



25 years [Vienna International Centre](#)



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

CAMPAGNING AGAINST ILLICIT DRUGS, CRIME AND TERRORISM

The mandate of the United Nations *Office on Drugs and Crime* is to support Member States in the prevention of illicit drugs, crime and terrorism. In the Millennium Declaration, Member States also resolved to intensify efforts to fight transnational crime in all its dimensions, to redouble efforts to implement their commitment to counter the world drug problem and to take concerted action against international terrorism.

UNODC has country and regional field offices in 21 locations around the world, covering over 150 countries. They represent the operational arm of the organization. Field staff work directly with institutions, civil society organizations and local communities to develop and implement drug control and crime prevention programmes that are tailored to the needs of assisted countries. The UNODC liaison office in New York coordinates activities with United Nations headquarters and other international, regional and non-governmental organizations in North America.

The three pillars of the UNODC work programme are:

- Research and analytical work to increase knowledge and understanding of drugs and crime issues and expand the evidence-base for policy and operational decisions;
- Normative work to assist States in the ratification and implementation of the international treaties, the development of domestic legislation on drugs, crime and terrorism, and the provision of secretariat and substantive services to the treaty-based and governing bodies; and
- Field-based technical cooperation projects to enhance the capacity of Member States to counteract illicit drugs, crime and terrorism.

UNODC advocates a balanced approach to drug control, emphasizing the importance of preventive education and treatment for addicts, as well as measures to reduce production and trafficking. The *Office* stresses the public policy implications of the drug issue and advocates that governments address the root causes of drug abuse when formulating economic and social policies. UNODC works to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS through drug abuse prevention and by providing opportunities for treatment and social reintegration to injecting drug users.

UNODC's Global Assessment Programme supplies accurate and current statistics on illicit drug consumption worldwide, which is crucial for developing the best prevention strategies. The Global Youth Network increases youth involvement with the international community in developing drug abuse prevention policies and programmes.

UNODC assists law enforcement, working directly with governments to strengthen their interdiction effectiveness against illicit drugs, and developing their capacities to successfully investigate, dismantle and prosecute trafficking groups. Assistance is delivered through technical experts, modern training in best practice techniques and the provision of technical equipment to support front-line operations. UNODC works in conjunction with its international and regional partners to analyse and share information on global trafficking trends and smuggling methods.

UNODC's Illicit Crop Monitoring Programme establishes methodologies for data collection and analysis to increase governments' capacity to monitor illicit crops and to assist the international community in monitoring the extent and evolution of illicit crops. Alternative development assistance provides new economic opportunities to regions that are transitioning from opium poppy, coca and cannabis cultivation. These projects take into account the rights and views of the intended beneficiaries and address education, health, environmental sustainability, women's participation, food security and other social and economic issues.

UNODC's Legal Advisory Programme delivers legal assistance services to requesting States through a decentralized headquarters/field legal team to establish legal and institutional frameworks for drug control and to effectively implement international drug conventions. The Global Programme against Money Laundering provides training and technical assistance to legal, financial and law enforcement authorities to help develop the infrastructure to address money laundering. It assists governments in developing and introducing legislation against money laundering and the financing of terrorism, and it helps lay the groundwork for the creation of financial intelligence units.

The age of globalization has opened up new forms of transnational crime. Organized criminal groups are expanding at an alarming rate, bringing with them physical violence and the intimidation and corruption of public officials. UNODC's Global Programme against Transnational Organized Crime supports Member States in their efforts to ratify the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary protocols by holding regional ratification seminars, drafting legislation and training police forces, prosecutors and judges. The Programme also publishes information on trends in organized crime, promotes strategies for combating it and provides technical assistance.

The smuggling of migrants and the trafficking of human beings for prostitution and slave labour are some of the fastest growing worldwide problems. Studies also show the increasing involvement of organized criminal groups. The Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings contributes to anti-trafficking efforts through data collection and analysis, policy formulation, and the implementation of projects that advocate action against traffickers, alert groups at risk and assist victims.

Corruption is a major obstacle to sustainable development and good governance. Negotiations among Member States resulted in the first United Nations Convention against Corruption in 2003. The Global Programme against Corruption assists countries in assessing the problem and in helping to make the actions of the public sector more transparent. It focuses on judiciaries and criminal justice systems and helps establish national anti-corruption agencies and other "watchdog bodies".

The UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch provides, through its Global Programme against Terrorism, technical and legal assistance to Member States seeking to ratify and implement international legal instruments relating to the prevention and suppression of terrorism. The Branch also works in close coordination with the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Office of Legal Affairs at United Nations headquarters, as well as with regional organizations.