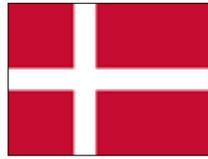




**UNODC**  
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



**REGIONAL PROGRAMME**  
for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries



## Joint Drug Control Agency of Tajikistan and UNODC Counter Narcotics Public Awareness Events for Tajikistan and Afghanistan Bordering Communities

September 2015



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Tajikistan Bordering Communities with Afghanistan

## 1. Introduction

Public awareness raising on counter-narcotics issues is an important element of the work conducted under Sub-Programme 4 “Trends and Impacts” of the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries (RP). In line with this component, the public awareness events to highlight on-going efforts to counter narcotic, tackle illicit drug trafficking and the harmful effect of illegal drugs on society in Tajikistan.

To this end, a series of public awareness events were conducted by UNODC Regional Programme and the Drug Control Agency (DCA) under the President of Tajikistan in the last week of September 2015 in Pyanj, Farkhor, Hamadoni, Vose, Darvaz and Shurabad communities bordering Afghanistan. These events included conducting of narcotics related precautionary, preventive and awareness raising activities among population the above mentioned communities with the aim of drawing their attention to problems and harms of illicit drug use, drug use prevention, formation of healthy life style and fight against drug crime. In addition, a children’s drawing competition entitled “World without drugs” was also held.

These public awareness events are a critical part of a holistic approach to effectively tackling drug use and related crimes which also include effective enforcement and provision of treatment services. They also serve the purpose of increasing understanding amongst communities of security, development, health and societal issues surrounding the illicit drug trade as well helping to develop greater interaction between state bodies and public organizations in relation to enforcement, prevention, treatment initiatives.

UNODC and DCA joined forces to run these events to support and increase efforts to tackle illegal drug trafficking and related harms in communities along the Afghan-Tajik border.

These reached more than 5,000 people living in border communities. They were also broadcasted on local and national Tajik television, ensuring exposure of the counter narcotics messaging to a much wider audience.

During the events, brochures containing information on illicit drugs (production, trafficking, addiction, and harms to society) were distributed to all audiences.

## 2. Goals and Objectives

Tackling the harmful effects of the illicit drug trade requires a comprehensive and holistic approach including enforcement, treatment provision, communications and advocacy which targets all aspects of society and makes it a shared responsibility.

Bordering communities are at the forefront of the illicit drug trade due to on-going trafficking. For counter measures to be truly effective, affected communities must be informed and have buy-in to on-going efforts. As such, the joint UNODC-DCA Public Awareness events were aimed at:

- I. Raising awareness of the complexity of the illicit drug issue for the bordering communities;



*The girls from the community are reading the brochures provided by the DCA during the events.*

- II. Publicizing the efforts of respective governments of the region to combat drug production and trafficking;
- III. Raising awareness of the individual and societal impact of drug use and dependence;
- IV. Enhancing the public's knowledge of illicit drugs and its adverse impact on security, economics, governance and health;
- V. Encouraging mobilization of communities and civil society organizations to counter narcotics through support to on-going initiatives such the promotion of healthy, drug free lifestyles;
- VI. Organizing awareness raising, preventative and educational activities such as meetings, lectures, round tables, contests, cultural and sport events with population participation in five bordering areas and districts on the issues concerning counteraction drug use and crime by involving specialists, science, culture, clergy, social and creative representatives.
- VII. Facilitating the involvement of the state and public bodies, working in the sphere of drug prevention, drug treatment and fight with illicit drug trafficking in the realization of these events.

### 3. Summary

Regional Programme and DCA undertook these Public Awareness events in communities bordering Afghanistan, namely Pyanj, Farkhor, Hamadoni, Vose, Darvaz, Shurabad to deliver the aims outlined previously.

These events took place in the last week of September 2015 and included convening preventive, explanatory and educational activities among the inhabitants of above mentioned communities to raise their awareness of personal and societal harms related to drug use and encourage their mobilization to fully participate in initiatives aimed at preventing drug use, following healthy, drug-free lifestyles and supporting the overall fight against illicit drugs and drug related crime.

As well increasing awareness of border communities, organizers of the anti-drug actions also received new information about the drug situation in Tajikistan and the region as well as improving their skills in conducting preventive / explanatory events and helping to improve of cooperation and coordination between them and local government officials.

Anti-drug banners were on show at every event with all events receiving coverage through mass media TV, radio and newspapers.

More than 2,000 people participated in the awareness raising event that took place in Darvaz during which the Governor delivered a speech outlining the harms of illicit drugs, asking those in attendance and also the wider community to mobilize and help government effectively counter narcotics.

The Governor thanked UNODC and the Drug Control Agency for convening what he termed "important events, particularly to the bordering areas between the two countries".

From UNODC's Regional Programme, Hashim Wahdatyar also had the opportunity to deliver speech and explained the drug situation in Afghanistan in terms of cultivation, production, trafficking and consumption. He also outlined harms of illicit drugs on communities, security, health, economy and different arenas of lives.

The events also included cinematic presentations of anti-drug messaging as well as sporting events with trophies and medals presented to winners and participants.



*Governor of Darvaz delivering speech at the public awareness event in Darvaz.*

In total, the events reached over 5,000 members of targeted communities. Furthermore, the events targeted the populations of the area and the program was broadcasted by media both in national level and in local level through national TVs and local TVs.

#### **4. Outcomes:**

The joint UNODC-DCA run Public Awareness Events were enthusiastically received by participating border communities. Tangible outcomes included:

1. Over 5,000 participants in five public awareness events;
2. Information sharing and awareness raising on the complexity of the drug issues, anti-drug messaging and the need for mobilization and participation of communities in the fight against the illicit drugs;
3. Efforts of Governments of the regional, the UN and international community to counter narcotics publicized;
4. All five public awareness events broadcasted on national and local television;
5. Brochures containing information on the production, cultivation and trafficking of illicit drugs as well as addiction and societal harms produced and distributed at the events;
6. The events enabling DCA and UNODC officials to gain a better understanding of ground realities and challenges facing border communities;

#### **5. Donor Support:**

UNODC and DCA Tajikistan would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Denmark for their support, without which these events could not have taken place.

#### **6. Next Steps:**

Going forward, UNODC and DCA Tajikistan will explore the possibility of delivering further public awareness events in border communities.

