



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



REGIONAL PROGRAMME
for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries

ANNUAL REPORT **2017**

UNODC's Regional Programme for Afghanistan and
Neighbouring Countries

ANNUAL
REPORT
2017

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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Abbreviations

| | |
|----------|---|
| AD | Alternative Development |
| ADNA | Asian Drug Demand Reduction/Harm Reduction NGOs Association |
| AML | Anti-money laundering |
| AOTP | Afghan Opiate Trade Project (UNODC) |
| AKT | Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (Initiative) |
| CARICC | Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre |
| CASH | Central Asia and Southern Hub (Initiative) |
| COAFC | Country Officer for Afghanistan (UNODC) |
| DCA | Drug Control Agency (Tajikistan) |
| DCHQ | Drug Control Headquarters (Iran) |
| DLO | Drug Liaison Officer |
| EU | European Union |
| EUROJUST | European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit |
| EUROPOL | European Union's Law Enforcement Agency |
| INCB | International Narcotics Control Board |
| IRDCA | Inter-Regional Drug Control Approach |
| FAST | Family and Schools Together |
| FIU | Financial Investigation Unit |
| GCIC | Gulf Criminal Intelligence Centre |
| 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 |
| OSCE | Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| PLO | Permanent Liaison Officer |
| PPI | Paris Pact Initiative |
| RWGP | Regional Working Group on Precursors |
| RWGFD | Regional Working Group on Forensic Capacity and Drugs |
| ROCA | Regional Officer for Central Asia (ROCA) |
| RP | Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries |
| SASS | Statistics and Surveys Section (UNODC) |
| SELEC | Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre |
| SFTs | Suspicious Financial Transactions |
| SFP | Strengthening Family Programme |
| SOM | Senior Officials Meeting |
| SRSG | Senior Representative of the Secretary General |
| TI | Triangular Initiative |
| UNCAC | United Nations Convention against Corruption |
| UNODC | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |
| UNRCCA | United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia |

Acknowledgments

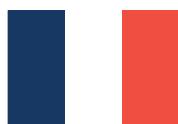
The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries (RP) team would like to express its sincere gratitude to counterparts in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan for their unwavering commitment, active engagement and continued partnership in making the Regional Programme. Our special thanks go to the Government of Kazakhstan, which hosted the Programme Steering Committee in Astana in April, 2017.

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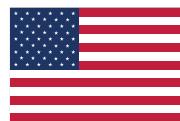
In addition, we would also like to thank colleagues in the UNODC Country Officers in Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and the Regional Office for Central Asia for their extensive support in the implementation of the Regional Programme in 2017. Our appreciation is also extended to UNODC Headquarters (HQ), including HQ regional, substantive and thematic sections/units for the support and guidance in moving towards Regional Programme objectives.

The generous support of the donors to the Regional Programme provided the necessary impetus to our work. Our appreciation to 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 working to deliver further success.



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FROM THE SENIOR PROGRAMME COORDINATOR



Jeremy Milson

*Senior Programme Coordinator
Regional Programme for Afghanistan
and Neighbouring Countries*

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Strengthening international and regional cooperation has become a mandatory element to counter illicit drugs and transnational organised crime. With drug traffickers constantly changing routes and methods, and the modus operandi and activities of criminal groups constantly evolving, including into cyberspace, building joint responses at the regional, inter-regional and global level continues to be critical to counter the threat.

The UNODC Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries is UNODC's key mechanism to support the countries of West and Central Asia to develop regional and international joint responses to counter the harmful impact of illicit narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime on security, governance and social and economic development. When launched in December 2011, it represented the first major initiative to focus on building cooperation between the countries in the immediate region neighbouring Afghanistan. In launching the programme, UNODC, in partnership with the eight member countries recognised that the greatest impact

on the illicit drugs, crime and security challenges in the region could be achieved through an integrated regional response alongside dedicated contributions of the international community based on principles of shared responsibility. Since its launch both member and donor countries have shown strong commitment, support and political will to work together to address the region's drug and crime challenges.

Drug and crime issues remain one of the central challenges in the efforts to bring peace, stability, security and economic development to Afghanistan and the wider region. For well over a decade, Afghanistan has been at the epicentre of the global illicit opiate trade accounting for over 80% of production. The crime and illicit finances associated with illicit drug production are supporting insurgency and terrorism, fuelling corruption and undermining governance, increasing insecurity and vulnerability of societies. The increasing availability of illicit drugs, not only opiates but now synthetic drugs have led to a serious problem of drug addiction in some countries in the region.

In 2017, due largely to declining security in Afghanistan, the production levels of illicit opiates increased to record levels, posing an ever-increasing challenge to governments and the agencies working to counter the problem. Underneath the veneer of drug production however, the work on building regional cooperation has been bucking

this negative trend. The past two years have seen: the highest ever levels of drug and precursor seizures in the region, much of it due to increasing trust, cooperation and information sharing between countries in the region; progress on cooperation and increased technical capacity in the ability of countries to work together to counter illicit financial flows; improvements in legislation on tackling corruption in many of the countries; and, more co-operation on sharing best practices in treatment and prevention of drug abuse to name just a few areas in which progress has been made.

The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries (RP) thus has been a timely and important platform to build and strengthen regional cooperation and is now more relevant than ever as momentum for building cooperation in the region is growing. The RP provides a neutral platform that allows member states to work together to analyse problems and threats, to share information and best practices and to develop integrated multi-national responses to tackle illicit drug cultivation, trafficking, and abuse as well as the related security, crime, development and health issues in the region. 2017 was the second year of the second four-year phase of the RP (2016 to 2019), with phase II officially launched at the annual Programme Steering Committee, which was hosted by the Kyrgyz Government at Issyk Kul in May 2016. The second phase of the RP has been building on the successes and priorities established over the first four years. It is informed by priorities as determined by the RP Member states and incorporates lessons from a formal evaluation of the first phase activities.

Operationally, 2017 was a very active year in which significant progress took place on many fronts seeing strengthened cooperation on countering illicit drugs and organised crime. The working groups were very active, with information on illicit drugs and precursors shared between the states, and operations both planned and conducted. Many regional workshops took place bringing countries together to discuss emerging threats, global best practices and responses in critical areas relating to drug trafficking, illicit financial flows, the increasing use of the internet for criminal purposes and human trafficking to name a few. An important development that came through RP supported corruption and asset recovery regional workshops, was a decision by member countries to work towards the establishment of an Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network (ARIN) for West and Central Asia.

The countries continued to share their experiences on drug prevention, treatment and HIV prevention among vulnerable groups under the framework of the Regional Programme and to strengthen networks and mutual support in this crucial area. There was further development and expansion of the FAST and SFP prevention programmes, which are helping protect children across the region and strengthen the capacity of families and schools to address potential risks.

A particularly significant event in 2017, was a high level international conference on “Promoting Afghanistan’s Alternative Development Initiatives Amongst Regional and International Partners,” which was organized by the RP and the Ministry of Counter Narcotics of Afghanistan in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, with support of the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan. The meeting was run back to back with the high level Regional Economic Co-operation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA VII) with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan. Some speakers from the RECCA VII attended the AD conference and vice versa to allow sharing of ideas between the two important events. The conference was an important step in raising awareness and increasing collaboration within the West and Central Asia region on supporting long term sustainable AD strategies as a means of countering narcotics and promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan. In the context of the higher production levels in 2017, it allowed member countries and the wider international community to explore possibilities for new strategies and partnerships between agencies working on both drug control and development in support of Afghanistan.

A very important element in the RP effort is to continue to build partnerships, and the regional programme works with the various agencies and frameworks tackling drugs and crime in the region including the SCO, OSCE, CSTO, Europol, Interpol, other UN agencies and other major bilateral projects. The Regional Programme coordinates closely with both the Paris Pact Initiative and also the Heart of Asia -Istanbul Process (HoA-IP), to which UNODC is now an official observer. Both these initiatives, one more global in nature, while the other brings the states of the region together, are playing an important and active role in addressing the drug problem and the RP supports these in an operational capacity, building synergy between the two initiatives. UNODC was able to address Members States of the Heart of Asia at the annual Senior Officials' and Ministerial meetings for the first time in 2017, highlighting the practical work carried out through the RP in support of the process.

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I am very proud of the achievements of the RP in 2017 and encouraged by the continued positive feedback UNODC receives from the Member States, donors and other stakeholders. The RP will continue to serve as an important platform to bring the states of the region together to share information and discuss mutual responses to the drug and crime challenges, and will continue to be responsive to address the emerging and shifting challenges in the drug and crime field.

We express our sincere gratitude to the many individuals from the programme states, donors and the RP team over the past year for their dedication, support and hard work, without which the RP would not be the success it is.

THE RP'S SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

- ▶ **Jeremy Milsom:** Senior Programme Coordinator
- ▶ **Ali Hajigholam-Saryazdi:** Regional Cooperation Adviser
- ▶ **Yusuf Mollaoglu:** Programme Coordinator – Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation (SP 1)
- ▶ **Danilo Campisi:** Programme Coordinator - International / Regional Cooperation in Legal Matters (SP 2)
- ▶ **Nadeem Rehman:** Programme Coordinator - Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependence among Vulnerable Groups (SP 3)

SUB-PROGRAMME 1:

REGIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION

Sub-programme1 (SP1) of the RP conducted numerous activities in 2017 to continue to promote and strengthen regional law enforcement cooperation. SP1 provided counterparts with technical assistance in law enforcement training, precursor control, countering narcotics and forensic capacity building activities in 2017. The SP1 framework was designed based on consultations with the member states, and the activities were planned so as to meet the needs in the field.

The main vehicles of SP1 are the three regional working groups, 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), which are specialized in different aspects of law enforcement, and are composed of senior officials with insights into the policy landscape in their respective countries and the needs and challenges. Through the biannual meetings of these working groups, SP1 not only responded to the needs, but also carried out activities to interlink the national or sub-regional efforts, and set a regional response.

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During the regional working group meetings, the situation in the region is analyzed, emerging threats are introduced, important seizures are identified to be the target cases, and remedial actions are recommended to the Governments. In addition to establishing information sharing networks, the working groups promote an operative approach, with three operations being supported in 2017, and target investigations cases are also identified for further follow up.

Under each regional working group, operational case meetings are conducted on an ad hoc basis with participation of states that are directly relevant to the targeted seizures. These operational case meetings bring together investigators from the relevant countries, with meeting sessions being held in confidentiality. In these case meetings, investigators from different countries share information and prepare a plan for developing the investigations at the regional level.

RP Sub-programme 1 (SP1) also continued efforts to enhance counter-narcotics enforcement capacity through the delivery of several training courses across the region in 2017. It also continued to support the Triangular Initiative (TI), which involves the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, and the Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (AKT) Initiative. The AKT and TI bring specific countries together along known trafficking routes to enhance cooperation and coordination on operations.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017

Regional Operations and Meetings

An important development in 2017 under SP1 was conducting the region-wide operations “Reflex” (identification and interception of synthetic drugs along with new psycho-active substances) and “Substitute Phase 2” (interception of precursors including non-controlled chemicals). In addition, SP1 also supported the “Container Programme Chemical check - I” regional operation.

Operation “Reflex” (REgional Forensic and Law Enforcement Exercise) was aimed at strengthening interagency and international cooperation in tackling the trafficking of new illicit psychoactive substances (NPS), enhancing information exchange and providing support to analytical work related to the survey of trends and threats posed by trafficking and consumption of NPS. This operation feeds into the Global NPS Early Warning mechanism and may become an annual exercise conducted through the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC).

The main objective of the operation “Substitute Phase 2” was the identification and interception of smuggled consignments of acetic anhydride as well as of non-controlled chemicals that are either directly used in the illicit manufacture of heroin or serve as a cover for smuggled consignments of acetic anhydride. The first stage of the operation was implemented in 2017, with participating countries providing analytical information to CARICC on the results of the conducted audit of licit trade through the territories of the following chemicals: acetic acid, acetyl chloride and ammonium chloride. During the coordination meeting of the “Substitute.Phase 2” regional operation held in Almaty on 5 December 2017, the participating countries agreed to conduct the active stage of operation in the first quarter of 2018.

Additionally, the “Container Programme Chemical check - I” regional operation created a unique opportunity for the regional customs/law enforcement community to promote and enhance regional cooperation in the field of security as well as to cooperate internationally to prevent illicit trafficking of chemicals/substances using international supply chains, and to explore and better understand the risk environment.

In addition to operational case meetings, the RP SP 1 held multilateral coordination working meetings of the TI Initiative, RWGP, RWGFD and RWGT in 2017.

The Regional Working Groups

In 2017, the 10th meeting of the Regional Working Group on Precursors (RWGP) was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. During the meeting, the participants made presentations on the precursor trafficking situation, in addition to sharing information, analysis, challenges and good practices within the field of precursor control. Furthermore, Operation Substitute, which aims to track the movement of three non-controlled chemicals as well as acetic anhydride, was reviewed and supported by the participants. The member states further discussed their plans for the future and drafted recommendations for action plans in order to set a regional response for precursor control.



Similarly, a Regional Workshop on Law Enforcement Training was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 11-12 July 2017. During the two day event, the participants discussed several issues including practices, problems and potential solutions to strengthen coordination among the law enforcement educational systems in the region. With a view to better understand the potential gaps and weaknesses of existing training systems, the participants agreed to conduct further research and consider a set of criteria to use to measure their effectiveness.



Participants also discussed and reviewed training of trainers (ToT) programmes and agreed that it would be useful for countries to assess the courses used in their respective countries and to present ToT methods used at the next workshop, with a view of exchanging experiences and best practices.

Regional Backtracking Investigation and Joint Operations

On 30 August and 4 December 2017 in Almaty (Kazakhstan), two Precursor Case Meetings (PCM) were conducted with the participation of investigators from Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan as well as representatives from CARICC and INCB. The meetings were aimed at reviewing investigation cases of precursor chemical seizures, with the country delegates sharing specific details on major precursor seizure cases in 2016 and 2017, which in turn could help with the further development of investigations at the regional level. Owing to the interaction and information sharing in the framework of these meetings, Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan agreed to conduct regional back tracking investigations on 15 major precursor seizure cases on over 150 tons of illicit precursors. Under this mechanism countries carry out joint law enforcement investigations aimed at identification of the source of the seized precursors and those responsible for the diversion and as a result of the case meetings an additional 17,500 litres of precursors were seized.



In 2017, six joint interagency operations were conducted under the coordination of the Drug Control Agency (DCA) of Tajikistan. During these operations, 4 kg of illicit drugs were seized which included 1.5 kg of heroin, 20.8 kg of opium and 87.1 kg of cannabis.

Training Courses to Enhance Regional Law Enforcement Capacity

Eleven training courses were conducted in 2017, and a total of 200 officers from both law enforcement agencies and forensic laboratories in the region were trained

There was a continuation of both basic and advanced training for the police forces of Afghanistan and Central Asian countries under the Domodedovo and Japan-Russia training projects.



This long standing cooperation is helping the countries of the region strengthen the capacity of law enforcement officers to tackle drug trafficking and to counter the threat it poses to security, health and development. There was also further training for Afghan police officers at the Iranian Police University supported by Iran and Italy.

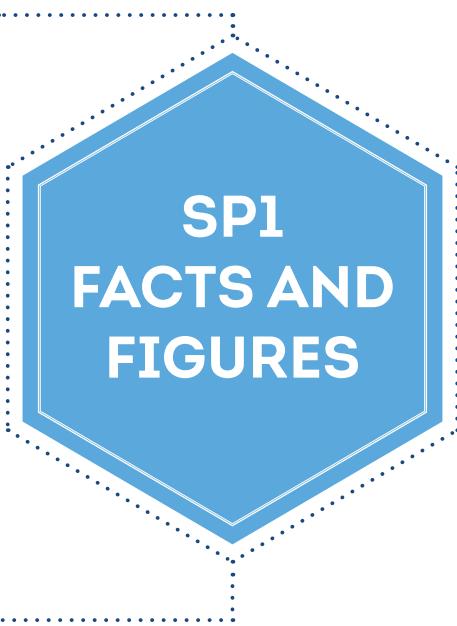
There were courses on laboratory identification of illicit drugs. These were conducted jointly with the Laboratory and Scientific Section of UNODC in Vienna, Austria. The training was structured to be hands-on and included analysis of real drug samples with unspecified content.



More than 90% of the participants of these training courses have indicated in the post-training evaluation forms that they have improved their qualifications. As a practical result of the capacity building activities, advanced investigation techniques were applied by counterparts with a positive impact possibly contributing to the increase in drug seizures in the region by 17% in 2017 compared to 2016.

- **11 training courses**

were conducted for law enforcement officers and forensic laboratory experts, with over 200 officers and laboratory staff trained

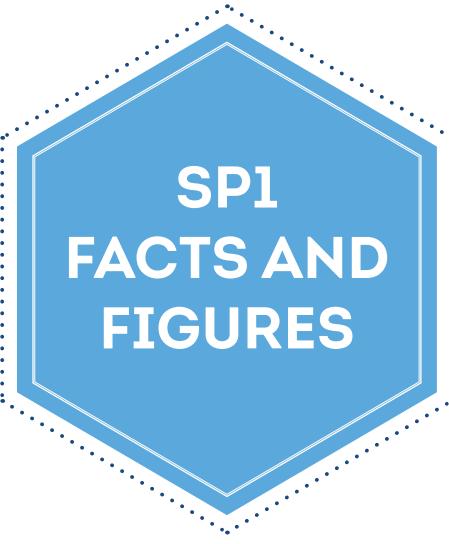


- **2 regional operations**

were conducted and 1 operation was supported: the regional operation aimed at identification and interception of synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances – operation “Reflex” as well as of operation “Substitute. Phase 2” on precursors including non-controlled chemicals was conducted in 2017. In addition, “Container Programme Chemical check – I” was also supported to promote and enhance regional cooperation in the field of security and to explore and better understand the risk environment.

- **6 joint operations**

Based on information sharing between DLOs and Precursor Case Meetings and application of advanced investigation measures in the region, 6 joint operations were conducted under the coordination of the Drug Control Agency (DCA) of Tajikistan.



SP1
FACTS AND
FIGURES

- **10 regional operational meetings**

multilateral coordination working meetings of the TI Initiative, RWGP, RWGFD were held in 2017.

SUB-PROGRAMME 2: INTERNATIONAL/REGIONAL COOPERATION IN CRIMINAL MATTERS



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Sub-Programme 2 (SP2) of the RP was able to further increase its support to member countries in 2017 through the provision of specialized regional and inter-regional events addressing priority areas in the effort to counter illicit financial flows and strengthen regional cooperation in legal matters. A total of 16 regional and inter-regional events and activities were undertaken in 2017, up from 12 in 2016. More than 500 practitioners were trained during the course of the year.

The main focus of SP2 on Regional and International Cooperation in Legal Matters continues to be on strengthening capacities of relevant authorities to better address the legal aspects of drug-related threats and crimes. SP2 facilitates contacts among legal and law enforcement officials and through this is helping to strengthen cooperation at regional and inter-regional level in three thematic areas: crime prevention, anti-corruption/integrity and anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism.

Facts and Figures

More than **600 people** of **50 different nationalities** were involved in SP2 activities last year. This includes participants, observers, experts, UN and participants from other international organizations.

In 2017, SP2 implemented directly or supported the implementation of **16 activities** reaching more than **500 direct beneficiaries** both in the region and outside. Gender balance and women's empowerment has been one of the main objectives of 2017 and the number of female participants in SP2 events has almost doubled when compared to 2016.



Regional assessment

In 2017, a regional assessment titled "Harmonization of legislative frameworks to enable international and regional cooperation in mutual legal assistance and extradition" was completed and presented to the stakeholders. The objective of this study was to review the compliance of national frameworks with international requirements, along with the effective application of the instruments. The assessment compared existing laws to the require-

ments of UNTOC, UNCAC, and UN Drug Conventions and also to international good practices, such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendations. The goal was to strengthen the legal and operational capacity of RP states to implement the aforementioned UN Conventions and to facilitate harmonization of legislative frameworks among the countries in the region to invigorate cooperation in criminal matters among them.

Crime Prevention

Six activities in the area of crime prevention were implemented in 2017. A total 208 beneficiaries participated in these activities, 127 from West and Central Asia and the rest from more than 30 countries around the world.

Activities under the pillar of crime prevention covered different technical subjects such as investigation and prosecution of cyber-crime, cooperation to address trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, transfer of sentenced persons and others.



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Working groups



In 2017 Sub-programme 2 has continued promoting cooperation and synergies at regional and inter-regional level. Three informal regional/inter-regional expert working groups were created to strengthen regional cooperation, facilitate the exchange of information and increase trust among the practitioners in the areas of cyber-crime, transfer of sentenced prisoners and trafficking in persons/smuggling of migrants.

Anti-corruption/integrity

The Regional Programme has continued supporting regional countries in their efforts to fight corruption, implement the United Nations Convention against corruption (UNCAC) and promote a culture of integrity in all sectors of society. 54 participants benefitted from two training workshops organized in 2017.

Experts from the region joined for the first time a training for focal points responsible for the Review Mechanism for the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

Asset recovery

UNODC supports Asset Recovery Interagency Networks (ARINs) around the globe (e.g. Caribbean and Southern Africa). West and Central Asia is the only region along with the Middle East, where a network has not been established yet. In 2017, under the auspices of Sub-Programme

FIU to FIU meetings

In 2017, SP2 continued promoting “FIU to FIU” meetings as a crucial tool for regional FIUs to sit together and discuss common challenges as well as best practices and investigative techniques. Three such meetings were organized in 2017 in the margins of regional/inter-regional events.



Anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT)

Billions of dollars flow through the hands of drug trafficking organizations each year, and what they do with that money can have a huge impact on local and wider economies. They might smuggle cash out of their home country, buy or build real estate, invest in restaurants and casinos for money laundering purposes, or stash their profits in offshore financial centres. Depending on the method they choose, property prices can be distorted, unfair competition created, licit businesses crowded out, corruption bolstered and the climate to attract international investment spoilt, ultimately eroding rule of law and economic stability.

In 2017, SP2 has scaled up its AML/CFT efforts by in-

creasing cooperation with relevant UNODC global and regional programmes, including the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism (GPML) and the EU Cocaine Programme (CRIMJUST). In 2017 eight activities were organized and 249 individuals from West and Central Asia benefitted.

Apart from training on how to investigate and detect the traditional money laundering techniques, SP2 focused on new means that pose a significant risk if abused, such as money or value transfer services (MVTs) (e.g hawala, hundi, and fei-chen), cryptocurrencies, blockchain, darknet and others.

Memoranda of Understanding on anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism

Since the beginning of the Programme, SP2 has supported and/or facilitated the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) on anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism between regional countries.

These MoUs have facilitated the exchange of operational information at the technical level and have allowed signatories parties to expedite and make more effective

their investigations. In December 2016, in the margin of a FIU to FIU meeting, SP2 facilitated the negotiations of a MoU on AML/CFT between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Peoples' Republic of China by also preparing and handing over a sample document. These efforts led to the signing of an inter-regional MoU on AML/CFT between Afghanistan and China, following the eight already signed since 2012.

Activities under SP2 involved 511 participants

from 50 countries



85%

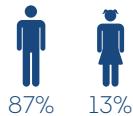


15%

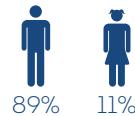
365 participants

from the 8 RP countries

Afghanistan



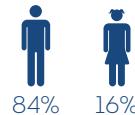
Iran



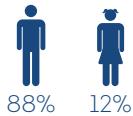
Kazakhstan



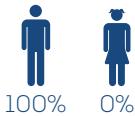
Kyrgyz Republic



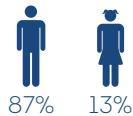
Pakistan



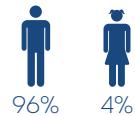
Turkmenistan



Tajikistan



Uzbekistan



146 participants

from 42 countries outside the region

- **Three informal**
regional/inter-regional expert working groups were created to strengthen regional cooperation
- **The first preparatory meeting**

for the establishment of an Asset Recovery Interagency Network in West and Central Asia (ARIN-WCA) was successfully organized in Islamabad, Pakistan.

- **16 activities**
reaching more than 500 direct beneficiaries both in the region and outside

A regional assessment titled “Harmonization of legislative framework to enable international and regional cooperation in mutual legal assistance and extradition” was completed and presented to the stakeholders.

- **6 activities**

in the area of crime prevention were implemented.

- **2 training sessions**

were organized in the efforts to fight corruption and promote a culture of integrity in the society.

- **8 activities**

were organized in the effort for anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism(AML/CFT)

- **Inter-regional**
cooperation promoted

- **Partnership**
platform strengthened

SUB-PROGRAMME 3:

PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF ADDICTION AMONG VULNERABLE GROUPS

SP3 focuses on three outcomes related to the prevention of drug use, treatment and rehabilitation as well as facilitating HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care services for high-risk populations. In order to achieve these aims, the RP engages in a diverse variety of initiatives aimed at facilitating education on the dangers of drug use, providing training on evidence-based treatment and rehabilitation, and lastly ensuring that countries provide adequate HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care services to high-risk segments of the population. These endeavors have included training workshops, youth educational programmes, direct engagement and collaboration with regional government partners (policy-makers, law enforcement and healthcare providers), and the promotion of evidence-based policy, in addition to other measures.

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The results and feedback from the recently undertaken and ongoing efforts has been widely positive and encouraging, therefore justifying the expansion of many of these programmes.

- 1. Successful implementation of the FAST and SFP programmes**
- 2. Capacity building of drug treatment professionals in treatment of women with drug use problems and management of drug treatment services.**
- 3. Networking of civil society organizations and drug demand reduction institutions**
- 4. Capacity building in of policy makers and professionals in the implementation of evidence based drug use and HIV prevention services.**

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2017

Drug Use Prevention

The Regional Programme works closely with the ROCA programme and Country Programmes in Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan to support the piloting and roll out of evidence based prevention programmes. The goal of this work is to enable policy-makers and drug prevention professionals to strengthen prevention responses across the region. It has entailed significant engagement with both government officials and civil society organizations in each of the RP countries, and has included a series of training workshops/seminars in order to ensure the long-term viability of these efforts. The flagship programmes of this outcome have been the “Families and Schools Together” programme (or FAST) and the “Strengthening Family Programme” (SFP), both of which have targeted young people and their families on the basis that this engagement will have the short-term benefit of improving family cohesion and child behaviour, coupled with the long-term benefit of discouraging drug use and other high-risk behaviours.

In continuation of the efforts made in 2015 and 2016, the UNODC Regional Programme technically supported the scaling up phase of the FAST programme in Uzbekistan in 2017. Additionally, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran also expanded the FAST programme in 32 provinces.



In both countries, the respective governments have taken ownership of the FAST and incorporated it into their national programmes, with some methodological support from SP3. In Uzbekistan in 2017, 4000 families in 391 schools participated in the FAST programmes. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the FAST programme was implemented in 128 schools and 32 kindergartens, reaching 1600 families.

The Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) has been developed through extensive, rigorous research and is evidence-based. It can be adapted to any national or cultural context. In continuation of the efforts made in 2015 and 2016, the SFP programme was scaled up in Iran, Afghanistan and Kazakhstan in 2017.

SFP implementation and training were conducted in all three countries. In all cases it involved conducting “Training of Facilitators” courses. Those trained are then able to train further facilitators in their respective countries to support its development and expansion. An evaluation exercise was conducted in Iran to assess the effects of the training and it showed significant positive results. Based on those results, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has incorporated SFP into its national drug prevention programme and the trained facilitators in turn trained an additional 24 national experts from six provinces. The SFP was subsequently implemented in eight schools and health centres in six cities in Iran with participation of 132 families.



Drug Dependence Treatment and Care – a focus on assisting women with drug use problems

The Regional Programme continued to work closely with Member States to strengthen capacity and sharing of best practices in drug dependence treatment, with a special focus on assisting women with drug use problems in 2017. In drug dependence treatment and care, SP3 continues to encourage the standardization of protocols, procedures and practices, support law enforcement agencies with guidelines and toolkits, expand the knowledge and skills of health managers and service providers, and lastly to strengthen the infrastructure of drug treatment, social protection and auxiliary health services for vulnerable segments of the population.



Two training of trainers (ToT) workshops were conducted in 2017 focusing specifically on treatment services for women. In addition, given the immense under-served need in Afghanistan, which has the greatest drug dependence problem among member countries, support was given to upgrade a 100-bed women's drug treatment centre in Kabul through special funding support from Japan.

The first of these, a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on the treatment of women with drug use disorders was held from 26 to 29 September in Issyk Kul, Kyrgyz Republic. Twenty drug treatment managers from seven of the Regional programme countries took part in the workshop, which addressed such subjects as addressing stigma and discrimination related to women in drug treatment, the benefits and methods of gender specific treatment, and addressing the attitudes of society to women with drug use disorders.

A special advanced Training of Trainers (ToT) course on evidence-based drug treatment services for women who use drugs was held from 14 to 19 December in Dushanbe, Tajikistan specifically for drug treatment professionals from

Afghanistan from two specialized drug treatment centres for women. The trainees were also able to visit a treatment facility in Tajikistan with support from the Ministry of Health.

Scientific evidence has established the fact the women differ in the context in which they initiate, maintain and enter treatment for drug use. Moreover, clinical experience has proven that women respond well to treatments that are women-centered. Along these lines, the UNODC Regional Programme sought to strengthen support to women drug users in Kabul, who are considered a particularly vulnerable group as they face issues like stigma, shame, guilt, fear, limited access to treatment services, domestic violence and psychiatric comorbidity anxiety.



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In view of the above and in order to deliver quality drug treatment and rehabilitation services to women with drug use problems, the UNODC Regional Programme, in close coordination with the Ministry of Health of Afghanistan, successfully up-graded a 100-bed women's drug treatment center in Kabul. The support included provision of equipment (both medical and non-medical) and training for the centre's drug treatment professionals. Support was also provided for 385 women and 177 children to complete a 45-day residential drug treatment course at two separate centres.

The below statistics represents the number of vulnerable beneficiaries who have benefited from the programme:

- **577 women and children** with drug use problems registered in the women's drug treatment centre in Kabul, out of which, **290 women** and **177 children** completed the 45-day residential drug treatment services training.
- **114 clients** were admitted to a separate 50-bed women's drug treatment centre, out of which 95 women completed the 45-day residential drug treatment services training.
- Also, an awareness raising campaign was conducted with **3,136 clients** benefiting. The number of relapsed clients was 14 people.

Hiv/Aids Prevention

Tackling the spread of HIV/AIDS remains an important challenge in many of the RP countries, and has had a particularly adverse impact upon vulnerable segments of the population, including people who inject drugs. As such, a portion of this sub-programme is committed to equipping policy-makers and healthcare providers with the knowledge and tools necessary to combat the spread of HIV and provide necessary treatment to those who are living with the HIV/AIDS. With respect to the latter, a particular emphasis has been placed on including referrals for vulnerable groups (refugees and returnees, females, youth and prison population).

Towards this goal, the RP supported an additional two workshops on the ‘UNODC Toolkit on Drug Use and HIV Prevention’ for law enforcement officials in Islamabad and in Lahore, Pakistan in 2017. Over 80 police officers participated in the workshops, with 47 anti-narcotic police officers from 21 districts of the Punjab province of Pakistan participating in the Islamabad workshop and 36 police officers in the Lahore workshop. Pre and post evaluation surveys showed that the participants gained practical knowledge and confidence on how to deal with drug users including by providing counselling and referring them to the nearest available drug treatment and HIV prevention service centres.



The number of families participating in the

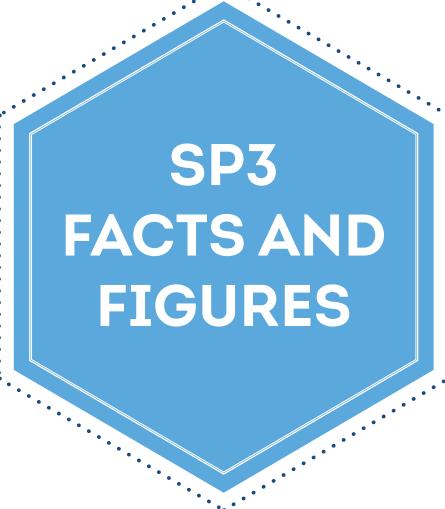
- **The FAST programme**

in Iran and Uzbekistan has reached 5,600 families (4,000 from Uzbekistan and 1,600 from Iran)

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- 83 anti-narcotic police officers

in Pakistan gained practical knowledge on how to deal with drug users and vulnerable people of concern



**SP3
FACTS AND
FIGURES**

- A 100-bed women's drug treatment centre

was successfully upgraded in Afghanistan

- 691 Afghan women

and children with drug use problems were registered in the women's drug treatment centres in Kabul

- 177 Afghan children

with drug use problem completed the 45-day residential drug treatment services training

- 385 Afghan women

drug users completed the 45-day residential drug treatment services training

SP3 FACTS AND FIGURES

- 3,136 Afghan clients

benefited from the awareness-raising activities

- 22 Afghan female

drug treatment professionals were trained on "evidence-based women drug treatment services

- 20 health managers and experts

in the area of drug dependence treatment from seven countries covered by the Regional Programme were trained on the "treatment of women with drug use disorders".

SUB-PROGRAMME 4: TRENDS AND IMPACTS

For UNODC to effectively address illicit drug and crime issues in the west and central asia region, accurate analysis of the illicit activities, methods and trends through evidence-based data is essential.

Sub-Programme 4 (SP 4) on Trends and Impacts of the RP addresses critical gaps in trends analysis and impact monitoring capacity at the regional level, also supporting high level conferences and meetings to strengthen evidence-based policy making efforts. Working in tandem with partner governments, SP 4 strengthens capacities in data generation, collection, management, analysis, reporting and its use in the region. It reviews indicators on law enforcement, criminal justice and drug demand reduction and reports on trends and institutional capacities.

On a broader level, SP 4 supports studies into the under-researched areas such as linkages between narcotics, socio-economic factors and wider concerns of human security. This evidence-based research plays a vital role in informing and positioning policy responses. As such SP4 is a cross-cutting sub-programme that is integrated with and supports the three others sub-programmes of the RP.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2017

Strengthening Data Collection and Analysis

SP4 is working in tandem with the Research, Trends and Analysis Branch (RTAB) in UNODC Vienna to support the development and implementation of national surveys on drug use among youth in Member States. The goal, over the course of the phase 2 of the RP, is to help the Member States, where requested, to update data and understanding on youth drug use and understanding of drug risks among youth. Currently this work has been initiated in three countries: Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan with discussions ongoing with other RP member countries. The work is being conducted in partnership with UNICEF in Afghanistan, which has provided co-funding for the exercise.

The RP, in conjunction with AOTP and the Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA), provides support to Tajikistan on drug reporting. The RP continued to provide support to the Drug Control Agency (DCA) of Tajikistan to publish its National Annual Drug Report (March 2017). The support provided by SP 4. ROCA and AOTP enabled the continued enhancement of the DCA's research capacity.

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Furthermore, SP 4 continues to support specialised research. An upcoming study, which was initiated towards the end of 2017, focuses on organized immigration crime and its links with other criminal activities. Further research into illicit financial flows and drug trafficking is planned under the second phase of the RP.



High Level Conferences, Advocacy and Awareness raising

Two high level conferences were supported in 2017. The Regional Programme, jointly with the Country Partnership Programme for the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, organised an international conference on narcotic drugs and related organized crime as obstacles to sustainable development, in Tehran on 27 February, 2017. The conference was attended by 130 experts from 35 countries and eight regional and international organizations. The conference provided a forum for exchange of information and experiences among countries from Europe, West and Central Asia, as well as relevant regional and international organizations, and donors.



Furthermore, a high level international conference on “Promoting Afghanistan’s Alternative Development Initiatives Amongst Regional and International Partners” was organised jointly with the Ministry of Counter Narcotics of Afghanistan on 16-17 November 2017 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. Over 70 delegates from all eight Regional Programme countries as well as Colombia and Thailand, donor representatives from Russia, Finland, USA and Japan and well as other UN agencies and NGOs including UNDP, UNRCCA, UNCTAD, DACAAR and AKDN also participated. The meeting was run back to back with the high level Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA VII) organised under the Istanbul - Heart of Asia Process. Some speakers from the RECCA VII attended the Alternative Development conference and vice versa to allow sharing of ideas between the two important events. The conference was an important step in raising awareness and increasing collaboration within the West and Central Asia region on supporting long term sustainable Alternative Development strategies as a means of countering narcotics and promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan. The conference sought to increase awareness and opportunities for Alternative Development among countries of the region and to explore possibilities for new strategies and partnerships between agencies working on both drug control and development in support of Afghanistan.

The Regional Programme posts accounts of all work conducted on its website and more detailed accounts of the work carried out in 2017 can be observed there. www.unodc.org/rpanc

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.

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 and Iran and 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 the Global Programmes such as the Global Programme on 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 Center (SELEC), and the Gulf Criminal Intelligence Centre (GCIC).



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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 programming in the region and the RP is a primary operational vehicle for the Initiative, helping translate the recommendations 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 deliver the goals and outcomes pursued by that group. UNODC is now an official observer to the Heart of Asia Process and presented progress at the Ministerial level meeting in Baku in December 2017.

PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE

The annual Programme Steering Committee meeting of the RP was held in Astana, Kazakhstan on 6 April 2017. During the meeting, senior representatives from the drug control agencies, Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs from the eight Regional Programme Countries (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan), as well as donors, international partners and organizations reviewed the achievements made under the programmes in 2016 and identified and adopted the priorities for 2017.

