



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

Integrated operations in drugs, crime and terrorism
Commentary on UNODC's new organizational structure

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In autumn 2002, after extensive consultations with Member States, staff and civil society representatives the *Office* published its new *Operational Priorities*. Meant to provide UNODC operatives with programmatic *Guidelines for the Medium Term*, the document listed an integrated approach to counter drugs, crime and terrorism as a key institutional goal.

The reorientation of the *Office's* work was in response to repeated calls by governing bodies for stronger integration and greater synergy among the *Office's* main areas of responsibility. While this integration was seen essential at the operational level, it was not thought appropriate for the financial and the policy-making aspects of ODC work. As a consequence, for the time being the Drug Program (DCP) and the Crime Program (CICP) will maintain their individual identity in two respects: (i) to facilitate management of their respective Funds, and (ii) to provide separate support to institutional (Commissions') governance.

Half a dozen key themes came together to shape the *Operational Priorities* for the medium term. In the period ahead the *Office* committed itself to:

- (a) pursue an integrated approach to drug and crime issues;
- (b) place drug and crime issues in the context of sustainable development;
- (c) balance prevention and enforcement activities;
- (d) select operations on the basis of knowledge and strategic vision;
- (e) help establish institutions that promote international best practices;
- (f) leverage resources to exploit the power of partnership.

To some extent, the first three of the above could be understood as operational priorities, while the remaining three are programmatic. The relative emphasis placed on these themes will vary between countries, reflecting different stages of development and different intensities of social problems.

In December 2002, and again in January 2003, the Permanent Representatives in Vienna discussed and unanimously endorsed the *Operational Priorities*. Further strong support was also manifested by delegates attending the April session of the Drugs Commission and the May session of the Crime Commission. On both occasions, management was invited to turn the integration of operations on drugs, crime and terrorism into a similarly integrated institutional structure.

In mid-June the *Office's* new structure, and the newly specified functions under each of its elements, were discussed with senior management at the United Nations Headquarters, whose assistance is needed to incorporate the new UNODC organigram into the Secretary-General's Bulletins (no further institutional requirement is needed). Also in mid-June the new structure, developed in close consultation with UNODC staff at large, was examined by senior UNODC managers during a 3-day retreat also attended by the President of the Staff Council and some field representatives.

This structure is represented in the attached organigram. The latter is supplemented by an organizational matrix showing how (i) the staff in geographic areas, and (ii) the staff in thematic issues will need to cooperate in project development.

The *Office's* new structure was designed to rest on four pillars:

- (a) an operations pillar, designed to show how UNODC intends to organize itself to help societies meet emerging challenges (anti-social behaviours related to crime, drugs and terrorism), in partnership with Member States;
- (b) a treaty and legal affairs pillar, concerned with the stewardship of already established conventions (for example, in drug areas), as well as the development of new ones (most importantly, the Trans-national Organized Crime Convention shortly to come into effect, and the soon-to-be agreed Convention against Corruption);
- (c) a research and public affairs pillar, to push forward the *Office's* intellectual leadership in the crime, drugs and terrorism areas in association with other agencies (within and outside the United Nations system) and with civil society (CSOs);
- (d) a management pillar, so as to integrate project delivery with the necessary human, technical and financial means.

This 4-element foundation, further described below, simplifies and rationalizes the earlier structure, as well as slimming it down (one Director position is thus abolished).

Conceptualization of the new organigram was guided by the desire to:

- improve coordination among the *Office's* many functions, so as to produce synergies and generate savings;
- reallocate resources to Field Offices pursuing the logic of strengthening the delivery capability of UNODC;
- create new functions, especially in the area of research and institutional development, without calling for new resources from Member States;
- separate decision-making (project approval), from implementation (project execution) and from results assessment (project evaluation);
- associate key management functions (for example those regarding human, financial and IT resources) to the project cycle (which consists of conception, approval, execution and evaluation of each operation);
- introduce structural flexibility in employment at UNODC by offering further career opportunity to staff who have assumed the same responsibility for too long (more than 5 years);
- facilitate staff cross-learning by promoting greater osmosis between Field Offices and Headquarters.

The new UNODC will therefore consist of the following Divisions.

DIVISION FOR OPERATIONS

Operations, whose main task is to develop and run stand-alone projects in both drug and crime areas, will combine thematic activities with geographical ones. Their interrelation can be envisaged by thinking of a matrix (already mentioned above), whose columns represent operational themes, while its rows stand for areas of the world.

The Partnership in Development Branch (with its geographical emphasis) fully integrates the operational activities of the two programmes (drugs and crime) within the geographical areas shown in the matrix. It also ensures full integration at the field level, and between headquarters and the field.

The Emerging Challenges in Development Branch (with its thematic emphasis) combines drug and crime related thematic areas also as shown in the matrix. It regroups a number of functions for the purpose of facilitating the provision of services to basically the same clients, whether they belong to ministries of health, interior or justice.

DIVISION FOR TREATY AFFAIRS

This Division is the initiator and the broker of several United Nations Conventions. In this capacity of conscience of contracting parties, it has to make sure that Conventions are adhered to and implemented by as many parties as possible. It also incorporates the Programme against Terrorism, which focuses mainly on the implementation of Conventions rather than (as yet) the promotion of stand alone projects. It will also continue to coordinate the work for, and the substantive servicing of the two Commissions, as well as ECOSOC and the General Assembly.

The Treaty and Legal Affairs Branch combines functions that are currently carried out separately within the two programmes. The Secretariat of the International Narcotic Control Board (INCB) will be closely associated with this Division.

DIVISION FOR RESEARCH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Public Affairs Branch will continue to carry out fully integrated functions and combine the resources of the two programmes for the preparation of publications and, in general, media and CSO/NGO activities. It will also discharge a crucial mandate in inter-agency affairs.

The Strategic Planning Section will be established to support the direction and co-ordination of UNODC's policy development, research and trend analysis activities. This section will also perform the secretariat/pre-appraisal functions in connection with the submission of project proposals to the Programme and Project Committee.

The Independent Evaluation Unit will perform programme and project evaluations whose findings will be reported to senior managers and Member States.

DIVISION FOR MANAGEMENT

The Division for Management fully integrates all financial, human resources and information technology management functions. By bringing the Division inside the UNODC structure (at the moment it is part of the United Nations Office at Vienna, UNOV), it will be possible to facilitate the processing of all resources in the context of project delivery, rather than outside the project cycle and therefore without full awareness of the importance of the aimed-at results.

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The cooperation of stakeholders will be essential. Member States have welcomed the *Office on Drugs and Crime's* attempt to concentrate on what it is best equipped to do. The new operational structure is meant to bring the process a few steps ahead. Support from Member States to make this both a realistic aim and a reality will be crucial.