



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



REGIONAL PROGRAMME

for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

UNODC's Regional Programme for Afghanistan and
Neighbouring Countries

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2019**

CONTENT

01

ABBREVIATIONS

03

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

05

FROM THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

09

Regional Programme 2019 Overview

10

SUB-PROGRAMME 1:
Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation

21

SUB-PROGRAMME 2:

International/Regional Cooperation in Legal Matters

31

SUB-PROGRAMME 3:

Prevention and Treatment of Addiction Among Vulnerable Groups

37

SUB-PROGRAMME 4:

Trends and Impacts

41

PARTNERSHIPS

43

PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE

ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Alternative Development
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AML	Anti-money laundering
AOTP	Afghan Opiate Trade Project (UNODC)
AKT	Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (Initiative)
ARIN-AP	Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Asia Pacific
ARIN-WCA	Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for West and Central Asia
ARIN-SA	Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Southern Africa
CARICC	Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre
CARIN	Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency network
CBM	Confidence Building Measures
CCP	Container Control Programme
CNPA	Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan
CN	Counter Narcotics
CFT	Counter Financing of Terrorism
COAFG	Country Officer for Afghanistan (UNODC)
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
CT	Counter Terrorism
DCA	Drug Control Agency (Tajikistan)
DCHQ	Drug Control Headquarters (Iran)
DDR	Drug Demand Reduction
DLO	Drug Liaison Officer
DTO	Drug Trafficking Organization
DRS	Drug Research Section (UNODC)
EU	European Union
EU - ACT	European Union Action Against Drugs and Organized Crime
EUROJUST	European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit
EUROPOL	European Union's Law Enforcement Agency
HT/SOM	Human Trafficking Smuggling of Migrants
HOA – IP	Heart of Asia Istanbul Process
GLO.ACT	Global Action Against Trafficking in Person and Smuggling of Migrants
FinTRACA	Financial Transaction and Reports Analysis Center of Afghanistan
INCB	International Narcotics Control Board
IRDCA	Inter-Regional Drug Control Approach
FATF	Financial Action Task Force

FAST	Family and Schools Together
FIU	Financial Investigation Unit
GCIC	Gulf Criminal Intelligence Centre
ICE	International Collaborative Exercise
INCB	International Narcotics Control Board
INTERPOL	International Police Force
JPC	Joint Planning Cell
LE	Law Enforcement
MLA	Mutual Legal Assistance
MCN	Ministry of Country Narcotics (Afghanistan)
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MVTS	Money or Value Transfer Services
NPS	New psycho-active substances
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PCM	Precursor Case Meeting
PLO	Permanent Liaison Officer
PPI	Paris Pact Initiative
RTAB	Research Trends and Analysis Branch (UNODC)
REFLEX	Regional Forensic and Law Enforcement Exercise
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
RWGP	Regional Working Group on Precursors
RWGFD	Regional Working Group on Forensic Capacity and Drugs
RWGT	Regional Working Group on Law Enforcement Training
ROCA	Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA)
RP	Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries
SASS	Statistics and Surveys Section (UNODC)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SELEC	Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre
SFTs	Suspicious Financial Transactions
SFP	SGM Strengthening Family Programme
SGM	Steering Group Meeting
SOM	Senior Officials Meeting
SRS	Senior Representative of the Secretary General
TI	Triangular Initiative
TOF	Trainer of the Facilitator
UNCAC	United Nations Convention against Corruption
TOT	Trainer of Trainer
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries (RP) team would like to express its sincere gratitude to counterparts in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan for their unwavering commitment, active engagement and continued partnership in making the Regional Programme a success. Our special thanks go to the Government of Kazakhstan, which hosted the 8th Programme Steering Committee in Almaty in July, 2019. In addition, we would also like to thank colleagues in the UNODC Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and the Programme for Central Asia for their support and partnership in the implementation of the Regional Programme in 2019. Our appreciation is also extended to UNODC Headquarters (HQ), including HQ regional, substantive and thematic sections/units for the support and guidance in moving towards Regional Programme objectives. Gratitude is also extended to past and present donors to the Regional Programme for their generous contributions that has funded the work, which includes the Governments of Canada, Denmark, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States for their contributions. Without the efforts and dedication of all the parties involved in the Regional Programme, the implementation of the achievements presented in this report would not have been possible. We look forward to your continued engagement and partnership in working to deliver further success.

DONORS TO THE RP

FROM THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE



Mark Colhoun

Special Advisor to the SRSG on Counter Narcotics, Regional Representative, Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries

The drug and crime challenges confronting the countries of West and Central Asia persist and are evolving. Insecurity in Afghanistan continues to result in high levels of opium production, which in turn, fuels transnational trafficking and an illicit economy. Over the last few years, the illicit drug landscape has become more complex, with a large increase in the production and trafficking of synthetic drugs emerging, and non-traditional methods of trafficking and routes being developed.

Our understanding of illicit financial flows and the links between the illicit economy and other forms of criminal activity including: trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants; smuggling of contraband items; and, financing of terrorism has grown. UNODC is working closely with its Member Countries to continue to build understanding of these linkages and address existing and emerging drug and crime threats in the region.

Now its eighth year, the UNODC Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries continues to work actively to address these many challenges, regularly reviewing priorities in partnership with its Member Countries to ensure the work is targeted and responsive. Activities are conducted, and operations supported that counter the harmful impact of illicit narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime on security, governance and socio-economic development. The Programme works to support Member Countries to bring perpetrators to justice, and to ensure strong, health-based support to victims of drug trafficking and crime.

There were multiple successes and achievements in 2019, with work taking place across many fronts related to our collective illicit drug and crime responses. The law enforcement working groups met regularly strengthening information exchange, with four operations developed and numerous backtracking investigations conducted. Regional workshops were conducted around critical areas including anti-money laundering and counter financing of terrorism, investigations related to illicit financial flows, asset recovery, cybercrime, and countering human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants. The Asset Recovery Inter-agency Network for West and Central Asia (ARIN-WCA) launched last year, continued to perform strongly in 2019.

Activities aimed at capacity building and sharing best practices on drug prevention and treatment were conducted, with 18 events reaching more than 1,700 beneficiaries. The Strengthening Families Prevention Programme (SFP) is running in all eight RP countries and has been adopted into the national curricula of three countries. Work also advanced on understanding evolving drug use patterns among youth and networking opportunities were supported among the analytical units to identify drug and crime trends in the wider region.

The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries remains one of UNODC's most important programmes. Not only it is building avenues for joint operations and sharing experiences and best practices but it is connecting West and Central Asia with other regions including Eastern and Southern Africa, Europe, Eurasia, Middle-East and South and South-East Asia. Technical experts and specialists from over 35 countries shared good practices and investigative case studies in events over the course of 2019.

The Regional Programme is grateful for the many partnerships that mutually strengthen our responses in the region. These include those with CSTO, EUROPOL, INTERPOL, OSCE, other UN agencies and bilateral and multilateral projects such as EU-ACT. It includes the experts from counterpart national agencies of police, financial investigations and drug treatment bodies from outside the region that contributed to sharing experiences and good practices. The Regional Programme also continues to work closely at the strategic level with the Paris Pact Initiative and the Heart of Asia Istanbul Process (HoA-IP). Both these initiatives play an active role in bringing global attention and support to the region to address illicit drug and crime issues. The Regional Programme is the operational partner for the Paris Pact in the region and

is an official observer to the HoA-IP, supporting both in an operational and advisory capacity, building synergies between them.

The Regional Programme exhibits a strong sense of solidarity with Member Countries in tackling these serious issues and we are greatly encouraged by the positive feedback received from Member Countries, donors and other stakeholders during 2019.

All Member Countries and current donors gave a unanimous vote of support for the development of a new phase of the Regional Programme to cover the years 2021 to 2025, which will be developed in the course of the coming year. The Regional Programme will continue to serve as an important regional platform to bring countries of the region together to share information and discuss mutual responses to current, emerging and evolving drug and crime challenges.

In conclusion, I express my sincere gratitude to the many individuals from our Member Countries, our donors, supporting stakeholders and the team over the past year for their tireless efforts and hard work, that have made this such a successful and important programme.

THE RP TEAM

Mark Colhoun

Regional Representative and Advisor to the
Special Representative
to the Secretary General on Afghanistan

Jeremy Milsom

Senior Programme Coordinator

Hideki Hosaka

Project Coordinator

Danilo Campisi

Programme Coordinator-International /
Regional Cooperation in Legal Matters

Azam Toshpulatov

National Programme Officer-Regional Law
Enforcement Cooperation

Marhabo Jonbekova

Programme Officer-International / Regional
Cooperation in Legal Matters

Roya Soltanian

National Programme Officer-Prevention and
Treatment of Drug Dependence among
Vulnerable Groups

Nasratullah Zarghoon

National Programme Coordinator-Trends and
Impacts

Ottabek Murodov

Senior National Programme Officer
(Programmes) – Secretariat

Lyazzat Zhussupova

Senior National Programme Officer
(Programmes and Finance) - Secretariat

NATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

Yana Demchuk

Programme Focal Point

Zhanerke Omarova

National Expert – Drug Prevention
and Treatment

Salima Dadybaeva

Programme Focal Point

Muhammad Amin

Programme Focal Point

Gulzhaz Bazilova

Support Officer
(Programmes and Finance) – Secretariat

REGIONAL PROGRAMME 2019 OVERVIEW

53

EVENTS

24

TRAININGS

16

OPERATIONAL
MEETINGS

9

WORKSHOPS

3

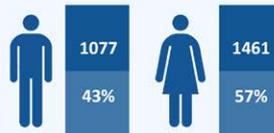
OPERATIONS

1

High-Level
Conference

2538

PARTICIPANTS



41

COUNTRIES

officials participated
including 8 RP
countries

SUB-PROGRAMME 1

Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation

In 2019, Sub-programme 1 (SP1) implemented a range of programme activities in the field of law enforcement cooperation at the regional level based on consultations with the Member States of the Regional Program. The activities were designed according to the needs of counterparts and focused on developing communication to increase the level of cooperation, as well as capacity building to set a regional response against illicit trafficking of drugs and diversion of precursor chemicals. The technical assistance provided by SP1 through the programme activities was grounded on three pillars including development of law enforcement training structures, preventing diversion of precursor chemicals, countering narcotics, and enhancing the forensic capacity in the region.

To ensure implementation standards of the programme activities and ensure cooperation in each Member State, SP1 led three working groups at regional level including the Regional Working Group on Precursors (RWGP), the Regional Working Group on Forensic Capacity and Illicit Drugs (RWGFD), and the Regional Working Group on Law Enforcement Training (RWGT). These working groups consisted of senior law enforcement officials from eight Member States and gathered on biannual basis with insights into the policy landscape in their respective countries, their needs, and challenges. Through the meetings of these working groups, SP1 responded to these needs and carried out activities to interlink the national or sub-regional efforts and set a regional response. During these meetings, not only the illicit drug situation was analysed, but also emerging threats were discussed and regional targets along with roadmaps were identified for remedial actions. To enhance law enforcement capacity, SP1 organized training courses and provided recommendations to ensure standardization of law enforcement training structures in Member States.

Further to serving as information sharing networks, the regional working groups promoted an operational approach at regional level and three regional operations were supported in 2019. Besides regional operations, under each working group, operational case meetings were conducted on ad hoc basis to identify the new cases, set targets, and cooperate in investigations at regional level. The operational case meetings brought together investigators who handled the investigations in participating each country. Considering the criminal intelligence information, all these meetings were conducted in confidentiality in accordance with the laws of Member States.

SP1 also continued supporting the Triangular Initiative (TI), which involves the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, and the Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan (AKT) Initiative. Both these initiatives bring relevant countries along known trafficking routes together to enhance operational cooperation and coordination.

REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS

In 2019, Sub-programme 1 conducted 10 regional meetings under the three working groups including the Regional Working Group on Forensic Capacity and Illicit Drugs (RWGFD) and Regional Working Group on Precursors (RWGP). These meetings provided platforms to share information and take joint actions to set a regional counter narcotics strategy.



At the RWGFD meeting in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, the participants shared information and discussed over the illicit drug situation in 2018-2019, major seizures, activities of national forensic laboratories, drug tests, technical aspects and challenges in forensic examination of new psychoactive substances (NPS). The meeting resulted in making proposals on further strengthening of regional cooperation on forensic analysis and countering illicit drugs. The participants stressed the importance of “Operation REFLEX”. Furthermore, the participants expressed the interest of their respective countries in joining the UNODC International

Collaborative Exercise (ICE) and Early Warning Advisory on NPS.

At the RWGP meeting in Tehran, (I.R. of) Iran, the participants shared information about the precursor trafficking situation and new trends such as trade in precursor chemicals through the internet. The participants presented major precursor seizures in 2019 and reviewed the evolving situation with respect to illicit trafficking of precursors. Furthermore, the participants expressed strong support of their respective countries to the regional “Operation Substitute” on preventing diversion and illicit trafficking of precursor chemicals used in heroin production and they agreed to cooperate in the next phase of this operation. The plan for Operation Substitute was finalized in due course.



REGIONAL OPERATIONS

In 2019, SP1 facilitated development and coordination of three region-wide operations in the field of countering narcotics and preventing diversion of precursor chemicals. These operations were titled as “REFLEX 2019” (Regional Forensic and Law enforcement Exercise in 2019), Counter-narcotics Operations “AKT-DLO” and Operation “TI-LO” in November and December 2019.



In the field of countering narcotics, based on cooperation ensured by meetings of RWGFD, the Operation REFLEX-2019 was carried out focusing on countering the new psycho-active substances (NPS) and synthetic drugs under coordination of the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) and with participation of law enforcement agencies from (I.R. of) Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, (I.R. of) Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, (I.R. of) Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. This operation established the NPS Early Warning mechanism in the region and has become an annual exercise conducted through CARICC. During the operation 6.9 tons of synthetic drugs and NPS, including 54,885 tablets, were seized in participating countries with major seizures made by the Russian Federation.

In the field of countering narcotics, “Operation AKT- DLO” was conducted within the framework of the AKT

Initiative. UNODC supported the deployment of 2 Drug Liaison Officers (DLOs) from each country according to the following scheme: 2 DLOs from Afghanistan to Tajikistan; 2 DLOs from Kyrgyzstan to Tajikistan; 1 DLO from Tajikistan to Afghanistan and 1 DLO from Tajikistan to Kyrgyzstan. In the same period, to ensure countering narcotics throughout borders of Afghanistan, operation “TI-LO” was conducted as part of the Triangular Initiative. Afghanistan, (I.R. of) Iran, and Pakistan have appointed liaison officers (LOs) to the Joint Planning Cell (JPC) for the duration of the operation. UNODC supported the deployment of LOs from Afghanistan and Pakistan. This intelligence-led drug interdiction operation focused on information sharing and cross-border follow-up operations on illicit drugs and precursors. These placements have strengthened regional cooperation and resulted in information sharing on trafficking of illicit drugs.

In October 2019 the Regional Programme, jointly with CARICC, convened an expert meeting on the regional operation “Operation Substitute Phase 3” to identify and intercept smuggled consignments of acetic anhydride as well as of non-controlled chemicals that are directly used in the illicit manufacture of heroin. Law enforcement officers of precursors units from Afghanistan, (I.R. of) Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan as well as representatives from the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), CARICC and UNODC participated in this meeting. Participating countries approved the plan and modalities of the third phase of operation “Substitute” and the operation was planned to be launched confidentially in due course.



SUCCESS STORY

COUNTERING DRUG TRAFFICKING ALONG THE NORTHERN ROUTE THROUGH ENHANCED REGIONAL COOPERATION UNDER AKT INITIATIVE

Afghanistan is the world's largest opium producing country accounting for 82% of the global opium production. For heroin trafficked through the Northern Route, the most significant path is considered to be Afghanistan to Tajikistan to Kyrgyzstan and ultimately to Russian Federation. The Afghanistan – Tajikistan border in particular is lengthy, remote and mountainous and challenging for the two countries to monitor.

As part of the RP's mandate to strengthen advocacy among its member states and regional law enforcement cooperation and coordination, the tripartite Afghanistan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan (AKT) initiative was launched in 2012 as a platform to strengthen cross-border cooperation, information exchange and operational activities to fight against drug trafficking and associated transnational organized crime along the Northern Trafficking Route.

Capitan Hafizi is the Counter Narcotics Police Officer working for the Planning and Operations Directorate of Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA). He is one of the six nominated Drug Liaison Officers who was stationed in Tajikistan for 55 days in 2019 under the AKT initiative. His placement under the initiative did not only strengthen regional cooperation but also resulted in drug seizure information exchange of over 1,143 Kg of different kinds of illicit drugs including but not limited to heroin, hashish, methamphetamine and opium as well as in information exchange of over 28 drug traffickers operating on the Afghan-Tajikistan border.

Capitan Hafizi stated that “The Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) operating along the Afghan-Tajikistan border have turned into smaller and professional organizations able to move longer distances. The people living at the border region such as Afghanistan's Badakhshan Province and Tajikistan's Gorno-Badakhshan Region share the same language, cultural values and ethnicity providing them an advantage to change their trafficking routes and synchronise their activities easily. Hence, to fight trafficking along the route and to dismantle these DTOs, a more coordinated and holistic approach is required that is based on mutual trust, information exchange and joint operations.”

REGIONAL BACKTRACKING INVESTIGATIONS

In 2019 the Regional Programme conducted two Precursors Case Meetings (PCM) (Tehran, July 16 and Almaty, October 22), with participation of representatives of the law enforcement agencies from Afghanistan, (I.R. of) Iran, Pakistan, China, UAE as well as UNODC and INCB. During the meetings participants reviewed 13 major precursor seizure cases on over 100 tons of illicit precursors. Information shared at these meetings lead to the conduct of regional/international backtracking investigations which yielded significant results including additional seizures as well as strengthened confidence and information sharing between participating countries.



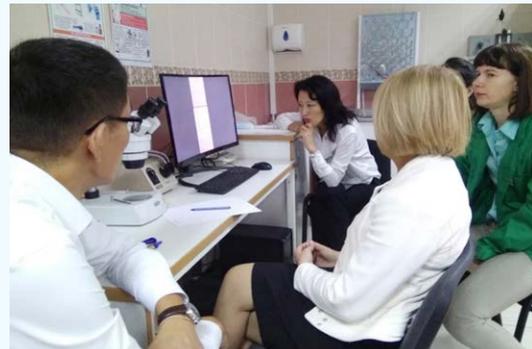
TRAINING COURSES and CAPACITY BUILDING EVENTS

To enhance counter-narcotics capacity and functions of both law enforcement agencies and forensic institutions, SP1 organized 15 advanced level training courses in 2019. In these courses, a total of 197 officers from both law enforcement agencies and forensic laboratories in the region were trained. The training courses consisted of mobile training courses in participating countries as well as courses at international training centres in Domodedovo and Krasnoyarsk.



Specialist training on forensic analysis related to identification of illicit drugs was conducted through three separate courses in 2019 at leading specialist laboratories in Belarus, Italy, and Lithuania. There was an emphasis on laboratory analysis of synthetic drugs and NPS.

Through the links established under the RWGFD and these courses, a regional network of criminal justice laboratories was established successfully. Currently, this network consists of over 60 senior level representatives (i.e. directors / deputies and leading experts) of forensic laboratories from all Member States of the Regional Programme.



15 Training Courses in Belarus, Italy, Lithuania and Russia & through three mobile training courses held in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, **for 197 Officers** from the law enforcement agencies and forensic laboratories.



3 Regional Operations were conducted

“Operation REFLEX – 2019” resulted in seizures of 6.9 tons of synthetic drugs.

Operation “AKT-DLO” was conducted in November and December 2019.

Operation “TI-LO” was launched in November 2019, under the TI and JPC.

Plans for **“Operation Substitute”** finalized.

SUB-PROGRAMME 2

INTERNATIONAL/REGIONAL
COOPERATION IN LEGAL MATTERS

In 2019, Sub-programme 2 “International/Regional Cooperation in Legal Matters” continued providing support to harmonize legal provisions across the region in line with the United Nations Drugs and Crime conventions and international standards and norms. Furthermore, the programme facilitated better contacts among relevant judicial authorities and supported institutions responsible for international/regional cooperation in legal matters to address drug and crime related threats. During the year, 16 regional and inter-regional capacity building and institutional development interventions were undertaken on important technical areas including mutual legal assistance and international cooperation, anti-money laundering and counter financing of terrorism, illicit use of money and value transfer services, asset recovery, cybercrime, financial investigation and disruption of illicit financial flows derived from human trafficking. More than 510 senior experts/high officials from law enforcement, prosecution services, judicial institutions and financial intelligence units from 31 countries participated in these activities whose main objective was to build trust, enhance coordination and cooperation to better implement the UN drugs, crime and terrorism international legal instruments.

ASSET RECOVERY – ARIN-WCA

The Regional Programme continued to provide technical support to the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network of West and Central Asia (ARIN-WCA). Following a series of consultative and drafting meetings, countries in the region, under the auspices and with the support of the programme, established and launched the Network in November 2018. The Republic of Kazakhstan held the first Presidency of ARIN-WCA since its launch and guided the network’s operations through the end of 2019. Under the leadership of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Kazakhstan, with administrative support of the Network’s





Secretariat based at the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the technical support of Sub-Programme 2, a series of capacity building and institutional development activities were organized which enhanced regional potential in depriving criminals of ill-gotten assets obtained through drug trafficking or transnational organized crime and further strengthened cooperation among the eight jurisdictions of the West and Central Asia. As a result of the work carried out in 2019, ARIN-WCA achieved important objectives including the development of its Strategic Plan (2019-2023), approval of a 'peer review' programme starting from the middle of 2020, whereby regional jurisdictions, with technical support of the Sub-Programme will review their respective asset recovery legislative and institutional capacity. Furthermore, an effective outreach strategy was agreed and implemented by, inter alia, attending ARINs and other regional asset recovery related meetings, with a view to marketing the establishment of ARIN-WCA and enhancing international asset recovery cooperation as well as discussing the possibility to standardize the process of record keeping among and beyond ARIN-WCA jurisdictions.



At the end of 2019, the First Annual General Meeting (AGM) was co-hosted by the General Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the technical support of the Sub-programme in Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan. The AGM provided a platform for Member-countries to present the latest achievements in the area of asset recovery, best practices, challenges and further developments. The AGM was also attended by representatives of other ARINs (i.e. CARIN and ARIN-AP¹), the Attorney General Office of Guernsey and the Asset Recovery and Management Agency of Ukraine. The meeting ended with a set of conclusions on the achieved level of cooperation, outreach to other ARINs globally to further enhance regional/international asset recovery cooperation, importance for the Member-countries to participate in the peer review exercise of the legal and institutional asset recovery capacity, as well as on the need to improve communication and transparency. Representatives of the donor-community including the European Union and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland expressed satisfaction with the achievements of ARIN-WCA and commended UNODC for the key role played in facilitating the process, and reiterated their commitment to continue supporting the ARIN-WCA initiative that provides synergy to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The meeting concluded with the General Prosecutor's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic assuming the Presidency of the Network for 2020.



1 Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency network and Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network Asia-Pacific respectively.

ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING/COUNTER FINACING OF TERRORISM (AML/CFT)

Combatting money laundering and terrorism financing remain crucial for all countries in the region and beyond. In 2019, the Programme increased its efforts to support regional countries developing and strengthening effective cooperation mechanisms, with several initiatives to enable competent authorities to effectively cooperate at the regional and international level supported. These efforts produced significant results not only in terms of information exchange between financial intelligence units and financial supervisors with their foreign counterparts, but also created the basis for providing cooperation, consistent with the applicable international standards in areas such as disposing of property that is frozen or seized, or has been confiscated, asset tracing and recovery, and other technical areas related to or relevant for AML/CFT.



Relevant AML/CFT technical assistance and legal advisory services to senior practitioners and operative staff of financial intelligence units (FIUs), law enforcement, prosecutors and other relevant national agencies of the RP countries using different platforms was provided. These interventions delivered on key observations agreed at Paris Pact meetings as well as FATF studies deriving from the illicit trafficking of opiates and focused on combatting illicit use of money or value transfer services (MVTs), the fight against



organised crime related to drug trafficking through assets seizure, investigation of money laundering with cryptocurrencies, Darkweb and open source intelligence as well as financial disruption associated with transnational organized crime. In total, 8 regional and inter-regional trainings, workshops and meetings were organized with participation of more than 350 experts.

The impact of these interventions has been promising and tangible according to the feedback received from the beneficiaries. Results include:

- An increased volume of relevant financial transaction exchanged between regional countries ²
- A sharp decrease of information/cooperation request processing time ³
- Increased access to foreign counterparts outside the region
- Confidence and trust among regional partners consolidated
- Informal experts' groups created via different networking applications making informal communication fast and effective

² Although specific figures were not shared given the sensitivity of the information, it is estimated that the volume of the information exchanged increased between 30 and 40%

³ The average dropped from 90 to 20/30 days

FIU TO FIU MEETINGS AND THE MOU ON ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING AND COUNTERING FINANCING OF TERRORISM (AML / CFT)

Bilateral and regional 'FIU to FIU' meetings, network building around key aspects of illicit financial flows, and supporting countries to develop and sign regional MoUs on AML/CFT remain pivotal to the RP regional cooperation strategy.

In 2019, two regional "FIU to FIU" meetings were organized to discuss issues of utmost importance including updates on the Regional/Bilateral MoU on AML/CFT, potential exchange of operational information among financial intelligence units (FIUs) in West and Central Asia, updates on exchange of suspicious financial transactions (SFTs), challenges and prospects for regional and inter-regional cooperation with focus on illicit financial flows. The first meeting was held in Beijing, China on 1-5 July 2019 and the second in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 22 November 2019. Additionally,



several bilateral FIU to FIU meetings were supported or facilitated.

The regional 'FIU to FIU' platform contributed to strengthening cooperation mechanisms for countering illicit financial flows in West and Central Asia, and provided an effective vehicle to promote and support the negotiation and signing of MoU on AML/CFT, identified areas of assistance and cooperation, as well as promoted trust and exchange of SFTs.

In 2019, three additional MoU on AML/CFT were signed between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, Pakistan and Kazakhstan, and Pakistan and the People's Republic of China. This brings the number of MoU on AML/CFT signed with the support of the RP to eleven (beyond the initial target).

INFORMAL GROUP OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING EXPERTS

For the last three years, Sub-programme 2 provided technical support to countries in the region to discuss the establishment of an informal group of experts on trafficking in persons to promote international/regional cooperation in the fight against human trafficking and smuggling of migrants. These training workshops organized in cooperation with the Academy of Law Enforcement Agencies under the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan provided a conducive environment for acknowledgement of the importance of accelerating a targeted work in this specific area to strengthen international/regional cooperation in trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants associated with illicit financial flows. At the regional workshop on "International and Regional Cooperation to Disrupt Illicit Financial Flows Derived from Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants" held on 1-2 October 2019 in Nur-Sultan, Republic of Kazakhstan, countries agreed to conduct a study on illicit financial flows derived from trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants in West and Central Asia. Officials also agreed on the need to revitalize and operationalize the existing informal regional network on Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants with technical support of the Sub-Programme under the leadership of the Academy of Law Enforcement Agencies under the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Activities involved during

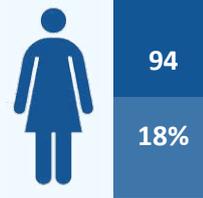
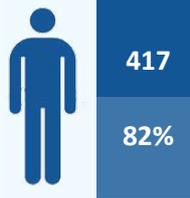


511

PARTICIPANTS

31

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

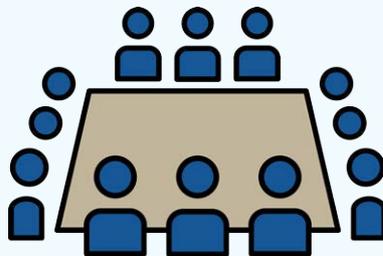


454

participants were from **8** RP countries

56

participants were from **23** countries beyond the RP region



16

Events Conducted

The Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network West and Central Asia (ARIN-WCA) is operational with an Annual General Meeting (AGM) and two Steering Group meetings run in 2019. ARIN-WCA Member States are prioritising technical assistance and training in this field within the grouping.

2 Informal working groups on cybercrime and HT/SOM were further strengthened.

SP 2 HIGHLIGHTS

2 Regional FIU – FIU meetings were held and 3 additional MoU’s on AML/CFT signed in 2019.

Technical hands-on training workshops involving sharing of best practices from around the world were held on topics such as combatting illicit use of MVTS, asset seizure, investigating money laundering with crypto-currencies, Darkweb and open source intelligence, and financial disruptions associated with transnational organised crime, among others.

SUB PROGRAMME 3

PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF
ADDICTION AMONG VULNERABLE
GROUPS

The Regional Programme works to reduce the social impact of drug use and risky behaviour, especially among vulnerable groups. Sub Programme 3 (SP3) addressed these needs through various evidence-based activities around prevention and treatment. The activities include youth, family and schools' education programmes, training and capacity building workshops that allow exchange of successful practices based on international standards, and support for networking among designated counterpart agencies around the region.

PREVENTION OF DRUG USE AND OTHER HIGH RISKY BEHAVIOUR

In 2019, the Regional Programme through its Sub-programme 3 (SP3) enhanced the capacity of regional policy and decision-makers and practitioners to develop comprehensive evidence-based drug use prevention programmes. The goal of this work was to improve the coverage and quality of drug use prevention programmes and policies thereby improving prevention of drug abuse in the RP countries. This work has been primarily carried out through the steady roll out of a comprehensive evidence-based drug prevention programmes known as the Strengthening Families Programme (SFP 10-14). A significant achievement in 2019, was that the SFP 10-14 has now reached all eight Member Countries. The work is conducted in close collaboration with the UNODC Global Programme on Drug Use Prevention⁴, and in 2019 achieved the following:

- 32 national SFP 10-14 facilitators from the I.R. of Afghanistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan were awarded Trainer of the Facilitator (TOF) certificates, which enables them to work as “National SFP 10-14 Trainers” in their respective countries.



⁴ Prevention of drug use, HIV/AIDS and crime among young people through family skills training programmes in low- and middle-income countries

- 125 teachers/psychologists from the I.R. of Afghanistan, the I.R. of Pakistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan participated in SFP 10-14 workshops. The 125 national facilitators have been working as “National SFP 10-14 Facilitators”.
- 1,166 family members including 406 youth participated in the SFP 10-14 in the I.R. of Afghanistan, the I. R. of Pakistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.
- * SFP 10-14 was included in the work plan of the Autonomous Educational Organization “Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools” for 2019-2020 and added to the curriculum of school psychologists. The positive feedback by the participating families could be found through:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYzk8SA0EEo>,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OI2EtK-uHTc>.

Having rolled out the SFP 10 to 14 in all Member Countries, the Regional Programme convened a special workshop for practitioners from all over the region to share experiences, lessons learned, challenges and solutions to working with parents and teachers to reduce risk taking behaviour among youth. Countries that had adapted and adopted the programme into their national curricula were able to share the steps taken to move the programme into policy. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Kazakhstan in Almaty in December 2019.



A high-level policy event entitled “Prevention Drug Abuse in Educational Settings: Fostering Regional Cooperation and Partnership” was convened jointly by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Narcotics Control of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Regional Programme in Islamabad in February 2019. The event brought together policy makers and senior officials in charge of drug use prevention and health promotion to formulate a regional response to drug abuse in educational settings. The event contributed towards implementation of Resolution 61/2 “strengthening efforts to prevent drug abuse in educational settings” adopted during the sixty-first session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March 2018. The conference was followed by a one-day training session on “Preventing Drug Abuse in Educational Settings,” hosted by the Anti-Narcotics Force Academy in Islamabad. In total, 117 school teachers, university lecturers, drug prevention professionals and practitioners as well as law enforcement officials participated in the later training session. The participants brainstormed ways and means by which the drug abuse among youth could be prevented in education settings, in the framework of international standards.



Finally, an abstract on the effectiveness of the SFP 10-14 in the Islamic Republic of Iran was submitted to the “Road to Global Mental Health Conference”, organized by Kings’ College London, on 29 October 2019. The abstract was presented as a poster at the conference and received positive feedback from audiences.

DRUG DEPENDENCE TREATMENT AND CARE

The Regional Programme works closely with Member Countries to strengthen capacity in evidence-informed and human rights-based drug dependence treatment, with a focus also on networking and sharing best practices. In 2019, the capacity of drug treatment policy makers and professionals was strengthened through a range of initiatives that included:

- Convening the 4th meeting of the regional network of Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) Coordination Centres of West and Central Asia in Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan. This regional network serves as a platform for sharing best practices in evidence-based drug dependence treatment and care services in West and Central Asia.
- A three-day regional in-service training of trainers (TOT) workshop on “Diagnosis and Treatment of Opioids Overdose, and Withdrawal” was held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran in commemoration of the International Overdose Awareness Day (31 August).
- A three-day training workshop on “Treatment of Children with Drug Use Problems with special attention to synthetic drugs” was convened in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan, in recognition of the Universal Children’s Day (20 November).



Activities
involved during

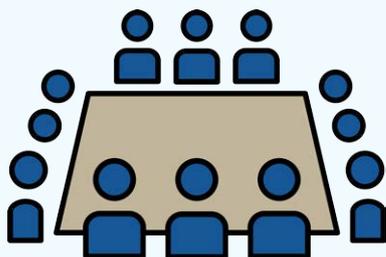
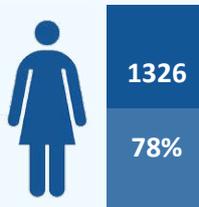
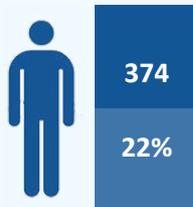


1700

PARTICIPANTS

12

COUNTRIES
REPRESENTED



18

Events Conducted

Gender equality and women's empowerment has continued to be prioritized in 2019 and the percentage of female participants in SP3 training workshops has reached 78%.

160
Experts from RP and beyond region participated in these and other DDR events in 2019.



In 2019, SP3 implemented directly or supported the implementation of **18** Activities reaching **1,728** Beneficiaries in the region.

Under the SFP 10-14, **125** Teachers/Psychologists are delivering SFP (10-14) as national facilitators in RP countries across the region. **32** were awarded Trainer of the Facilitator (TOF) certificates this year from various RP Countries. **1166** Family members including **406** Youth attended SFP (10-14) training this year.

SUB-PROGRAMME 4

Trends and Impact

To be effective, counter narcotics interventions need to be evidence-based supported by the latest and accurate information. The Trends and Impact Sub-Programme (SP-4) of the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries (RP) works to support its counterparts to form evidence-based and informed decisions and policies through trends analysis and impact monitoring capacity at regional level.

Working in close collaboration with its partner governments and regional and international coordination agencies such as, the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) and the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process (HoA-IP), SP-4 is actively engaged in strengthening capacities in data generation, collection, management, analysis, reporting and its use in the region. The SP-4 also supports studies and research on narcotic and crime that has linkages and impacts on socio-economic factors and wider concerns of human security.

At the strategic level, SP-4 provides a neutral platform for its partner governments to strengthen regional information coordination and cooperation through organizing high-level conferences and meetings to discuss and agree on interventions to counter illicit drugs and associated transnational organized crime. It also reviews indicators on law enforcement, criminal justice and drug demand reduction and reports on trends and institutional capacities. As such SP-4 is a cross-cutting sub-programme that is integrated with and supports the three others sub-programmes of the RP.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2019

Through SP-4, the RP continues its support to the Drug Control Agency (DCA) of Tajikistan on drug reporting, specifically to produce and publish its National Annual Drug Review Report for 2018. The report is published in English and Russian languages and provides an overview of the drug situation in the country which can help in better addressing evidence-based counter narcotics efforts.

SP-4 of the RP in collaboration with the Drug Research Section (DRS) of the Research, Trends and Analysis Branch (RTAB) in UNODC HQ, and the Drug Control Agency of Tajikistan produced the final report on Youth Survey on Substance Use and Health in Tajikistan. Similar studies to identify the prevalence of drug use, access and availability among youth in the academic setting are also carried out in Afghanistan and Kazakhstan with the final reports expected to be produced in the first quarter of the 2020. The study in

Afghanistan is being conducted in partnership with UNICEF, which has provided co-funding for the exercise to extend the study to cover children out of school.

Furthermore, SP-4 continues to support specialized research. The RP in partnership with the Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT) is conducting a Regional Study on Illicit Financial Flow derived from Trafficking in Person, Smuggling of Migrants covering Afghanistan (I.R.), Iran (I.R.), Iraq (I.R.), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan (I.R.), Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Similarly, under SP-4 of the RP efforts are underway to conduct a Study on Illicit Financial Flows along the Northern Route resulting from Afghan Opiate Trafficking in collaboration with the Drug Research Section (DRS) of the Research, Trends and Analysis Branch (RTAB) in UNODC, HQ, and the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC).

HIGH LEVEL CONFERENCES, ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS RAISING

UNODC's Regional Programme and the Secretariat of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process (HoA-IP) at Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan organized a Joint Regional Conference on Counter Narcotics and Counter Terrorism under the auspices of HoA-IP. The conference took place in Almaty on 22 July 2019 and was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The conference was attended by more than seventy Senior Officials of the HoA-IP participating and supporting countries as well as supporting organizations. It focused discussion on practical activities that could be undertaken under the CN-CBM and



CT-CBM to strengthen coordination and cooperation among HoA-IP participating and supporting countries as well as supporting international organizations. It is important to state that all RP member countries are also participating countries under HoA-IP.

On 24 July 2019 in Almaty, Kazakhstan a coordination meeting of the Triangular Initiative (TI) of counter-narcotics authorities of the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan was conducted to discuss strategic and tactical responses for combating opiate and illicit precursors trafficking to/from Afghanistan through confidence-building measures, information exchange and operational activities between Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan.

The Regional Programme organized a Senior Officials Meeting of the tripartite Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (AKT) Initiative on 23 July 2019 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The delegates of the member countries of the initiative discussed issues related to cooperation in countering drugs and illicit precursors and agreed to launch a joint counter narcotics operation with a primary focus on information exchange on illicit drugs and precursors seizures as well as cross-border follow-up operations. As a result of this meeting, the member countries assigned Drug Liaison Officers (DLOs) to Tajikistan which significantly contributed to strengthening cross-border cooperation, information exchange and joint-operation activities.

UNODC in collaboration with Central Asian Regional Information Coordination Centre (CARICC) organized the second regional working group meeting of the Heads of the Information and Analytical Units of the Drug Control Agencies (DCAs) on 21 and 22 August 2019 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The meeting was organized to build upon the progress of the first meeting which was organized in November 2018. During the meeting the representatives of RP member countries as well as Azerbaijan, Russia and RATS SCO reviewed and further refined a CARICC developed methodology for assessing the drug situation in the participating states. The participants also reviewed the draft analysis of the drug situation in the CARICC member states for 2016-2018, prepared by CARICC in accordance with the concept and methodology developed and rolled out after the first meeting.



PARTNERSHIPS

Addressing illicit drug trafficking and related transnational organized crime in West and Central Asia is an immense challenge. The human, technical and financial resources available to counter the scourge are stretched thin as nations work to cope with a complex problem that is constantly evolving. To ensure the most comprehensive and effective coverage, the RP seeks to forge strong partnerships with the various regional and international bodies working in the region. This includes as a first step, coordination with the broader UN family towards the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and strong Institutions. UNODC works closely with UN Country Teams at the national level, with the Regional Programme providing inputs on work that builds national capacity through regional connectivity.

In 2019 in order to synergize efforts, the Regional Programme worked in partnership and strengthened cooperation with many different public and private counterparts including the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, CSTO, EUROPOL, INTERPOL, the Central Asian Regional Informational and Coordination Centre, the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism, the Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, the Asset Recovery and Management Agency of Ukraine, the Attorney General Office of Guernsey, the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the General Prosecutor's Office of Uzbekistan, the People's Bank of China, ABN AMRO Bank, ARIN-AP, ARIN-SA, ARIN-WCA, CARIN, FinTRACA, OSCE, EU-ACT, the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nayatel, Western Union and UNICEF.

Within UNODC, the RP continues to play a central role in a three-tier approach to harmonize programmes at the country, regional and global levels. The RP aligns activities with the Country Programmes for Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran as well as the Programme for Central Asia to ensure complementarity and economies of scale with regards to efficient programming and sharing of expertise. This is further illustrated by the close cooperation between the RP and Global Programmes such as the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, the Container Control Programme and the Afghan Opiate Trade Project, among others. The RP connects West and Central Asia with neighbouring regions, through the Networking the Networks Initiative, which supports, among other work, the linking of the Central Asian Regional Information

and Coordination Centre (CARICC) and the Joint Planning Cell (JPC) with the Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC), and the Gulf Criminal Intelligence Centre (GCIC).

At the strategic level, the RP coordinates closely with the Paris Pact Initiative and also the Heart of Asia (Istanbul) Process. The Paris Pact Initiative has served for many years as a crucial strategic guiding body for UNODC program-ming in the region and the RP is a primary operational vehicle for the Initiative, helping to translate the recommen-dations of the expert working groups into action. The Heart of Asia Process complements the Paris Pact Initiative, being a partnership of countries more closely neighbouring Afghanistan. The RP has been engaged with the Counter Narcotics Confidence Building Measure of the Heart of Asia Process and is helping to deliver the goals and outcomes pursued by that group. UNODC is an official observer to the Heart of Asia Process and participated and spoke in both the closed door and open sessions of the Senior Officials Meeting held in Ankara and Istanbul, Turkey in June and December 2019 respectively. As a result of enhanced cooperation and coordination, the RP also participated and presented UNODC at HoA-IP's Eighth Ministerial Meeting on 9 December in Istanbul, Turkey.



PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE

The Eighth Programme Steering Committee (PSC) meeting of the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries (RP-ANC) was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 24 July 2019. The meeting was attended by senior representatives from Drug Control Agencies, Ministries of Interior, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Permanent Missions from eight countries of the Regional Programme as well as donor countries and CARICC. The participants of the steering committee meeting reviewed the implementation and achievements of the Programme in 2018-2019, discussed and agreed on operational priorities for 2019 as well as the extension of the second phase from 2016-2020. RP Member countries unanimously supported the extension of the RP into a third phase to run from 2021 to 2025.



CONTACT INFORMATION

UNODC Regional Programme For Afghanistan And Neighboring Countries

Email: unodc-rpanc@un.org

Kabul Office

UNOCA Compound, Kabul-Jalalabad Highway,
Industrial Zone, District 9, P.O. Box 1772, Kabul,
Afghanistan
Telephone: +93 (0) 794-585-626
Email: unodc-rpanc@un.org

Islamabad Office

Street Address: Plot # 5-11 Diplomatic Enclave
Fourth Road, G-5, Islamabad Pakistan
Telephone: +92 51 2601461-2
Email: unodc-rpanc@un.org

Tehran Office

Street Address: No. 2, Behesht Dead-end, Eram
Alley, Vanak St., Vanak Sq. Tehran, 1994715311,
Iran P.O. Box: 15875-4557
Telephone: (+98-21) 8887 8377-81
Email: unodc-rpanc@un.org

Dushanbe Office

Street Address: 5, Lohuti Street, Dushabe
734013, Tajikistan
Telephone: +(992-44) 600-00-54
Email: unodc-rpanc@un.org

Nur-Sultan Office

Street Address: 14, Azerbaizhan Mambetov Street,
Nur-Sultan, 010000, Kazakhstan
Telephone: +7(7172) 69-65-52
Email: unodc-rpanc@un.org

Ashgabat Office

Street Address: 21, Archabil Avenue Ashgabat,
744036, Turkmenistan
Telephone: +(993 12) 48-83-80
Email: unodc-rpanc@un.org

Bishkek Office

Street Address: 114/2, Kiev Street, Bishkek,
720001 Kyrgyz Republic
Telephone: +(996 312) 32-17-32
Email: unodc-rpanc@un.org

Tashkent Office

Street Address: 30a Abdulla Kahhor Street
100100 Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Telephone: +998 71 120 80 50
Email: unodc-rpanc@un.org



REGIONAL PROGRAMME
for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries