognizing that this issue transcends law enforcement and touches upon socioeconomic development. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of enhancing detection, identification and assistance measures for domestic trafficking in persons cases, ensuring timely support for victims of trafficking for forced labour. This collaborative effort marks a significant stride forward in the ongoing battle against human trafficking in Bangladesh, ensuring the protection and well-being of vulnerable individuals in the region.

In addition, UNODC contributes to the work of Alliance 8.7, a global partnership taking immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour, in accordance with SDG Target 8.7.
The Office is part of the Alliance’s Global Coordinating Group, which sets goals and monitors progress in the implementation of measures to attain Target 8.7 and actively supports States in strengthening their capacity to respond to trafficking in persons. UNODC is paying particular attention to child trafficking, noting that according to recent UNODC research, children comprise 35 per cent of all detected victims of trafficking.

The Office, in partnership with the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago, is also implementing the Tapajos Project to combat forced labour in the gold mining sector in Para, Northern Brazil. The project includes research on forced labour prevalence, its convergence with criminal activities, supply and value chain analysis and the socio-ethnographic profile of miners. The Tapajos Project holds a gender-based response and a cross-cutting indigenous perspective and represents the way forward to better tackle trafficking in persons and forced labour in marginalized regions and sectors across the globe.

Lastly, UNODC’s main research output on trafficking in persons is the biennial Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, which is primarily based on official, national data and analyses the patterns and trends of trafficking globally, regionally and at the country level. UNODC is advancing the work on testing methodologies for estimating the total number of victims of trafficking in persons. Not only will this help uncover the real magnitude of the trafficking, but it will also assist countries in measuring progress toward attaining three SDGs, including SDG 8.
While prison conditions constitute a key aspect of the overall quality of prison life and the human dignity of prisoners, prisons tend to be severely under-resourced. Budgets for the maintenance, refurbishment, or construction of sound prison infrastructure are scarce. In line with Target 9.1, UNODC invests in improving prison conditions through refurbishment and infrastructural modernization to ensure that the basic needs of prisoners are catered for and to provide access to education, vocational training and other constructive activities, all the while promoting strategies to reduce prison populations. For instance, in October 2022, UNODC co-funded a training room at a women’s prison in Mozambique, the first of its kind in the country, which will be used to build capacities and improve the skills of prison staff and inmates.

Through its Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP), UNODC supports the creation of sustainable and resilient infrastructure to improve responses to maritime crime and protect the global blue economy, thus contributing to advancing SDG 9. Efforts in this regard include, for instance, the construction of Visit Board Search and Seizure Simulators (VBS3) in Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles and Sri Lanka; building classroom and training facilities in Sri Lanka and Somalia; and the construction of a new Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Maldives in 2022.

The Office has also provided critical maritime surveillance infrastructure to Member States in the Pacific Ocean region to improve capability to detect, analyse and respond to maritime
crimes, such as the installation of the Terrestrial-based Passive Radio Frequency (RF) Sensor system on Bongao Island of Western Mindanao in the Philippines in 2023. Additionally, to ensure a robust rule of law framework and that perpetrators committing maritime crimes are brought to justice, in 2022, UNODC’s GMCP supported the construction of effective, human rights compliant and secure court facilities in Kenya for efficient dispensation of justice.

Fostering innovation to meet the challenges that drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism pose worldwide is a priority for UNODC. In line with the UNODC Strategy 2021-25 and the UNOV/UNODC Innovation Strategy, the Office will develop forward-looking and innovative responses to better deliver to those we serve in the areas of new technologies, new ways of working and organizational agility. This includes scaling up current initiatives and piloting new projects.
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.

UN entities work closely together to address the different targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda.

Target 10.7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies

Target 10.b: Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes
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.
UN entities work closely together to address the different targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda. UNODC assists Member States in achieving the following target:

11.7: By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the interconnectedness of contemporary challenges and the need for comprehensive and participatory approaches to address them. UNODC has adopted the same lens to understand the security challenges of individual cities. Building inclusive societies by focusing on city safety and resilient governments lies at the heart of UNODC’s work at the urban level.

The role of local government is vital as this is the layer of government closest to the people, and it often has significant decision-making and spending power. Accordingly, recognizing that the future success of the SDGs resides in large part in cities, UNODC is determined to contribute to the “localization” of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for urban policy-makers and planners, particularly those residing in the Global South.

UNODC’s Urban Safety Governance Approach, based on the Urban Safety Governance Assessments, aims to make urban environments safe, inclusive and resilient by addressing the multi-causal factors of violence, crime and insecurity. To date, assessments have been carried out in communities in Barbados, Kenya, Mexico and Uzbekistan. The approach ensures that crime prevention and community safety strategies, policies and programmes are tailored to meet grassroots needs and take account of the interface between global crime threats and local vulnerabilities. In addition to strengthening the role of cities in dealing with crime and violence, it also emphasizes building communities’ resilience by addressing structural issues such as corruption and lack of transparency and providing a space free of drug use, terrorism and organized crime.
Considering UNODC’s strong experience and knowledge in the areas of crime prevention and criminal justice, creating institutional resilience and capacity building, promoting education for justice and peace, crime prevention among youth, combatting gender-based violence and promoting gender equality, and preventing and responding to substance abuse, UNODC’s Urban Safety Governance Approach can contribute to the development of effective and humane responses to urban issues and assist Member States in achieving SDG 11.
The safe and environmentally responsible handling, storage and disposal of seized chemicals used in illicit drug manufacture present unique challenges to law enforcement and regulatory authorities. UNODC supports the environmentally responsible disposal of chemicals used in illicit drug manufacture to protect and maintain clean, accessible water resources, reduce pollution, protect aquatic environments, reduce or prevent land degradation and protect local environments and their biodiversity, contributing thus to Target 12.4. In 2022, UNODC’s technical assistance to Member States in Latin America led to the safe disposal of almost 100 tons of chemicals used in the clandestine manufacture of drugs.

The Office has also developed resources to support law enforcement and customs officers, including those in remote locations where waste management infrastructure and expert technical support may not be available. Examples of these resources are the Illustrated guide for the Disposal of Chemicals used in the Illicit Manufacture of Drugs to support the implementation of the Guidelines for the Safe Disposal of Chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of Drugs and the principles of environmentally responsible disposal for remote locations; the self-paced e-learning courses on the safe handling and disposal of chemicals in remote, developing and non-secure environments available at UNODC Global E-Learning platform; and the videos that offer guidance to frontline officers on the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to remain safe from the risk of exposure to synthetic drugs.

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

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Furthermore, illegal mining and trafficking in precious metals also threaten the attainment of SDG 12 as it causes a range of harmful impacts on the environment, habitats, human and animal life, indigenous communities and their livelihoods, public health, economies, development and the rule of law. Illegal miners often use environmentally dangerous equipment, devices and chemicals, not only putting their own health at risk but also causing severe environmental harm, usually in areas not under full control by the state. Illegal mining and trafficking in precious metals are often accompanied by serious human rights abuses and associated with other criminal activities such as trafficking in firearms and explosives, trafficking in persons and forced labour, as well as linked to economic crimes such as tax evasion, fraud, and corruption, by exploiting loopholes in regulatory frameworks as well as gaps and vulnerabilities in the supply chain and trade monitoring procedures.

In line with its mission to assist Member States in confronting the threats and challenges posed by crime, UNODC has developed a legislative guide to support Governments in adopting or improving national legislation related to the prevention, investigation and prosecution of illegal mining and trafficking in metals and minerals. Additionally, UNODC is developing a Diagnostic Toolkit to conduct rapid assessments of vulnerabilities along the gold supply chain. More information on UNODC’s role and response to illegal mining and trafficking in metals can be found in the Response Framework on Illegal Mining and the Illicit Trafficking in Precious Metals.

Another issue that affects the environment and jeopardizes the achievement of SDG 12.4 is the illegal trade in waste (or waste trafficking). Once it reaches destination countries, illegal waste often ends up in illegal landfills and storage sites or is burnt in the open, harming the environment and human health and undermining the achievement of the SDG 12 and the transition toward a circular economy. To fight waste trafficking between the European Union and Southeast Asia (the leading destination of legal and illegal waste), UNODC has launched the Unwaste project to understand waste flows better and promote cooperation and partnership between the EU and Southeast Asian countries.

Moreover, through UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP), the Office works with States to address the illicit trafficking of plastic and hazardous waste by offering specialized training to Port Control Units, selected customs, law enforcement officials and other relevant agencies and by encouraging and facilitating inter-agency cooperation.
The illicit trafficking of plastic and hazardous waste is an ever-growing threat that endangers the environment, health and economic development. Assisting Member States in building technical capacity and strengthening cooperation related to the trafficking of waste is fundamental to achieving the SDGs.
Crimes that affect the environment, such as wildlife and forest crime, crimes in the fisheries sector, illegal mining and trafficking in precious metals and waste, have a negative impact not only on the environment but also on the economy, security and human health. These crimes contribute to biodiversity loss and climate change, threatening the achievement of SDG 13.

Through the Global Programme on Crimes that Affect the Environment (GPCAE), UNODC assists Member States in preventing and responding to these crimes. The Office currently provides technical assistance to more than 40 countries. Thus, UNODC’s work in preventing and addressing crimes that affect the environment includes conducting assessments and evidence-based research; strengthening national legal and global normative frameworks; strengthening national capacities for investigation, prosecution and adjudication; raising awareness and sharing knowledge; fostering sustainable livelihoods development and social entrepreneurship; and coordinate inter-agency efforts.

To fulfil its mandate, UNODC works in partnership with Member States, UN Agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the conservation community, academia and the private sector. In line with it, UNODC is part of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC), a coordinated global response to wildlife crime. The Office engages with academia, for example, to produce teaching material for the Teaching Module Series on Wildlife Crime, available at SHERLOC. This knowledge management portal facilitates the dissemination of information. Several databases, including case law and legislation databases, related to crimes that affect the environment can also be found in the portal.
UNODC’s research also contributes to advancing knowledge on the issue. Among the latest publications are the World Wildlife Crime Report and Illegal Wildlife Trade and Climate Change: Joining the dots.

Further, the Office contributes to tackling climate change and achieving the SDGs through the Law Enforcement Assistance Programme to Reduce Tropical Deforestation (LEAP), a partnership between UNODC and INTERPOL that seeks to build technical capacity and networks to assist Member States in the fight against illegal deforestation and related crimes. LEAP’s timber identification and document fraud training for relevant law enforcement agencies, for example, has led to significant wood seizures, including CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) protected timber, in Latin America and Southeast Asia.

Lastly, recognizing climate change as one of the triggers for humanitarian crises that exacerbate vulnerability to trafficking in persons, UNODC through its GLO.ACT initiative, produced a policy brief on the gendered linkages between climate change, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants. As a follow-up, UNODC is undertaking related research in partner countries and using recommendations from the policy brief to inform future programming to respond to trafficking in persons in the context of climate change.
SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Oceans, seas and marine resources are under threat due to human activities, including pollution, crimes in the fisheries sector, overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and trafficking of marine species. At the same time, it harms the economies of coastal countries by fuelling corruption and enabling an environment in which further crimes can be perpetrated. For instance, while fisheries and maritime safety are core to Africa’s “blue economy,” economic losses from crimes in the fisheries value chain are estimated at $2.5 billion per year, as noted in UNODC’s Strategic Vision for Africa 2030.

UNODC contributes to advancing SDG 14 through the Global Programme on Crimes that Affect the Environment, addressing crimes in the fisheries sector. These crimes take diverse forms: they can have no direct connection with fishing operations but take place on fishing vessels and facilities, such as drug trafficking and firearms trafficking; or happen within the value chain, closely linked to fishing operations (although they are not “illegal fishing” per se) and extend into the trade, ownership structures and financial services associated with the fishing sector, for example, fraud and forgery, corruption, money-laundering, tax crimes, customs and fiscal fraud as well as trafficking in persons.

Among the activities that UNODC engages in to tackle crimes in the fisheries sectors and protect the global blue economy are capacity building for Member States and their specialized agencies, delivering training and workshops, convening international high-level events and conferences, and raising awareness through, for example, developing educational and research resources on crimes in the fisheries sector.
Other UNODC programmes also provide specialized technical assistance in addressing crimes in the fisheries sector. For example, the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP) works with Member States to address crimes in the fisheries sector linked to the containerized trade supply chain. Under this component, CCP performs several activities, including providing specialized training, promoting inter-agency cooperation and supporting technical assessments. Also, the Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) assists Member States in enhancing and coordinating their efforts to tackle maritime crime and protecting the blue economy. One of the many activities undertaken by GMCP is to train prosecutors on crimes in the fisheries sector. Overall, the GMCP works across 70 countries addressing several threats, including terrorism at sea, illicit trafficking of nuclear material, drug trafficking, firearms trafficking, crimes in the fisheries sector, human trafficking and smuggling of migrants and piracy.

Another issue that compromises the achievement of SDG 14 is plastic pollution. Every minute, the equivalent of one garbage truck of plastic is dumped into the ocean. Through the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP), the Office works with Member States to address the illicit trafficking of plastic and hazardous waste by offering specialized training to Port Control Units, selected customs, law enforcement officials and other relevant agencies and by encouraging and facilitating inter-agency cooperation. Additionally, the Unwaste project has been launched to fight trafficking in waste between the EU and Southeast Asia, expand cooperation and partnerships, and support a circular economy. Through national - in Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand - and regional dialogues at the policy level, for example, Unwaste actively supports ASEAN countries to combat waste trafficking.
Wildlife and forest crimes significantly affect the environment and undermine efforts to achieve SDG 15. The trafficking of wild fauna and flora directly contributes to the global extinction crisis and biodiversity loss. At the same time, forests are under significant threat due to global deforestation, illegal logging and timber trafficking, which are progressing at an alarming rate. Environmental crimes are highly profitable and often used to finance other criminal activities and conflict in some cases. They are often interlinked with corruption and other economic crimes and directly impact local communities' livelihood and social and economic development.

Through the Global Programme on Crimes that Affect the Environment, UNODC assists Member States in preventing and responding to these crimes. The Office currently provides technical assistance to more than 40 countries, building capacity from the crime scene to court. UNODC also assist countries in adopting, strengthening and reviewing national legislation; improving their forensic capacity and increasing accessibility to wildlife forensic services; preventing and countering corruption related to crimes that affect the environment; improving international cooperation and cross-border investigations; and assessing their national criminal justice and preventive responses to wildlife and forest crime.

UNODC supports the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) to manage corruption risks. In 2015, Kenya and most of East Africa were experiencing a wildlife-poaching crisis, seeing numbers in flagship species deteriorating by the day. Corruption was identified as the main enabler of wildlife crime.

SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
In response to this, the Office began working with KWS in strengthening internal mechanisms and systems to better prevent future occurrences of corruption from taking place. After significant institutional and structural changes and strengthened accountability and transparency within the KWS, poaching has decreased, and the number of elephants, rhinos and big cats, including lions, has increased. Further, in 2022, KWS received a 100 per cent score in the 2022 Anti-Corruption Performance Indicator of Kenya’s Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission compared to 88 per cent in 2021 and 49 per cent in 2020.

Furthermore, UNODC-INTERPOL LEAP Programme assists Member States by supporting law enforcement in key countries across Latin America and Southeast Asia. Through enhancing intelligence sharing, building national task forces and providing operational support, mentoring and capacity building relating to combating forestry crime and illegal tropical deforestation, LEAP contributes to tackling climate change and achieving SDG 15. The programme further encourages multi-agency cooperation at the national and regional levels and public-private sector cooperation. A concrete example of LEAP’s activities is, for example, technical workshops on timber trafficking in Brazil. During training, frontline law enforcement officers identified suspicious shipments and conducted physical inspections in conjunction with UNODC and INTERPOL technical experts, which resulted in 130 cubic meters of illegal timber being seized and processed by Brazilian authorities.

UNODC further leads data collection, research and analysis on the issue, developing resources such as the Guide on Drafting Legislation to Combat Wildlife Crime and the World Wildlife Crime Report. The second edition of this flagship report presents the wildlife crime situation with a focus on the illicit trafficking of specific protected species of wild fauna and flora and offers a broad assessment of the nature and extent of the problem at the global level. In addition, concrete examples of UNODC’s support to prevent crimes in the forest sector include analyses of illegal timber trade, identifying vulnerabilities in the timber supply chain prone to crime and corruption and promoting capacity building to increase prevention and interdiction of timber trafficking.
Other UNODC programmes, such as the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP), Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP), Airport Communication Programme (AIRCOP) and the Global Programme against Money Laundering, also provide targeted and specialized technical assistance at particular stages of the enforcement and criminal justice chains when addressing crimes that affect the environment.

Lastly, UNODC is part of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC), consisting of five global entities - the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), UNODC, the World Bank Group (WBG) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) - working together to provide multi-agency support and capacity building to countries and regions affected by wildlife crime. Through these efforts, UNODC assists Member States in achieving SDG 15, particularly Target 15.7.
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.

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.
SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

SDG 17 is about revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. Thus, since September 2022, and as requested by the Secretary-General, the UN system has been taking concrete steps to support global efforts to address trafficking in all its forms. This year, a UN System-Wide Practice Group on Trafficking in All its Forms co-chaired by UNODC, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) was established to examine how the UN could work in a coherent and coordinated effort to address trafficking. Thirty-four entities developed a set of 23 recommendations to tackle this important issue effectively. Under the lead of the Deputy Secretary-General, UN System entities will implement a consolidated selection of the most sustainable and scalable recommended actions in the lead up to the Summit of the Future in September 2024.

Improved policy coherence and increased multi-stakeholder partnerships are the key to the most critical element of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: the ability of Member States to effectively raise, retain and manage their own domestic resources. Organized crime (and its related illegal economic activities) weakens state authority and institutions by fuelling corruption and violence and undermining sustainable development and the rule of law. Discouraging public and private investment, organized crime deprives the licit economy of the necessary resources for sustainable development across all its dimensions.
Through its work, UNODC contributes to advancing Target 17.9 on enhancing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries through cooperation. The Office is well placed to convene multi-stakeholder partnerships at the international level, and to assist Member States in convening them at the national level, to improve policy coherence and, consequently, the effectiveness of international, regional and national efforts to combat organized crime and related criminal activities. The Office applies the knowledge, skills and experience of its staff and governing bodies to help Member States to reach these goals.

Furthermore, UNODC contributes to Target 17.17 regarding effective partnerships between different sectors. The Office recognizes that promoting strong partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) is crucial to deal with complex issues such as the world drug problem, corruption and crime, which undermine the fabric of society. Partnerships with civil society, which includes NGOs, community groups, labour unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations and foundations, are essential to support UNODC in carrying out its global mandates.

The Office supports the participation of CSOs in intergovernmental meetings in line with relevant UNODC mandates. For example, to facilitate NGO participation in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), the Office has developed a Practical Guide for NGO Participants.

Additionally, UNODC supports building capacity of non-governmental stakeholders to help them improve their knowledge of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the Protocols Thereto, and related international drug policy instruments. Examples are the self-paced online course on Stakeholder Engagement in the Implementation of the Review Mechanism of the UNTOC and workshops under the SE4U project, formally known as “Stakeholder Engagement for the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), its Review Mechanism and Related Activities.” And the online platform WhatsOn, designed to bring together relevant stakeholders in the fight against transnational organized crime and corruption, including NGOs, academia and the private sector.
Furthermore, UNODC encourages public-private partnerships to promote coherent and coordinated strategies to prevent and counter crime. An example of it is the project “Public-Private Partnerships: Fostering Engagement with the Private Sector on the Implementation of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Trafficking in Persons Protocol” (PPP Project), which aims to enhance effective partnerships between the public and private sectors to better assist Member States in their implementation of the UNTOC and its Trafficking in Persons Protocol.

Finally, it is to be noted that the governing bodies of UNODC, namely the Commissions on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), concretely contribute towards the review of progress made towards the SDGs, which also input into the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), and various other similar fora.