



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR CENTRAL ASIA



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# UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Making the Region Safer from  
Drugs, Crime, Corruption and  
Terrorism



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The UNODC ROCA Annual Report for the year 2022 was prepared by the UNODC ROCA team under the close supervision of Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>ACCU</b>	Air Cargo Control Unit
<b>AML</b>	Anti-Money Laundering
<b>ARQ</b>	Annual Report Questionnaire
<b>BCP</b>	Border Control Point
<b>BLO</b>	Border Liaison Offices
<b>BOMCA</b>	Border Management Programme in Central Asia
<b>CAPVE</b>	Central Asia Network for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
<b>CARICC</b>	Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for Combating Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and their Precursors
<b>CASC</b>	The Judicial Cooperation Network for Central Asia and Southern Caucasus
<b>CBT</b>	Computer-Based Training
<b>CDB</b>	Centralized Data Bank
<b>CCP</b>	Container Control Programme
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>CFT</b>	Countering the Financing of Terrorism
<b>CND</b>	Commission on Narcotic Drugs
<b>CNS</b>	Counter Narcotics Service of the Ministry of Interior of the Kyrgyz Republic
<b>COSP</b>	Conference of the State Parties
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organizations

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<b>CTED</b>	Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate
<b>CTIP</b>	Countering trafficking in persons
<b>DCA</b>	Drug Control Agency
<b>DMP</b>	Drugs Monitoring Platform
<b>DXP</b>	Data eXchange Platform
<b>FATF</b>	Financial Action Task Force
<b>FIU</b>	Financial Intelligence Unit
<b>FTF</b>	Foreign Terrorist Fighter
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>GLOBE Network</b>	Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities
<b>GLOTIP</b>	Global Report on Trafficking in Persons
<b>GPO</b>	General Prosecutor's Office
<b>IDS</b>	Individual Drug Seizure Reports
<b>IMT</b>	Interagency Mobile Teams
<b>IREN</b>	Inter-Regional Network of Customs Authorities and Port Control Units
<b>ISSUP</b>	International Society of Substance Use Professionals
<b>MIA</b>	Ministry of Internal Affairs
<b>MLA</b>	Mutual Legal Assistance
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding

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<b>NCDC</b>	National Information-Analytical Centre on Drug Control under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NPS</b>	New Psychoactive Substances
<b>OCT</b>	Operations Coordination Team
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
<b>OST</b>	Opioid Substitution Treatment
<b>PCU</b>	Port Control Unit
<b>PVE</b>	Preventing Violent Extremism
<b>PWID</b>	People Who Inject Drugs
<b>RNA</b>	Prisoner Risks and Needs Assessment Tools
<b>SALW</b>	Small-arms and light weapons
<b>SCNS</b>	State Committee of National Security of the Kyrgyz Republic
<b>SCND</b>	State Coordinating Committee on Drug Control, Psychotropic Substances, and Precursors of the Kyrgyz Republic
<b>SOM</b>	Smuggling of Migrants
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>TADOC</b>	Turkish International Academy Against Drugs and Organized Crime
<b>TIP</b>	Trafficking in persons
<b>TOT</b>	Training of Trainers
<b>UAV</b>	Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

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<b>UNCAC</b>	United Nations Convention against Corruption
<b>UN-CTS</b>	United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UN-IAFQ</b>	United Nations Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaire
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNOCT</b>	United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism
<b>UNTOC</b>	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>ROCA</b>	Regional Office for Central Asia
<b>UTC</b>	Universal Treatment Curriculum for Substance Use Disorders
<b>VAWG</b>	Violence Against Women and Girls
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation

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# FOREWORD



I am pleased to present this Annual Report, a snapshot of the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Regional Office for Central Asia (UNODC ROCA) in 2022.

This report comes as the global community is struggling at the halfway point to revive progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Crises and conflicts continue to inflict suffering and deprivation. Peace, justice, and human rights, which should be the birthright of all, remain out of reach for far too many.

As global challenges intensify, UNODC's support to Member States, including in Central Asia, continues to grow. Through our strategic interventions, we contributed to advancing justice, health, and security at a time when our assistance is needed most – today, the countries in Central Asia are suffering from the consequences of conflicts in neighboring regions with critical economic, political, and social impact.

In 2022, UNODC delivered over \$16.5 million in technical assistance. Our integrated response, which includes legislation, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement, helped us continue to contribute to strengthening peace, preventing conflict, tackling the root causes and drivers of instability and violence.

In the past year, UNODC contributed to the capacity enhancement of over 2,000 law enforcement, criminal justice, and health sector practitioners. At least 25 laws, action plans, policy documents, legal reviews, and legislative amendments were developed and supported in implementation at the national level in all five Central Asian states to promote adherence to and ensure consistency with UN standards and norms. Additionally, 12 training institutions and professional associations enhanced institutional and professional capacities.

Our diversified portfolio resulted in tangible achievements covering all thematic areas of UNODC work, including countering trafficking in persons, small arms and light weapons, cybersecurity, anti-money laundering, and others. An increased number of regional advisors on a wide range of topics catalyze the region's expertise in countering traditional and emerging threats.

The people-centered approach prioritized the most vulnerable groups, giving access to justice and services for all by exploring opportunities for young women and men to voice their needs and participate in decision making.

We put gender equality and women's empowerment as an integral part of our interventions. We have engaged

in addressing gender-based violence and providing support to vulnerable women while also promoting gender mainstreaming and better representation of women in law enforcement and justice sectors. Currently, we are working on the development of an Action Plan to implement the UNODC Gender Strategy, which will further strengthen the coherence and effectiveness of our efforts in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

In 2022, we started the implementation of the new cycle of the Programme for Central Asia. I am proud to note that, through the commitment and innovation of our staff and the strength of our partnerships, our kickoff was solid, and we have been able to achieve our targets. Country-specific Roadmaps of Cooperation were signed with Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in February and September 2022, respectively. Additionally, UNODC signed a Roadmap of Cooperation with Armenia for 2022-2025, intended to serve as a cooperation framework for UNODC in the country.

ROCA contributed to the implementation of the "Strategic Stability Grid" for Afghanistan through building operational capacities and coordination to improve regional and cross-regional threats emanating from Afghanistan. For instance, UNODC opened new Port Control Units (PCUs) at the "Farap Avtoyollary" customs post on the Turkmen-Uzbek border, the "Ayritom" post at the Uzbek-Afghan border, and an Air Cargo Control Unit (ACCU) at the "Aviayuklar" customs post of the Tashkent International Airport within the Global Container Control Programme (CCP). Moreover, two new Border Liaison Offices at Merke (Sypatai Batyr) border checkpoint and at Kaindy railway border crossing point on the Kazakh-Kyrgyz border were inaugurated. The effectiveness of the UNODC networks resulted in increased seizures of drugs in Central Asia.

We continued to strengthen international cooperation through support to the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for combating the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and their precursors (CARICC), the Inter-Regional Network of Customs Authorities and Port Control Units (IREN) established within the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme, as well as the Judicial Cooperation Network for Central Asia and South Caucasus (CASC).

Corruption remains a key threat to the region, and we collaborated with national counterparts to combat this phenomenon, promote business integrity, anti-

corruption education, and support the implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption.

We continued to involve youth in our program implementation throughout 2022 to promote healthy lifestyles, improve the knowledge of youth on crime prevention, trafficking in persons, gender-based violence, and gender equality. Our activities brought together more than 1,500 young women and men.

UNODC is committed to further advancing our work in the region, echoing the UNODC Global Strategy's aspirations for "a healthy, safe, and secure community, free from the threats posed by organized crime and drug use and confident in the integrity of the justice system to provide access to services for all."


We look forward to advancing our partnerships with the governments, civil society, and the private sector in achieving our shared goal of keeping the people of Central Asia safer and advancing peace and security, sustainable development, and human rights for all in the region.

We will continue to focus on supporting the states in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, promoting human rights, gender equality, and leaving no one behind. The people of Central Asian states will remain at the heart of all our interventions.

I thank the government counterparts, civil society, the UN sister agencies, and other partners for their continued engagement. We see that countries in Central Asia are willing to enhance cooperation with each other, and UNODC will contribute to collective actions.

I am extremely grateful to our donors who have continued to demonstrate their appreciation and trust in UNODC through their voluntary contributions. In 2022, UNODC was able to mobilize \$19.3 million to further support our efforts in the region.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my colleagues, both at UNODC Headquarters and in the region, for their continuous support, dedication, and professionalism.



Sincerely,  
Ashita Mittal

UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia

# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2022

## REGIONAL





# KAZAKHSTAN



Conference on preventing the financing of terrorism through effectively implementing the UN Security Council Resolution 1267



Online expert meeting to launch two new e-Learning modules for police



Exchange visit of prison administration staff from Tunisia and Uganda to Kazakhstan





Inauguration of the BLO and interactive computer-based training class at the Merke (Sypatai Batyr) BCP located on the Kazakh-Kyrgyz border



Workplan developed between UNODC and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the police reform project



# THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC



A mock trial exercise designed to enhance the abilities and professional capacities of prosecutors and judges to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate trafficking in persons cases



The launch of a new project to support efforts by the Kyrgyz Government to recover assets stolen through corruption-related crimes



The First Steering Committee Meeting of the 'Support to justice sector reform in the Kyrgyz Republic: advancing probation and criminal justice information management (JUST4ALL)' initiative





Adoption of the new National Anti-Narcotic Programme of the Kyrgyz Republic, and its Action Plan



Establishment of a Border Liaison Office at the railway BCP Kaindy on the Kyrgyz-Kazakh border



Opening Ceremony for the Counter Narcotics Service's administrative buildings (Talas, Jalal-Abad)



# TAJIKISTAN



Opening of the first opioid (methadone) substitution therapy site at the pre-trial facility in Dushanbe

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Opening of the Border Cooperation Coordination Centre at the Border Troops of the State Committee for National Security of the Republic of Tajikistan

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Capacity building of prison staff on training curricula development and the Nelson Mandela Rules to review the current training curriculum for prison officers

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Roundtable “FTF prisoners’ post-release supervision and support of adaptation of international standards and recommendations for national legislation”



Launch of the project “Capacity Building of the Drug Control Agency of Tajikistan”



Side event on the margins of the high-level conference “International and Regional Border Security and Management Cooperation to Counter Terrorism and Prevent the Movement of Terrorists”



# TURKMENISTAN



The Fifty-fifth Session of the Sub-commission on Illicit Drug Trafficking and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Assessment of the Management System of the Central Forensic Bureau of Turkmenistan

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Piloting the UNODC Education Modules in specialized training and educational school in Ashgabat

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



International judicial cooperation and mutual legal assistance in tackling cases of transnational trafficking in persons for national and international practitioners

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Flash-mob in Ashgabat devoted to the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2022

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Opening of the new Port Control Unit at the 'Farap Avtoyollary' Customs Post in Turkmenistan

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

# UZBEKISTAN



Youth Media Hub for young people on professional development to prevent crime in Ferghana Valley

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Launch of multi-stakeholder CTIP coordination meetings in Uzbekistan

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



A Zumba Flash mob to mark World Drug Day 'For a Drug-free World!'

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

5 GENDER EQUALITY

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Opening of the new Port Control Unit at the 'Ayritom' Customs Post in Uzbekistan

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



A CND side event on 'Uzbekistan's experience in combatting illicit drug trafficking - strengthening regional cross-border cooperation to prevent drug trafficking in Central Asia'

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Opening of the new Air Cargo Control Unit at the 'Aviayuklar' Customs Post at the Tashkent International Airport in Uzbekistan

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17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

# SOUTH CAUCASUS

## Armenia



Signing of the Roadmap of Cooperation between Armenia and UNODC

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17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 



Establishment of a new Port Control Unit in Yerevan

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 

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## Azerbaijan



Technical assessment to identify needs under the CCP, conducted in Azerbaijan

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17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## Georgia



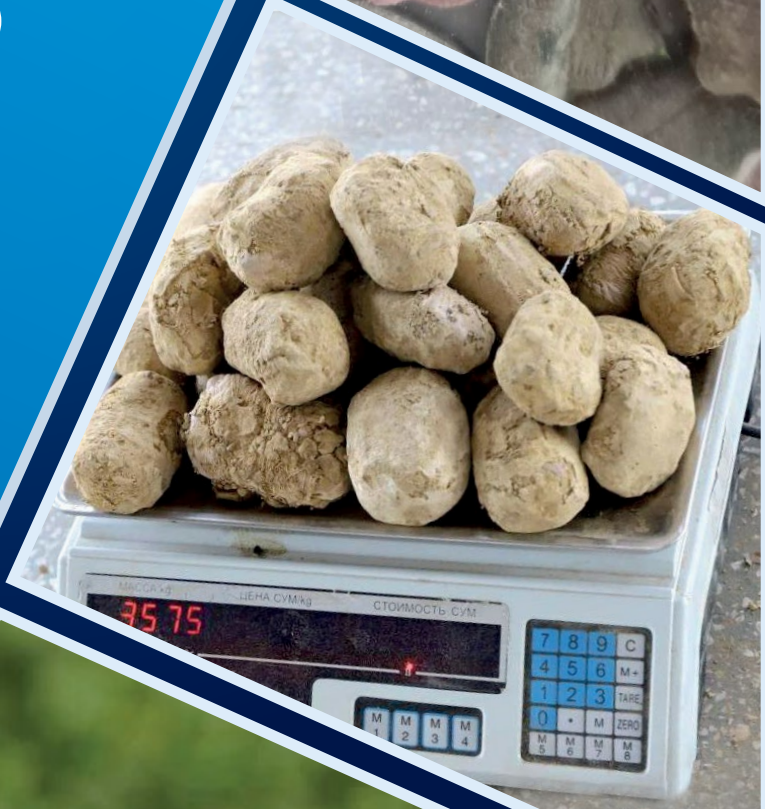
A new MoU was signed during the ceremony for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CCP in Georgia

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



# COMMON CAUSE AGAINST DRUGS AND ORGANIZED CRIME



## Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Countering Drugs, Transnational Organized Crime, and Terrorism

### Integrated Border Management - Border Liaison Offices



UNODC supports Member States in strengthening their integrated border management to facilitate information and intelligence sharing, conducting joint operations, and strengthening border security by detecting and preventing illegal activities, such as terrorism, drug trafficking and trafficking in persons, while promoting legitimate trade and travel.

To promote better coordination and cooperation between different border control agencies at national and international levels, in 2022, UNODC supported the establishment of two Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) at the border crossing points (BCPs) Merke and Kayindy on the Kazakh-Kyrgyz border. In the year, the number of UNODC-supported BLOs in the Central Asian region reached 21, including those at geographically remote and potentially vulnerable checkpoints. The offices were equipped with the necessary high-tech and specialized analytical software enabling analysis of database information, and standardizing information-sharing and reporting mechanisms for inter-agency and cross-border communication.

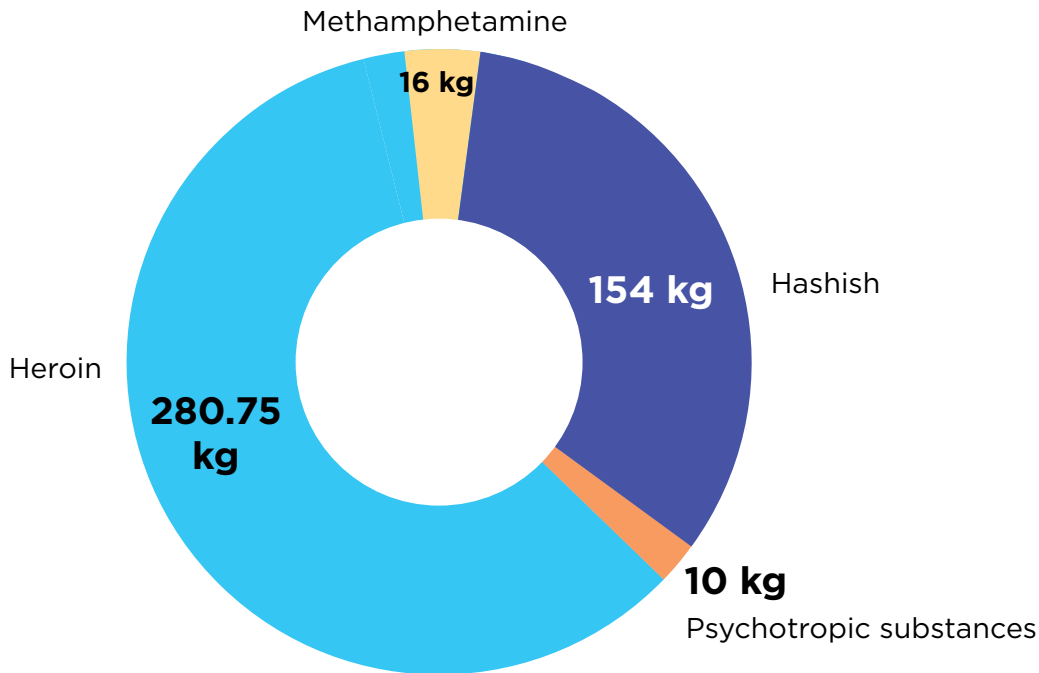
#### Computer-Based Training Classes

To ensure that law enforcement officers working at borders have adequate capacity, UNODC has continued to support the establishment of computer-based training (CBT) classes in Central Asia. On 14 September 2022, a third interactive computer-based training class commenced at Kazakhstan's Sypatai Batyr BCP. The Sypatai Batyr BCP plays an important role in combatting illicit drug trafficking in Southern Kazakhstan, especially in the Merke region and the Shu Valley, from where most of the wild cannabis with pronounced psychotropic properties is cultivated.

In 2022, **157 border officers** underwent training through CBT classes conducted at the Kordai, Saryagash and Sypatai Batyr border checkpoints – participants included **67 officers** newly registered in the e-learning system.

In Kazakhstan, following an agreement reached between UNODC and the Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA) in 2021, the first

**Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances seized in Central Asia by BLO officers in 2022**



regional training centre for border officers serving at the BCPs located along the state border in this area, with particular focus on the Kazakh-Uzbek and Kazakh-Turkmen borders will be established at the Kuryk seaport. The training centre will include a passport control class to be established by BOMCA and CBT class to be established by UNODC.

In Turkmenistan, work is underway to set up four interactive computer classrooms for the State

Frontier Service to provide continuous training to law enforcement officers working at remote BCPs. The official opening ceremony is planned for 2023.

In Uzbekistan, an interactive computer classroom is being established at the premises of the Drug Enforcement Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan and is expected to be inaugurated in early 2023.

**Situation Centres**

In 2022, UNODC supported Border Troops of the State Committee for National Security of the Republic of Tajikistan in establishing the Border Cooperation Coordination Centre. This centre acts as an operative coordination entity for conducting joint operations between different law enforcement agencies at country, regional and international levels, at road, railway and airport BCPs. The centre was established based on best practices attained from a similar Situation Centre under the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which was visited by Tajik counterparts. During the visit, participants were introduced to the technical capacity and capabilities of the Situation Centre, along with insights into the working process and legal basis for the establishment and functioning of the Situation Centre in Uzbekistan.



To further support the Situation Centre under the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, UNODC provided five notebooks and two biometric lock units. In addition, a specialized training course on programming based on Java technology was conducted in 2022 for six officers of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Border Troops of the State Security Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In Kazakhstan, UNODC provided computers and interactive equipment to support the establishment of the Situation Centre at the premises of the Border Guard Service of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for a total amount of US\$ 115,532. This Situation Centre will connect all BCPs, BLOs and CBT classes in Kazakhstan, and regulate all processes for data collection, analysis and exchange.

In 2022, UNODC convened two online Regional Expert Meetings of the Heads of Analytical Units of Border Law Enforcement Agencies in Central Asia. These meetings facilitated experience exchange between participants on the mechanisms of information-sharing through the corporate information systems and data transfer standards used by border law enforcement agencies. The meeting recommended establishing a working group to develop concepts

and terms of reference for the creation of a **Regional Information and Communication System (RICS)** - an integrated real-time information exchange system, within the framework of the UNODC – CARICC joint initiative.

UNODC supported the development of the **'My Border' mobile application** with the Border Service of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which is intended for wide use by the public. This mobile application aims to deploy a national mechanism for establishing communication between the Border Service and the general population, by providing useful and easily accessible up-to-date first-hand information at the BCPs. The mobile application's testing among the population is planned for 2023.

**Sixteen** national and regional training courses were conducted in 2022 for **253 law enforcement officers**, including 14 women. These trainings covered topics related to cross-border operations and search techniques, including documents verification, cargo search techniques and examination of cargo documents, cross-border transportation of cash and identification of cash couriers, and processing and analysis of information using special and open programmes, including IBM 'i2' and ArcGIS.





As made evident through official information provided by beneficiaries, all actions and activities implemented within the UNODC Regional Initiative on Cross-Border Cooperation have led to the seizure of over 450 kg of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in Central Asia in 2022.

To mark World Drug Day 2022, UNODC conducted a public outreach campaign at the selected land and air border crossing points in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to raise public awareness of the risks posed by drug use and illicit drug trafficking. During the campaign, the UNODC team and law enforcement officers working at the border crossing points and international airports placed information banners and disseminated visibility materials among people crossing the borders. The messages were presented in English, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, and Uzbek languages. The banners provided the following useful information: “Even a single use of a drug can cause severe harm to the human body. You can become addicted to any type of drug the first time you try it”; “Illegal drugs are often transported under the guise of ordinary food, medications, or other legal goods”; “Anyone can be found to be a drug trafficker by agreeing to transport a stranger’s luggage across the border if it is found to contain drugs.”

UNODC, in cooperation with BOMCA and CARICC has developed two significant publications, including the manual on concealment methods for drugs and psychotropic substances, and methodical recommendations on profiling at border crossing points.

On 12-13 April in Samarkand, UNODC conducted a regional working meeting of Central Asian border authorities. At the meeting, the participants reviewed mechanisms for further implementing border initiatives and planned future activities. The participants developed recommendations for expanding border initiatives and enhancing cross-border law enforcement cooperation in the region.

On 8-11 August in Cholpon-Ata (Kyrgyzstan), UNODC arranged a working meeting of the heads of the operational and search bodies of the border services of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan in the 7+7 format. The meeting’s main purpose was to exchange information on existing challenges and threats in the region and to discuss the current situation on the shared border.

On 19-30 September 2022, UNODC conducted a regional training course on risk analysis and contraband detection methods at the Istanbul



International Airport for **27 representatives of law enforcement authorities** of the five Central Asian states. The training aimed to equip law enforcement officers with the knowledge, techniques and skills needed to effectively combat contraband smuggling at airports, as well as to facilitate exchange of best practices and information among participants, with a specific focus on countering smuggling activities.

In cooperation with the Strategic Affairs Division of

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel, a working study visit was conducted to the State of Israel on 19-21 December 2022. During this visit, participants got acquainted with the best practices of law enforcement agencies utilized in the State of Israel for effective implementation of border control and interagency cooperation, as well as exchanging knowledge and experience on enhancing cross-border cooperation in combatting smuggling and illicit drug trafficking.









## UNODC-WCO Global Container Control Programme:

Measures to further enhance the intellectual customs control mechanisms, and to prevent and suppress illicit movements, have been continued in Central Asia under the UNODC-WCO Global Container Control Programme (CCP). The CCP continued expanding in 2022 to new ports in Central Asia, including the opening of the Farap Port Control Unit (PCU) in Turkmenistan on 1 April, the Aviyuklar Air Cargo Control Unit (ACCU) on 22 April, and the Ayritom PCU on 5 October in Uzbekistan, to maximize its strategic impact on facilitating legal trade and intellectual customs control. Thus, the total number of fully operational PCUs and ACCUs in the region has reached 17 Units.

### Capacity-building Measures

Work to enhance the PCU/ACCU staff's expertise has also continued, with 30 national and regional training activities, study tours, exchange visits and mentoring programmes having been held in 2022. 283 officials from customs offices and other competent authorities of Central Asia (264 men and 19 women) had an opportunity to improve their knowledge and expertise in areas including: (i) risk and cargo targeting and profiling; (ii) strategic trade control issues; (iii) legislative practices and procedures; (iv) customs enforcement practices; (v) examination techniques, verbal and non-verbal communication, practical interviewing, and case management; (vi) hands-on exercises on forensics integrity and evidence handling; (vii) smuggling of

bulk cash, drugs, precursors and new psychoactive substances; and others.

Among these learning opportunities, the region's first-ever cross-border practical training activity was organized from 28 November to 1 December 2022 for 14 representatives of the customs services of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan at the Alat (Uzbekistan) and Farap (Turkmenistan) customs posts, which are adjacent to each other. As an added value of the event, both parties mentioned that the training enabled addressing challenges and obstacles faced in ensuring smooth cargo and transport flow through this border segment. The training helped the participants to agree on further mutual steps towards synchronizing their customs control efforts in line with existing bilateral agreements on exchanging cargo pre-arrival information. A follow-up on the matter showed that the long queue of trucks (being approximately 1,000-1,200 for each direction), which existed as a legacy of COVID-19 for both directions at a neutral zone between the two customs posts, was significantly reduced after the joint exercise.

### Technical Equipment

In 2022, technical assistance continued to be delivered to participating countries in line with their current needs and priorities. Video surveillance gear, radio and communication equipment, off-road vehicles, IT and





office equipment, computers, search and detection tools, and assistance with building construction at the Batken PCU (worth a total of \$188,500), was all delivered to national beneficiaries through 2022.

### Seizure Statistics

As a result of these capacity-building measures, the 17 PCUs/ACCUs in Central Asia continued their efforts in demonstrating tangible seizures and detentions of illegally-moved commodities. The total customs value of such commodities, seized in 123 cases by all units in Central Asia, was \$11.5 million.

These include the detection and seizure of nine tons of toluene drug precursor, 70 million pieces of cigarettes, 488 kg of jewellery, 25,480 kg of smuggled and/or falsified medical products, weapon spare parts, as well as illicit drugs, such as 15 kg of opium extracts, 3 litres of methamphetamine, 11.5 kg of cannabis products, 10 kg of marijuana seeds, 1 kg of MDMB-4en-PINACA synthetic cannabinoid, 115 pieces of smoking mixtures containing marijuana, 200 pills of MDMA, 130 pills of psychotropic substances, and over one million tons of various types of mis-declared goods.



### Promoting and Facilitating Regional and Interregional Cooperation

International practical cooperation and information exchange has been boosted under the CCP Inter-Regional Network of Customs Authorities and Port Control Units (IREN) – a unique platform that brings together and joins the efforts of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. A series of awareness-raising and ownership-building consultations and meetings provided an impetus to countries. 120 information exchanges and alert messages led to the seizure of 16,500,000 pieces of smuggled cigarettes, 200 MDMA pills and 111 g of cocaine hydrochloride, in addition to other contraband.

The total worth of illegally-moved commodities seized was over \$570,000.

The strategic steps of IREN participating countries have been outlined at the Seventh CCP Annual Inter-Regional Meeting of the Heads of Customs Administrations, held over 25-26 May 2022 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, where Parties adopted the Joint Declaration as an outcome document of the meeting. The Parties agreed to further strengthen and sustain interregional practical cooperation in the following areas to identify and suppress high-risk consignments, including in the context of the current security and drug situation in Afghanistan.

In July 2022, the work of the IREN Inter-Regional Group on Urgent Queries was launched as an outcome of the IREN Inter-Regional Expert-Level Meetings held over 15-16 March 2022 in Uzbekistan, and over 26-27 July 2022 in Kyrgyzstan. Another accomplishment of these meetings has been an agreement reached between Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to conduct an interregional joint operation on suppressing trafficking in tobacco products.

Over October-November 2022, the IREN Nicotiana Interregional Operation on suppressing the trafficking of tobacco products was successfully conducted with the involvement of eight CCP participating countries of the Central Asia, West Asia and Black Sea regions. The State

Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan has coordinated the operation. The operation's objective was to prevent trafficking in smuggled and/or counterfeit cigarettes and other tobacco products and goods, as well as to promote and enhance interregional practical cooperation. Out of several thousand customs declarations, as profiled during the Nicotiana operation, 211 import/export and transit containers, railway wagons, trucks, international mail and express cargo were all inspected. This resulted in suppressing the smuggling of 9,157 kg of cigarette papers, honeycomb paperboard, electronic rechargeable/refillable vaping devices and atomizing device parts; 4 kg of marijuana; 8 million pieces of excise stamps for brand cigarettes; 0.8 kg of liquid marijuana and smoking mixtures containing narcotic drugs; and over 17,350,000 pieces of cigarettes.

The CCP continued coordinating and facilitating a legal framework for technical cooperation and data sharing between Customs Administrations of Central Asian countries. The WCO's Customs Enforcement Network (nCEN) communication tool was applied as a technical platform for the Regional High-Risk Cargo Alert System (RECASYS) being deployed in Central Asian countries. The UNODC facilitated signing Agreements on the utilization of the WCO nCEN application between the WCO, the State Customs Service under the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic on 21 September 2022, and with the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 20 October 2022.



## South Caucasus

Over 19-20 October 2022, UNODC jointly with the Revenue Service of Georgia conducted the Fourth Inter-Regional Meeting on Pre-Arrival Information Exchange and Cargo Control in Kakheti, Georgia. The meeting brought together over forty experts from customs and railway companies from Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the five Central Asian states. National updates and latest developments on cooperation among customs authorities, freight carriers and the private sector on pre-arrival information exchange in the region, with a focus on accomplishments and challenges from the perspective of customs, freight carriers and the private sector, were presented and discussed during the meeting. The meeting provided a platform for participants to share and discuss their efforts in Customs-to-Customs and Railway-to-Customs data exchange with regional countries, including the means used to obtain information.

In Georgia, UNODC signed a new MoU during the ceremony for the 10th anniversary of CCP in Georgia on 14 June 2022, including a mention of the participation of the Financial Investigation Service of the Ministry of Finance of Georgia in the three existing units in Georgia. While the existing memorandum merely included the PCU Poti, the new MoU included the PCU Tbilisi and ACCU Tbilisi. Signatories of the MoU included the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Minister of Finance, and the UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia.

In August 2022, a joint regional STEC practical exercise including Georgian, Moldovan, Azerbaijani and Armenian officers took place in Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan simultaneously.

UNODC facilitated the joint **operation FAST-AIR** with ACCUs from Sarajevo and Tbilisi, and the Border Inspection Unit (BIU) of the Skopje Airport. The operations' objectives were to assess existing risks and identify new potential ones, as well as to identify and intercept outbound shipments with illicit goods in air traffic. The objectives also included strengthening communication and cooperation among the ACCUs/joint inter-agency units and cooperation with other relevant authorities and private sector stakeholders at national levels. As a result of the focused work, the Units reported interception of several outbound postal shipments containing weapon parts in Sarajevo, and in

Tbilisi, a shipment of paintings that was sent without a permit.

In Azerbaijan, UNODC conducted a technical assessment to establish CCP's continuous programme implementation and assessment on criminal intelligence, transit, transshipment and export control procedures in relation to the CCP STEC project as part of the Caspian Sea initiative. As part of the assessment, the team visited the new port area in Baku, PCU Baku and PCU Alat, and conducted discussions with collaborating agencies. The need for a specialized training for PCUs in Aktau, Kuryk, Turkmenbashi and Baku in the area of risk profiling/risk management and container inspection was determined. The training includes a STEC training module with an enhanced focus on criminal intelligence, export control procedures and integrating Iran Sanctions IMPACT and other related tools into the PCU workflow process.

Based on the technical assessment undertaken in Baku, a new STEC training module was developed and delivered in Baku. The training 'STEC Criminal Intelligence and Risk Analysis (CIRA)' took a new approach to STEC by applying analytical skills to analyse criminal activity, based on standard, globally-accepted reporting procedures.

A ferry exercise was conducted in the Caspian Sea for PCU Morport Aktau (Kazakhstan) and PCU Alyat (Azerbaijan). The exercises started at the ferry terminal of Kuryk (70 km south of Aktau), where officers from both units joined efforts to assess and profile inbound and outbound commercial and passenger traffic at the ferry. The event also provided the opportunity to strengthen regional cooperation in the Caspian Sea – for instance, issues concerning the sharing of pre-arrival information between the two countries were identified and discussed. A strong emphasis was set on the importance of collaboration and communication between countries of the Caspian Sea.

In Armenia, UNODC facilitated establishment of a new PCU in Yerevan. A technical assessment was conducted in Yerevan, preceding the establishment of a new PCU, and the unit became operational in September 2022. The unit made its first seizures in November 2022 through routine work on risk profiling. The first seizure consisted of 60 tablets (0.1 mg. each) of Clonidine, smuggled from the USA to Armenia. The second seizure included 14 tablets (0.4 mg. each) of Buprenorphine smuggled from France to Armenia.





## CARICC - Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for Combating Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and their Precursors



In 2022, CARICC activities were directed towards the development and support of analytical products and programmes for monitoring the drug situation; conducting evidence-based studies of trends in the drug market and drug trafficking with predictive estimates of its development; holding international trainings and seminars on topical issues of anti-drug activities and re-equipment of classrooms; technical support of the Centralized Data Bank, and analytical programmes developed by the Centre.

During the reporting period, CARICC experts prepared and sent 38 weekly summaries of large drug seizures to competent authorities of CARICC member states and other partners, based on media reports, 35 weekly news releases, and 12 monthly surveys on identified drug concealment methods.

CARICC continued the formation of its Centralized Data Bank (CDB), and information on 6,233 objects were entered based on data provided by the competent agencies of the member states. 12 weekly reports on the facts of seizures of large consignments of drugs intercepted in 2021 and 2022 were systematized and entered into the open sources segment of the CARICC CDB. On their basis, 2,962 objects were created in the database.

Information on 940 seizure facts was entered into the CARICC web portal (<http://seizures.caricc.org>), specifically seizures of large consignments of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances on the territory of CARICC member states. The total number of entries reached 6,295, including 891 in Azerbaijan, 552 in Kazakhstan, 520 in Kyrgyzstan, 3,684 in Russia, 323 in Tajikistan, 2 in Turkmenistan, and 296 in Uzbekistan.

In 2022, with competent authorities of CARICC member states, CARICC coordinated nine short-term counter narcotics operations in Europe and Asia. Three operations were successfully completed and, as a result, channels for the trafficking of drugs from Afghanistan to countries of Western Europe were identified and blocked, a group of people was detained, and 545 kg of drugs were seized.

UNODC ROCA supported the participation of CARICC staff in 30 different national and international events (including training courses, meetings, plenary sessions and conferences), organized both online and in person. CARICC analysts conducted seven trainings and five lessons for 180 employees of the competent authorities of the Centre's member states.



## Judicial Cooperation Network for Central Asia and Southern Caucasus (CASC Network)

The Judicial Cooperation Network for Central Asia and Southern Caucasus (CASC) functions as a judicial cooperation network, facilitating international cooperation in addressing crime by strengthening inter-regional collaboration and enhancing the effectiveness of prosecutors and judges in using judicial cooperation in investigations and the prosecution of organized and serious crime. The Network facilitates both formal and informal contacts between competent authorities for international cooperation from countries of Central Asia and Southern Caucasus with those outside the region, and by promoting coordination with other judicial cooperation networks.

The Network was implemented by UNODC through its Global Programme on Criminal Network Disruption (GPCD), with the financial support of INL. The total budget provided by INL for 2022 is \$630,000.

In 2022 the CASC Network Contact Points reported facilitation of a total of ten mutual legal assistance (MLA), or extradition matters with States within and outside the region, including to the European Union, South-East Asia, the Gulf and Latin American regions. Eight coordination alerts were facilitated by the CASC Network, based on the information provided by CARICC on drug seizures, with a possible need for international cooperation interventions.

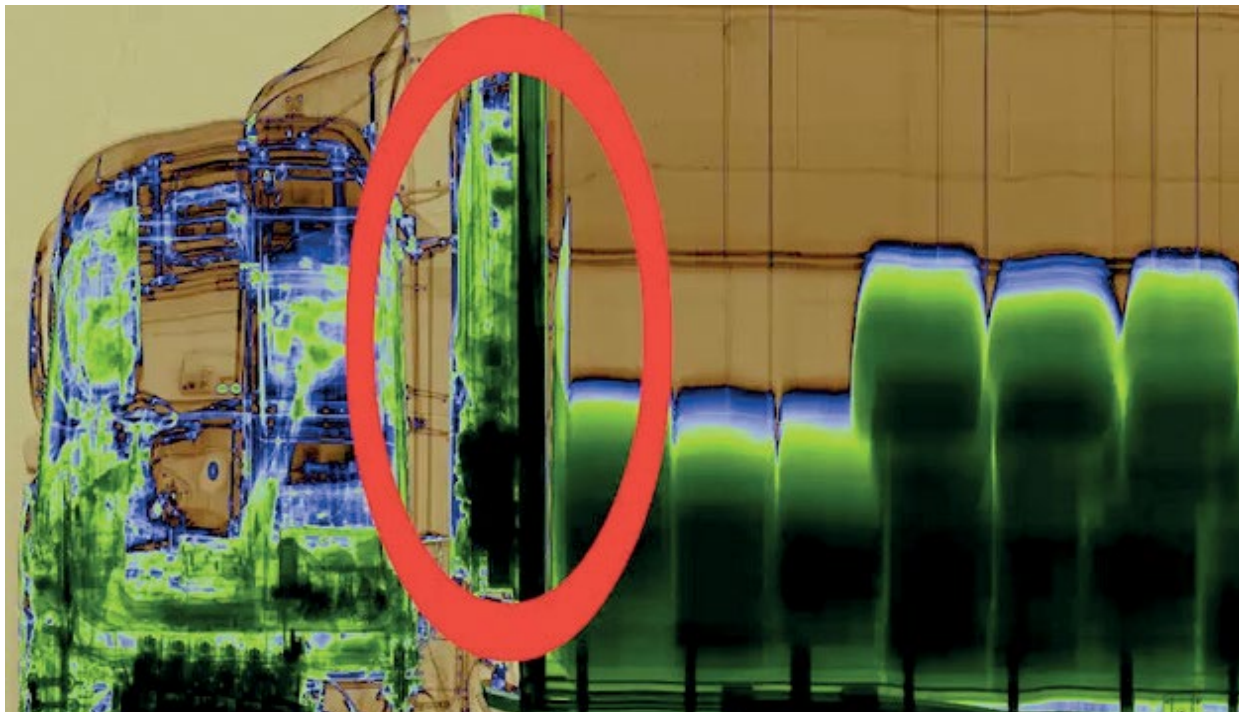
The CASC Network supported/facilitated consultations

and negotiations of bilateral treaties and ongoing international cooperation cases between Uzbekistan and the UAE. The CASC Secretariat, in cooperation with the Prosecutor General's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, continued its work on establishing a Regional Coordination (Advisory) Group under the CASC Network framework to address the ongoing threat of trafficking in persons and other cross-border organized crime issues.

More than 200 practitioners from the CASC Network states, with the participation of experts from Romania, Germany, Latvia, China, Turkey, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, France, Greece, the U.S. and CIS countries, as well as from other judicial cooperation networks and organizations (CARICC, EJM and EUROJUST, etc.), participated in 11 capacity-building and networking events. The CASC Network, in cooperation with the Academy of the Prosecutor General's Office of Uzbekistan and the Higher School of the Judiciary of Uzbekistan, developed training modules on MLA in cybercrime investigations for prosecutors and on extradition for judges. The two good practice guides developed include 'International Cooperation in Asset Recovery Best Practices', and 'International Good Practice on eMLA and Digital Transmissions of Requests for Service in the Context of Investigations'. These analytical documents, shared with national decision-makers, are used for implementing further legal reforms and developing new initiatives at national and regional levels.



## Strengthening National Responses for Combatting Drug Trafficking



The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has implemented several strategies in the Central Asia region to support the states and ensure the region is safer from drug trafficking. Some of these strategies include:

- 1. Capacity-building:** UNODC has been actively involved in implementing capacity-building programmes for law enforcement agencies, border control agencies and other relevant stakeholders in Central Asian countries. This includes providing technical assistance and training to these agencies to enhance their capacity to detect, investigate and prosecute drug-related crimes.
- 2. Technical Assistance:** UNODC has been providing technical assistance and support to improve drug treatment and rehabilitation services in Central Asian countries. This includes supporting the establishment and strengthening of drug treatment facilities, and providing training to healthcare professionals to improve the quality of drug treatment services.
- 3. Demand Reduction:** UNODC has also been working to reduce demand for drugs in the Central Asian region. This includes implementing public

awareness campaigns, providing education on drug abuse prevention in schools, and supporting community-based drug prevention initiatives.

- 4. Regional Cooperation:** UNODC has been promoting regional cooperation among Central Asian countries to improve cross-border cooperation and coordination in the fight against drug trafficking. This includes supporting establishment of regional law enforcement networks and promoting exchange of information and best practices.
- 5. Legislative and Institutional Reform:** UNODC has been providing technical assistance to Central Asian countries to strengthen their legal and institutional frameworks related to drug control. This includes supporting the development of drug control legislation and policies, and providing assistance to improve the capacity of national drug control institutions.

Overall, UNODC's approach in the Central Asian region has focused on strengthening the capacity of national institutions, promoting regional cooperation, and addressing both the supply and demand reduction aspects of drug control.

## Assisting the Kyrgyz Republic in the Field of Drug Control

UNODC has continued supporting relevant authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic in preventing illicit drug trafficking through applying innovative methods. Nowadays the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or drones in the daily operations of law enforcement agencies throughout the world has become an objective necessity. This is because the application of their potential contributes to the enormous enhancement of the ability of states to address threats posed by transnational organized crime, illicit drug trafficking and terrorism.

The identification and mapping of sites cultivated with illicit narcotic plants within the Kyrgyz Republic are hampered by several factors, ranging from the rough mountainous terrain to limited resources of

law enforcement. Usually, sites with illicit narcotic plants are located in areas that are difficult to access, or alternatively these plants are hidden among agricultural crops.

Throughout 2022, officers of the Counter Narcotics Service in Kyrgyzstan, with UNODC's support, were actively involved in testing innovative methods of combating drug trafficking within the project 'Strengthening the Capacity of Mobile Operational Teams of the Counter Narcotics Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic (CNS)'.

UNODC supported the CNS in the combined use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, hyperspectral technology, wireless autonomous alarm complexes and seismic





sensors, along with development of the capabilities of the CNS analytical centre. In cooperation with the Lebedev Physical Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Samara National Research University, a fully-automated method of detecting cannabis (marijuana) and ephedra plants using hyperspectral cameras mounted on UAVs was developed and successfully tested.

Moreover, this UNODC initiative had a significant impact on improving Kyrgyzstan's legal framework. For the first time, draft legal and regulatory documents regulating the use of UAVs in the Kyrgyz Republic were developed.

Over 18-29 April 2022, UNODC hosted a training for a team of UAV operators of the CNS on 'Organization of and conducting search and rescue operations in mountainous terrain and other conditions using mountaineering equipment'. The training was organized in cooperation with the State Rescue Training Center under the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic. During the event, the team of UAV operators gained skills in using mountaineering equipment, moving safely in mountainous terrain, crossing mountain rivers, providing first aid, and

organizing radio communication in mountainous conditions in accordance with international rules and emergency signals.

To ensure the mobility and efficiency of UAV operators, in April 2022 UNODC provided mobile management platforms – specifically a GAZ Sobol-M four-wheel-drive minibus, and a URAL 4320-4792 expedition truck with an accommodation module.

The UNODC supported initiation of an inter-agency working group (IWG) to develop a regulatory framework for developing and regulating UAV systems in the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic, which was established by Decree № 123 of the Head of Administration of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, dated 11 May 2022. As per the decree, the Security Council of the Kyrgyz Republic was charged with coordinating IWG activities. Later on, UNODC supported the IWG, where development of the regulatory framework for regulating the use of UAV systems in the Kyrgyz Republic was discussed. 20 participants from different government agencies were introduced to the Standard Operating Procedures for the Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in the Kyrgyz Republic, previously developed as part of the initiative.

A two-week training on 'Controlled Delivery' was held in Bishkek and Osh for officers of the CNS and the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, the State Customs Service under the Ministry of Finance, the State Committee of National Security (SCNS), the State Customs Service under the Ministry of Finance, and the State Border Guard Service of the SCNS. The event provided its participants with practical skills needed to organize controlled deliveries independently, and in cooperation with the national concerned units and law enforcement agencies of foreign countries. The event covered in detail the legal basis for organizing and conducting a controlled delivery, with aspects related to the main objectives, preparation, conduct and tactics of such events.

In June 2022, as part of the project implementation, UNODC delivered two sets of UAVs to Kyrgyzstan (multirotor and aircraft type - one set of Busel MCR UAV, and one set of DJI Matrice 300 UAV). The high-level handover ceremony was held with the participation of Government counterparts, donors and the international community in Kyrgyzstan, and IWG members.

From 22 July to 5 August, UNODC organized a practical field training for UAV operators of the CNS. The training was conducted by the Republican Unitary Enterprise 'Scientific and Production Centre for Multifunctional Unmanned Systems' of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Belarus in the Issyk-Kul region.

Jointly with UNOCT, UNODC conducted two more training sessions for UAV operators. Twenty-four security officers from the State Customs Service under the Ministry of Finance, the State Border Guard Service under the State National Security Committee, the State National Security Committee, and various units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs participated in the course. The course's goal was to enable national authorities to utilize UAV capabilities to detect, monitor and counter criminal activity, including in the country's vast mountainous regions. The course provided participants with comprehensive theoretical and operational training on the use and operation of UAVs to support efforts to prevent and counter criminal activity, including international law, meteorology, maritime operations, night operations, surveillance, safety and security, and other key elements.





Between 28 August and 4 September 2022, UNODC conducted field research using hyperspectral cameras and UAVs in the Issyk-Kul region. The purpose of this research was to develop methodologies for identifying, monitoring and analysing habitats of wild-growing cannabis and ephedra. The training was conducted by representatives of the Lebedev Physical Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Samara National Research University, with representatives of the National Academy of Belarus. Monitoring of wild-growing drug plants and collection of ground data in places where cannabis and ephedra grow in the Issyk-Kul region was carried out during the training. Also, a visual assessment of ephedra growing areas, a digital survey of the area undertaken to gather data for entering into the drug plant monitoring platform, a layout of ground sites with samples of ephedra bushes and associated vegetation, and ground spectrometry of plants within the marked sites, were all conducted. To create a database of its spectral reflectance characteristics, spectrometry of individual plants was utilized by a specialist to check correlation between spectral reflectance characteristics and the content of active substances in plants. The field research also provided information on the implementation of a project to introduce the use of UAVs in the law enforcement agencies of the Kyrgyz Republic, as well as advanced solutions for operational activities using wireless security and monitoring systems.



A seminar was organized in Bishkek by UNODC on new methods for analysing the drug situation in the region. Advanced developments in this area were presented to members of the State Coordinating Committee on Control of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors (SCND). For example, the automated system ANTINAR served to comprehensively analyse the drug situation in all spheres of the country, and identify the most critical trends and patterns of its development. The members of the SCND were also introduced to the possibilities of Big Data analysis conducted by mobile operators for predictive work with latent drug addicts and monitoring of drug flows.

UNODC also supported the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic in establishing a specialized UAV Unit within the CNS. The UAV Unit consisting of 8 people was established by order of the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic on 31 October 2022. To further support development of the UAV team's skills, UNODC organized an Advanced Level Course for five operators and three technicians of the CNS's UAV Unit. The advanced-level training's main objective was to prepare the CNS personnel to independently operate and maintain UAVs, including payloads. Training and certification services for CNS officers were provided by the Republican Unitary Enterprise 'Scientific and Production Center for

Multifunctional Unmanned Systems' of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.

Innovative approaches have had a significant impact on the CNS's performance. According to the results of operations conducted in 2022 with the participation of the Mobile Operational Team Department, which includes a UAV team, 5,678 kg of cannabis, 1432 kg of precursors, 124 kg of ephedra, 61 kg of marijuana, almost 40 kg of mephedrone, and 20 kg of hashish were all seized from illicit trafficking. The results are expected to be more substantial, as the team gains practical experience, and further develops their skills in this area.

Significant results have been achieved, thanks to the implementation of the project 'Strengthening the Capacity of Mobile Operational Teams of the Counter Narcotics Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic (CNS)', particularly due to the increased professional knowledge of the staff, strengthening the CNS' international cooperation and logistical capacity.

In June 2022, with the opening of CNS's administrative buildings in Talas and Jalalabad, UNODC completed the project '**Support to Drug Control in the Kyrgyz Republic**' as funded by the Government of Japan. Mr. Ulan Niyazbekov, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, expressed his gratitude to the Government of Japan and UNODC for their

contribution to the fight against drugs for the benefit of the peoples of the Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, as well as the international community. The Minister congratulated the CNS staff for the new administrative building, and called for greater efficiency and quality in the detection and seizure of drugs.

*"I hope that the Talas and Jalal-Abad regional departments will serve as an effective law enforcement tool in terms of seizure of prohibited drugs, being at the frontline of the borders. They will also contribute to staff's human resource development with the help of equipment and training opportunities provided today by UNODC. I expect that by fulfilling their daily duties and contributing to the resilience of society, this CNS unit will raise awareness among citizens,"* said Mr. Maeda Shigeki, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Kyrgyz Republic.

The project achieved measurable and verifiable results, in strengthening the legal framework on drug control, delivery of training for law enforcement officers on countering illicit drug trafficking, support in strengthening international and interagency cooperation, and strengthening the material and technical equipment potential of the drug control authorities.



Counter Narcotics Service's administrative buildings (Talas, Jalal-Abad).

## Support in Drug Control in Tajikistan

During the reporting period, UNODC continued providing support to the Government of Tajikistan's National Drug Control Strategy 2021 - 2030.

UNODC facilitated the Drug Control Agency (DCA) training needs assessment and identification of requirements for establishment of the Academic Training Unit within the DCA at the national level (February – April 2022). As a result, two new recruits training courses for 51 officers (1 woman) were conducted. The main goal of the trainings was to increase the knowledge and skills of the DCA officers related to performing their tasks, to enhance their expertise in special investigative techniques, including controlled deliveries and undercover operations, and information management in the area of counternarcotics.

Study tours for selected DCA instructors were organized to the CARICC in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and to ILEA, CEPOL and UNOCT in Budapest, Hungary (May 2022). Three in-service training courses were conducted for **111 DCA officers (5 women)** from regional departments in the Khatlon and Sughd regions, and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajikistan. The training aimed to introduce guidelines and policies to recently-recruited officers. These include current police practices, court procedures, modern technologies and intelligence analysis, and will

serve to enhance their expertise in investigative techniques.

In line with the component's overall objective, UNODC continued to support the DCA in establishing premier counternarcotic departments, including the Vetted Unit and Forensic Laboratory, through provision of equipment and required education appropriate to the agency's mission.

During the reporting period, UNODC provided technical assistance to the Tajikistan Border Troops to improve their capacity for detecting and intercepting drug trafficking at the border. The Initiative on Strengthening Control along the Tajik-Afghan Border is one of the most important projects that needs to be mentioned within the border management context.

In 2022, the initiative continued to strengthen the analytical and operational capacities of the Tajik Border Troops to better respond to threats of transnational organized crime to ensure effective border control and security.

Between July and December 2022, a series of training courses were conducted for **80 analyst and operations officers** from the border units and divisions of the Tajik Border Troops. The trainings covered a wide range of topics, such as management of operations and information and analytical activities to counter







organized crime, including terrorism and violent extremism, illicit drug trafficking and arms smuggling, use of mapping software and analytical specialized software products, analytical report writing and effective information-sharing with other law enforcement agencies, and others.

UNODC's work also focused on the construction and renovation of border posts and outposts.

The Tajik-Afghan border is a major transit route for drug trafficking from Afghanistan to Central Asia and beyond. Implementation of Tajik-Afghan Border Management initiatives, including establishment of BLOs, construction of border posts and outposts and promotion of interagency cooperation, helped improve border control and combat drug trafficking. This has led to increased drug seizures at the border and disruptions of drug trafficking networks.

UNODC's overall initiatives in Tajikistan have contributed to improving the country's capacity to address drug trafficking and related issues, and have resulted in positive changes, such as strengthened border controls, increased seizures of drugs, and improved drug treatment and rehabilitation services, as well as the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

UNODC's activities on legislative and institutional reform in Tajikistan have contributed to SDG 16, which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

UNODC has been providing technical assistance to the Tajikistan government to strengthen their legal and institutional frameworks related to drug control. This includes supporting the development of drug control legislation and policies, and providing assistance to improve the capacity of national drug control institutions. As a result, Tajikistan has been able to strengthen its legal and institutional frameworks related to drug control, which has improved its ability to address drug trafficking and related issues.

UNODC's activities in Tajikistan have contributed to SDG 17, which aims to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. UNODC has been working closely with the Tajikistan government and other partners to address drug trafficking and related issues, including supporting establishment of cross-border liaison offices, promoting regional and international cooperation, and facilitating knowledge-sharing and capacity-building activities. These partnerships have helped strengthen Tajikistan's capacity to address drug trafficking and related issues, and have contributed to regional and global efforts to combat drug trafficking.

Overall, UNODC's activities on combatting drug trafficking in Tajikistan have contributed to several SDG targets, including improving access to quality drug treatment and rehabilitation services, strengthening legal and institutional frameworks related to drug control, and promoting regional and international partnerships.

## Training Drug Control Officers to Effectively Respond to Drug Trafficking Challenges along the Tajik-Afghan Border



*The theme of World Drug Day 2022 was 'health and humanitarian crises'. To commemorate the day, UNODC is highlighting its work on drug abuse prevention and treatment around the world, particularly in crisis situations.*

Drug trafficking and illicit financial flows emanating out of Afghanistan pose increased challenges for the Central Asian region. Afghanistan continues to dominate the worldwide opium market, accounting for 85 per cent of 2020's total global production. Opium produced in Afghanistan supplies markets in neighbouring countries, as well as those in Europe, the Near and Middle East, South Asia and Africa.

Of all of Afghanistan's neighbours in Central Asia, Tajikistan shares its longest border. The Tajik-Afghan border runs for almost 1,400 km, and through incredibly rugged mountains that, compounded by weak security, makes it porous. Tajikistan is therefore the most vulnerable among its neighbours to drug-related threats and challenges. Accordingly, the nation plays a critical role in fighting illicit drug trafficking, especially given the high opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, and increased production of synthetic drugs. Tajikistan ranked eleventh among countries with the largest quantities of opiate seizures in 2020.

UNODC's counternarcotics efforts in Central Asia aim to strengthen abilities of national drug enforcement agencies to effectively address drug-related threats and challenges. The foremost coordinating institute of drug control, prevention and enforcement-related activities in Tajikistan is the Drug Control Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan (DCA), established in 1999. UNODC has supported the agency since its launch, enhancing its capacities in countering drug trafficking, including strengthening its institutional and human resources capabilities to cope with emerging challenges related to the regional drug situation.

Since 2020, UNODC in Tajikistan has been establishing a training academy at the DCA as part of a project funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. The academy is designed to empower the DCA staff, equipping them with the relevant knowledge and skills to execute effective service delivery.

To establish the training centre's long-term sustainability, UNODC has assisted in conducting training-of-trainers (ToT) courses to create a pool of national trainers. They will support the DCA by developing and delivering the training curriculum,

and giving advice on the application of relevant tools, standards and norms, and best practices in the design, delivery and evaluation of training programmes.

Two recipients of the ToT courses are Major Nuriddin Sharifzoda, Head of the DCA Legal Affairs Unit, and Lieutenant Colonel Tojiddin Ismoiliyon, Head of the DCA Training Centre. They are building their skills to develop their institution's capacity, efficiency, and reputation.

In 2021 - 2022, they delivered training courses through applying skills and knowledge gained from the ToT programmes and drafted standard operating procedures and some policy documents.

In 2022, the pair attended a study tour to institutions in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and in Budapest, Hungary, to study methods of organizing, developing, conducting and evaluating training programmes, and processing information on drugs and precursors. They considered which good practices could be applied at Tajikistan's DCA.



Tojiddin Ismoiliyon described his experience to UNODC: *"I have extensive teaching experience. Through attending ToT courses I learnt about new teaching methods, and how to plan, structure and conduct a course. I honed my training skills and knowledge in adult education. I developed the DCA and UNODC project implementation plan and training materials. The trainings greatly contributed to my professional development."*

Nuriddin Sharifzoda also expressed that *"the courses added value to my professional teaching experience. I have trained recruits and in-service officers from the DCA's regional and inter-district departments. The ToT courses improved my training skills and knowledge*

*in using best teaching practices. I am now equipped to conduct advanced training courses for the DCA's instructors and staff."*

Both trainers were asked how they will next apply their additional knowledge and skills. They proposed establishing an institute of advanced training and professional development at the DCA training centre, to further strengthen the agency's training and human resources capacities.

Tojiddin Ismoiliyon discussed developing the DCA's institutional capacities *"to ensure favourable training conditions and high quality of training activities, adapted to modern requirements and in line with international*

*standards. If the agency's human resources capacity is strengthened, that will contribute to conducting counternarcotics activities more effectively, and in turn ensure effective detection of crimes and drug seizures."*

Nuriddin Sharifzoda shared plans to contribute to the agency's development: *"I am engaged in reviewing the current drug control legislation and proposals to improve it. I will help improve drug control regulatory and legal acts and bring legislation in line with international standards and Tajikistan's obligations. Additionally, I will pass my new knowledge on to our officers."*

As part of its activities for World Drug Day held annually on 26 June, the DCA conducted drug abuse prevention public awareness-raising campaigns and contests for young people. Both Major Nuriddin

Sharifzoda and Lieutenant Colonel Tojiddin Ismoiliyon played active roles in organizing the events and promoting good health, using their training experience and skills to make the activities more impactful.

Mustafa Erten, Head of the UNODC Programme Office in Tajikistan, delivered several ToT courses and follow-up trainings for the DCA officers. He called the ToT courses *"the most sustainable form of capacity development, as they support the building of personal skills in imparting knowledge to others, and build up an institutional memory – key for organizations with an eye on continuous development. It is encouraging to witness the DCA's strong commitment to ToT courses through our joint project."*



The UNODC Programme for Central Asia will further strengthen the DCA's capacity through the ongoing 'Tajikistan Drug Control Agency Establishing the Training Academy: Phase II' project. This work includes providing additional ToT courses, recruit and in-service staff trainings, as well as establishing a

new database system for tracking information flow on the DCA capacity-building initiatives and developing e-learning training modules and an electronic library system meeting the DCA requirements. This library will be regularly updated with new materials, manuals and instructions by the DCA trainers.

## Countering Illicit Drug Trafficking in Uzbekistan



To support the Republic of Uzbekistan in addressing the country's drug-related situation, UNODC's 'Countering trafficking of Afghan narcotics and synthetic drugs in Uzbekistan through establishment of Interagency Mobile Teams (IMT)' initiative has addressed the currently-expanding illicit drug trafficking, growth of non-medical consumption of psychotropic and potent substances, and activation of existing and formation of new channels for the transit of Afghan opiates along the Northern Route.

Interagency Mobile Teams (IMTs) represent specialized units strategically designed to confront the multifaceted challenges of illicit drug trafficking. IMTs are distinguished by their remarkable mobility, agility, and operational efficiency, attributes that equip them exceptionally well to manage intricate counter-narcotics cases. IMT surveillance teams are deployable to conduct surveillance on individuals, businesses, and other entities suspected of involvement in serious organized crime.

These teams comprise the combined efforts and expertise of several key law enforcement agencies within the Republic of Uzbekistan, namely the State Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Customs Committee, and the Department for Combatting Economic Crimes under the General

Prosecutor's Office. The National Center for Drug Control and Coordination (NCDC) plays a pivotal role in ensuring the overall coordination and efficacy of these collaborative efforts.

The IMT Initiative aims to ensure that UNODC's support remains relevant and is adaptable to future challenges and risks. This initiative introduces a holistic approach to providing assistance by ensuring that UNODC's support continues to be delivered in a consultative and coordinated environment. This is meant to imply and reinforce increased cooperation, both internally between various delivery mechanisms, and externally with other international partners.

To support relevant counterparts in Uzbekistan, UNODC held an advanced training 'On collecting data from open sources and reporting skills' on the basis of the Turkish International Academy for Combating Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC) for 20 mid and high-level law enforcement officers, who work in analytical and operational departments of law enforcement agencies. The training programme was designed to equip law enforcement officers with the knowledge, techniques and skills needed to analyse open source and social media related data, and obtain necessary information through publicly-available content that can support their criminal investigations. The training,



including practical sessions, was led by experienced TADOC experts.

Another 60 officers from the National Information Analytical Centre on Drug Control of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the State Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Customs Committee and the Department on Combatting Economic Crimes under the General Prosecutor's Office attended the training course on 'Anti-money laundering and financing of terrorism' conducted in Bukhara, Uzbekistan. The training was led by four TADOC experts. It sought to equip law enforcement officers working in anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism units in their countries, with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities that will help them successfully fulfil their tasks and responsibilities. It was designed for law enforcement officers who are responsible for investigating financial crimes in departments fighting against illicit trafficking of narcotics and organized crimes. The training participants enhanced their knowledge and skills on countering money laundering and terrorism financing.

UNODC jointly with the TADOC held a training course on 'Special techniques of combating organized crime in the smuggling of NPS and synthetic drugs' for 26 mid and high-level law enforcement officers of Uzbekistan in Ankara, Turkey. The training programme facilitated exchange of best practices and information among the law enforcement practitioners and contributed to

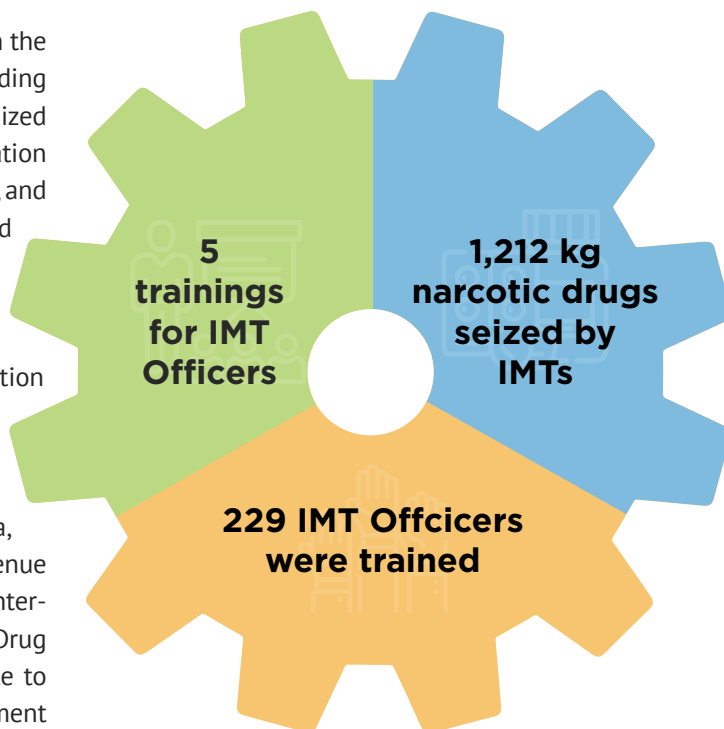
effectively incorporating knowledge and skills gained through the trainings into operations. The participants learned about the experience of the Turkish National Police in the intelligence field, information sources and analysis in investigations against organized crime groups, as well as technical and physical surveillance methods.

From September to December 2022, an advanced training related to intelligence-led policing techniques was organized during monitoring missions. The UNODC experts, accompanied by representatives of the NCDC and members of the Operations Coordination Team (OCT), conducted a series of joint monitoring missions to the IMT offices located within the premises of the local divisions of customs and internal affairs in 12 regions of the country. Monitoring missions were combined with the training courses 'Identification of illicit drugs and precursors: effectiveness of the equipment and arising challenges' and 'Analysis of drugs trafficking at airports and checkpoints - Use of equipment provided within the IMT project, and methods for screening cargo and passengers' for IMT officers.

From 28 November to 2 December 2022, the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia organized a five-day study tour for 11 law enforcement officers of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Tbilisi, Georgia. The study tour's purpose was to learn best practices used by Georgia's law enforcement agencies, and to exchange experience

on issues related to conducting joint operations in the field of combating illicit drug trafficking (including planning, coordination and cooperation), organized crime, effective execution of inter-agency cooperation in countering narcotics, illegal cross-border issues, and familiarization with databases, analytical tools and information tracking systems used by Georgian law enforcement agencies.

In the course of the study tour, the Uzbek delegation conducted meetings with the Information-Analytical Department of the MIA of Georgia, the Central Criminal Police Department of the MIA of Georgia, the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia, the Customs Department of the Georgian Revenue Service of the Ministry of Finance, and the Inter-Agency Coordinating Council on Combating Drug Abuse. During the meetings both sides were able to discuss topics such as: Anti-Drug Policy Development and Monitoring Drug Situation in Georgia; analytical software used in law enforcement operations in the fight against illicit drug trafficking; fulfilment of analytical activities with the view of providing officials with information related to drug trafficking, as well as communication with foreign partners, strengthening cooperation and exchanging information; countering narcotics through investigating drug crimes, such as drug trafficking, and drug fraud routes in coordination with other relevant agencies; a system of interagency and cross-border law enforcement cooperation on



drugs and crime in the country, and other matters.

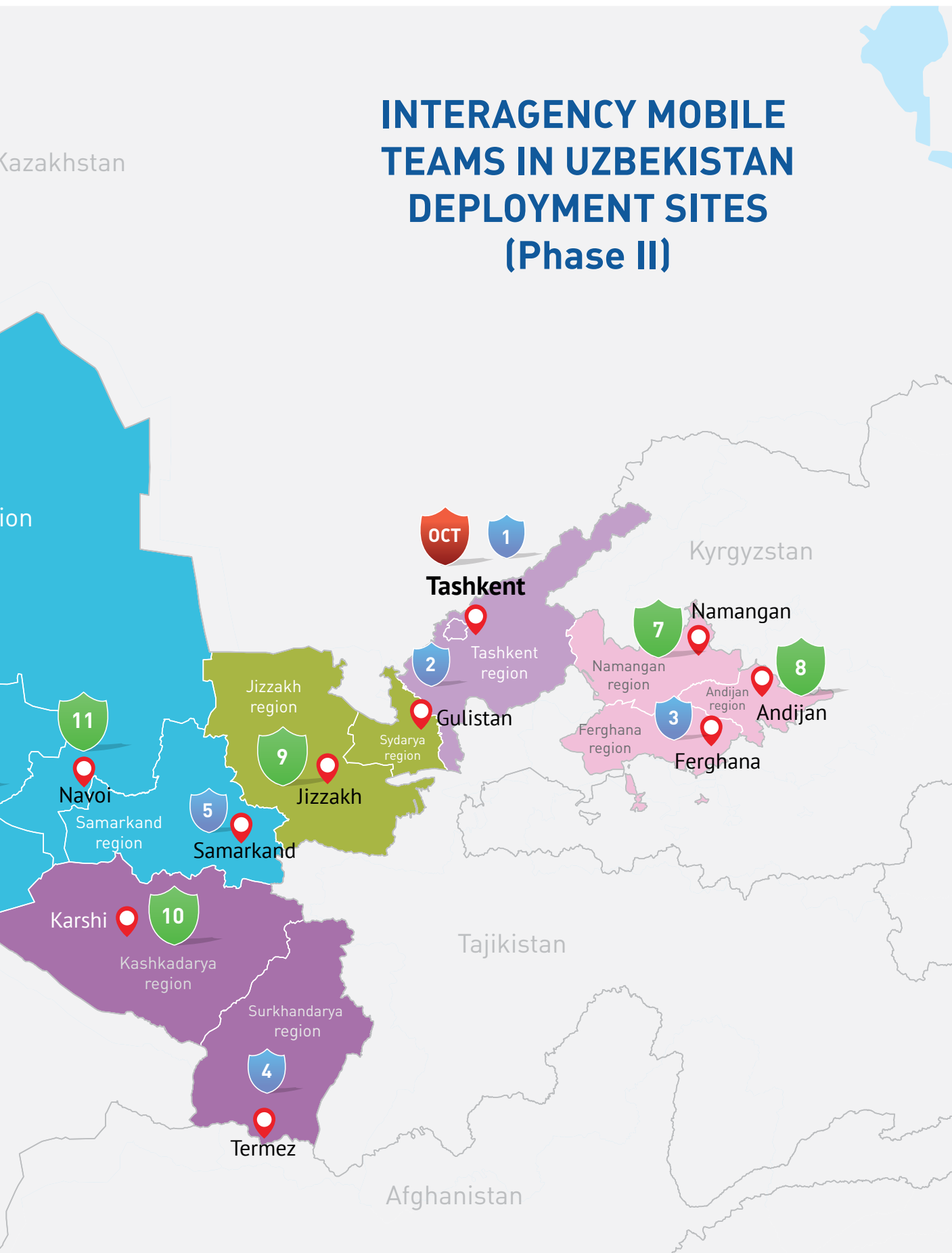
The delegation also visited and held meetings with the officials of Port Control Units (PCUs) in Tbilisi, the 'Red bridge' land-border crossing point, as well as the Air Cargo Control Unit ACCU at the Tbilisi International Airport. They became acquainted with control procedures and to exchange experience on enhancing interagency and cross-border cooperation to fight smuggling and illicit drug trafficking.







# INTERAGENCY MOBILE TEAMS IN UZBEKISTAN DEPLOYMENT SITES (Phase II)



## Criminal Justice Response to Trafficking in Persons and Migrant Smuggling in Central Asia

Central Asia is a source, and to a lesser extent a transit and destination point of victims trafficked for sexual and labour exploitation. According to the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2022 there is an increasing nine per cent trend in the total number of victims detected per 100,000 population.<sup>1</sup> Women and girls remain the vast majority of victims identified in Central Asia. Efforts made in countering trafficking in persons (TIP) is challenged by the distrust victims have towards law enforcement bodies, and their reluctance to ask for assistance. Victims are more likely to turn to civil society organizations rather than to the police.

In 2022, all Central Asian countries were – to varying degrees – taking important steps to introduce new laws and policies against TIP. These included identification of victims, investigation techniques, prosecution of traffickers and assistance provided to victims.

In the **Kyrgyz Republic**, the Government Programme on Countering TIP and its Action Plan 2022-2025 were endorsed, and a series of ministerial level coordination

meetings took place to discuss latest developments in the area of countering TIP, including amendments to the Law on TIP. Tajikistan representatives analysed TIP risks in the context of rapid changes to the profile and volume of Afghan refugees entering neighbouring countries.

UNODC expertise and tools were targeted to support Central Asian governments' efforts to address current challenges faced in building solid and consistent knowledge of justice sector professionals on TIP-related crimes, including their detection and investigation, as well as identification and referral of TIP victims, and legal and psycho-social guidance to young at-risk population groups to prevent youth crime, including TIP.

In 2022, over **400 criminal justice practitioners** in Central Asia (including from **Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan**) developed their capacities on best policymaking practices in the area of countering TIP, and enhanced their practical skills and knowledge on effective investigation, prosecution and adjudication of TIP crimes.



1 <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-report-trafficking-persons-2022>.



In **Kyrgyzstan**, UNODC experts developed a handbook on identification, handling and referral of TIP victims for front-line and junior police officers, including the principles and standards of providing services and assistance to abused children and women, and facilitated a series of mock-trial training sessions on TIP cases engaging around 70 judges, prosecutors and lawyers (35 women), based on the UNODC mock-trial methodology and international best practices.

In **Turkmenistan** a number of interventions were undertaken to strengthen national policies in the field of countering TIP and preventing forced labour, engaging representatives of civil society organizations and the private sector, and operators of Government and NGO-run hotlines.

Informational and awareness-raising events were conducted to strengthen partnerships against TIP, engaging over **40 justice sector professionals and civil society representatives**, dedicated to the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons and the 'Blue Heart' campaign in Central Asia.

Under the Global Programme against Trafficking in Persons and as part of implementing the Programme for Central Asia 2022–2025, the UNODC Regional

Adviser for Central Asia on Countering TIP and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM) (Regional Adviser on CTIP/SOM) deployed in Tashkent, carried out activities related to enhancing capacity of responsible counterparts in Central Asian countries to combat TIP and SOM crimes. This included the provision of support in elaborating policy documents and training programmes, raising awareness and conducting trainings, developing international cooperation, mentoring investigations, and coordinating national and international efforts in the field. The activities were implemented with financial support from the U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

In **Uzbekistan**, in cooperation with the Sub-Commission on Combating TIP, territorial commissions on combating TIP and forced labour and Winrock International, UNODC conducted another series of seven Training of Trainer seminars on 'Enhancing capacities of local actors in countering TIP'. These seminars aimed to build a standard level of solid and consistent knowledge of TIP crimes including their detection and investigation, as well as identification and referral of TIP victims, and developing partnerships among relevant local actors.



In 2022, 232 practitioners who might have contact with a TIP victim, including members of territorial commissions on combating trafficking in persons and forced labour, judges, prosecutors, internal affairs officers, regional representatives of Governmental agencies, and representatives of NGOs of Uzbekistan's Khorezm, Navoi, Kashkadarya, Samarkand, Tashkent, Fergana and Sirdarya regions, broadened their knowledge and skills based on their competence.

In 2021–2022, UNODC contributed to deepening knowledge of local actors of TIP crimes including their detection and investigation, identification and referral of TIP victims, as well as building multidisciplinary and multisectoral partnerships of responsible stakeholders in regions. Overall, this helped establish intra-regional partnerships and enhanced subject-matter expertise of **460 practitioners (including 105 women)** of all regions of Uzbekistan, Tashkent City and the Republic of Karakalpakstan.

Furthermore, UNODC in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs further developed the skills of 49 consular officers (including 3 women) from diplomatic missions of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on TIP crimes, identification and referral of, and provision of assistance to victims of such crimes.

Moreover, five representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs enhanced their knowledge of international police cooperation using Interpol tools, and leveraged UNODC capacity during their study visit, facilitated by UNODC, at the Interpol Headquarters in Lyon, France. During the visit, the possibilities of increasing Uzbekistan's efficiency in investigating international TIP crimes through the channels of Interpol and UNODC were discussed.

To facilitate networking, exchange of information and practices, and dialogue on the problems in the field and their possible solutions, UNODC organized the international conference 'Strengthening National and International Partnerships in Combating TIP' held **in Tashkent, Uzbekistan** on 28 July 2022, attended by 88 delegates of law enforcement, judiciaries and civil society from Central Asia countries and beyond. The conference was arranged in cooperation with the National Commission on Combating TIP and Forced Labour and Winrock International, implementing the Bukhara Declaration on Strengthening Partnerships in Countering TIP – being a call for action against TIP established at an international conference held in Bukhara in November 2021. In July 2023, the conference moved to Astana, Kazakhstan.

The International Debate on the Regional Videoconference Bridge for Central Asia 'TIP and

technology' (22 July), conducted in cooperation with the Law Enforcement Academy of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Uzbekistan, increased awareness of latest trends and best approaches to combating TIP through use of technologies. These include tools to detect TIP crimes through the internet, and digital evidence collection using ICT to ensure the efficient investigation and prosecution of criminals. The debate was attended by representatives of ministries of internal affairs and prosecutor general's offices of **Central Asia countries**.

UNODC also organized the regional workshop on 'Enhancing response to TIP, particularly in women and girls for sexual exploitation, through cross-border criminal justice cooperation in South Caucasus and Central Asia' held in **Tbilisi, Georgia** over 17-18 March. 35 practitioners from five Central Asia and three

South Caucasus countries exchanged knowledge and best practices, and discussed ways to improve cross-border criminal justice cooperation in TIP cases. The event was organised in cooperation with the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia, with financial support from Sweden.

The national Training of Trainers workshop investigating cross-border crimes including TIP and SOM for investigators of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs, and of the Border Service of the State Committee on National Security of **the Kyrgyz Republic**, was organized over 9-11 March. In total, 20 criminal intelligence officers and investigators of national security, internal affairs and border guard agencies strengthened their investigative capacities related to TIP and SOM. The event was organized in cooperation with the European Union Border Management Programme in Central Asia – Phase 10.



In addition, the UNODC Regional Adviser on CTIP/SOM began consultations with Uzbekistan's national authorities on criminalizing SOM crimes, and ratifying the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, *supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime*. The Regional Adviser shared her comments on the draft TIP Law **of the Republic of Kazakhstan** and the TIP law and related laws **of the Republic of Turkmenistan**.

Furthermore, in **Uzbekistan** in 2022, UNODC

together with the Ministry of the Internal Affairs launched regular multi-stakeholder counter-TIP coordination meetings, serving as a multidisciplinary platform to unite government authorities, donors, international and non-governmental organizations, for more efficient coordination of counter-TIP efforts, sustainability of the implemented counter-TIP activities supported by international organizations and donors, and the rational mobilization of resources. Furthermore, regular quarterly coordination meetings increased engagement of responsible practitioners

and experts in reviewing existing policies, elaborating new documents, identifying counter-TIP gaps, and also planning and implementing a coordinated response against TIP.

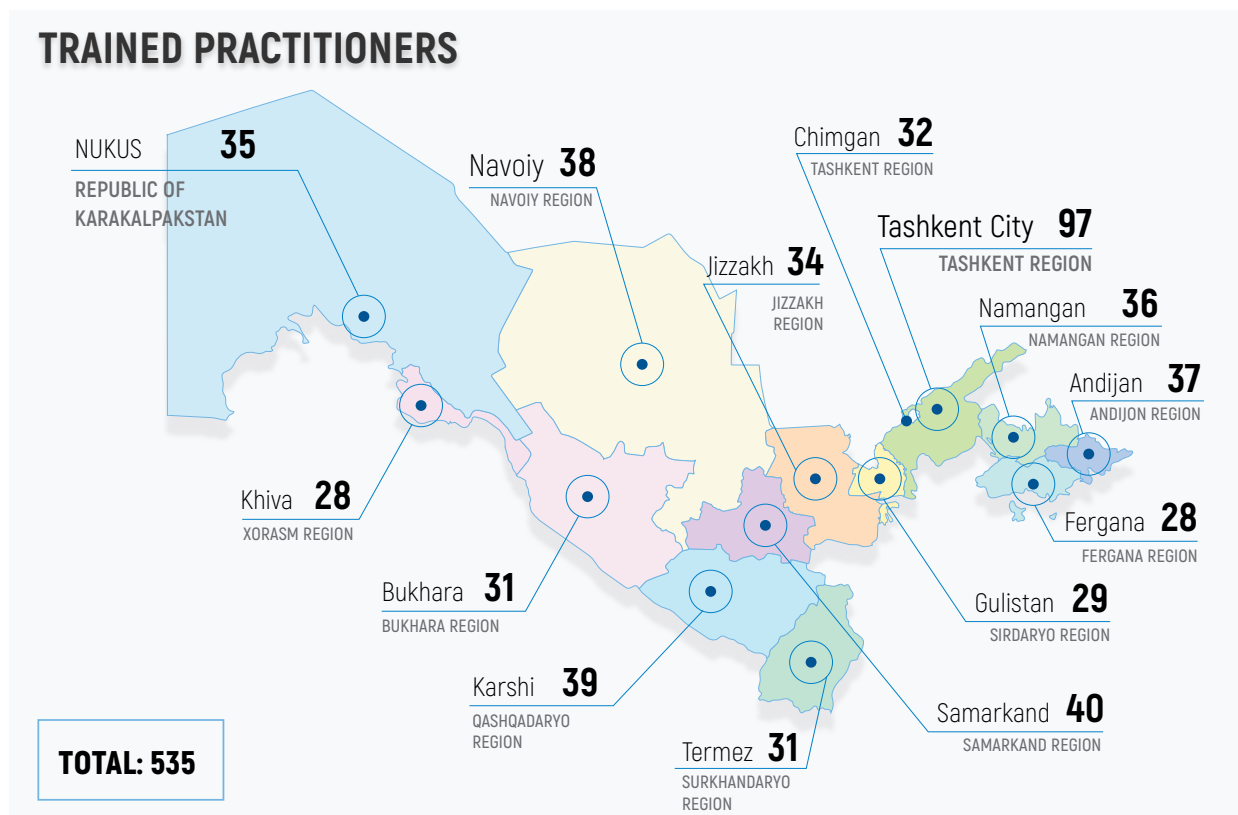
With UNODC’s facilitation, representatives of the Supreme Court and the Prosecutor General’s Office of **the Republic of Uzbekistan** improved their understanding of methods for measuring crime and managing criminal justice data, including related to TIP crimes, at the UNODC 6th International Conference on Governance, Crime and Justice Statistics in Seoul, Southern Korea.

In 2022, UNODC initiated and facilitated the first ever operational dialogue on cooperation and practical measures for police and judicial cooperation in TIP and SOM cases related to citizens of **the Republic of Uzbekistan**, between law enforcement and judiciary agencies of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Republic

of Costa Rica, the Republic of Honduras and the Dominican Republic. National representatives exchanged information and contacts for further cooperation.

The UNODC Regional Adviser on CTIP/SOM also facilitated the National Forum on Efforts of Uzbekistan to combat TIP through detection, investigation, prosecution and adjudication of TIP cases, based on the results of 2021, which took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Representatives of governmental agencies, civil society, international organizations and donors updated their knowledge of progress in combating TIP, including TIP trends, crime statistics and further plans.

The following map shows the number of practitioners trained at Training of Trainer seminars conducted in all regions in 2021-2022, and at the consular seminar of 2022 held in the Republic of Uzbekistan.



## Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons

In the framework of implementing the global project 'Addressing the terrorism-arms-crime nexus: Preventing and combatting the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their illicit supply to terrorists - Supporting the implementation of SCR.2370/2017 and the Madrid Guiding Principles' project in Central Asia, jointly implemented with UNOCT, UNODC conducted a comprehensive analysis of the current national legislative framework in the field of SALW control, organized crime and counterterrorism in five Central Asian countries. In 2022 the project implementation team, together with international organization partners from the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, organized a series of National Capacities Consultations with Turkmenistan (over 11-14 October 2022) and Uzbekistan (over 10-13 May 2022), with participation of national stakeholders representing the main national institutions with attributes in preventing and countering firearms trafficking and associated offences.

As a result of these consultations, the project team prepared Roadmap Reports for each country, containing assessments of current national capabilities to address the terrorism-arms-crime nexus by preventing and combatting the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and their illicit supply to terrorists, and of progress in implementing the Security Council Resolutions 2370

(2017) and 2482 (2019). The reports include a review of the level of implementation of international instruments on preventing firearms trafficking and terrorism, and conclusions, recommendations and guidelines for enhancing the legislative framework, regulatory framework, and operational and technical readiness. The roadmaps were translated into Russian, and shared with Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan for information and potential use in the work of national counterparts.

During the reporting period, the 'Addressing the terrorism-arms-crime nexus' project conducted two Workshops on Interinstitutional Cooperation on preventing firearms trafficking and their diversion to terrorists, over 17-18 November 2022 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, and over 25-26 July 2022 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The two workshops brought together 39 representatives (all men) from the Ministry of National Security, the Ministry of Justice, the State Border Service, the Supreme Court, the State Migration Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the General Prosecutor's Office and the State Customs Service of Turkmenistan; and from the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Security Service, Border Troops of the State Security Service, the State Customs Committee, the Supreme Court, National Guards and the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The workshop's main goal was to foster interinstitutional cooperation at national and



Sample x-ray images from GFP's training course on firearms detection



international levels, which plays a paramount role in countering illicit firearms trafficking and diversion of SALW to from terrorists, by collecting, analysing and sharing information, organizing joint operational activities and offering mutual support during investigation, prosecution and adjudication stages. The workshop also streamlined efforts of law enforcement and the judiciary in collecting, analysing and sharing information, organizing joint operational activities, and offering mutual support during investigation, prosecution and adjudication stages.

As a result of the workshop, participants learned about coordinated investigative and prosecutorial actions and specialized units coordinating investigative actions to connect firearms trafficking with organized crime and terrorism. The workshops also helped in: (i) creating favourable conditions for exchange of experiences and good practices between specialists in the criminal justice system at national levels; (ii) improving capacities in collection, analysis and exchange of information at the interinstitutional level; and (iii) improving cooperation capacities between national institutions at operational levels as well as for the detection, investigation, prosecution and adjudication of illicit

firearms trafficking and its nexus with organized crime and terrorism.

To date, the 'Addressing the terrorism-arms-crime nexus' project has conducted the National Legislative Workshop regarding the conformity of national criminal legislation with norms of the international framework on countering organized crime, firearms trafficking and terrorism in **Uzbekistan**. During this workshop 16 judiciary and law enforcement experts from Uzbekistan (including 1 woman) enhanced their awareness of international and regional instruments, while also discussing the possibilities of amending/updating national legislation and aligning it to international instruments on countering organized crime, firearms trafficking and terrorism, and ensuring the integration of the human rights approach and gender mainstreaming across the interventions.

The main objective of the National Legislative Workshop was to analyse in partnership with national counterparts the possibility of achieving an enhanced normative and institutional framework, and regulatory measures, to prevent and counter terrorist's illicit access to SALW, in particular through



illicit manufacturing, trafficking or diversion. The workshop was implemented in close cooperation with national counterparts to analyse current legislation in Uzbekistan, and explore opportunities to update the legislation in line with international instruments. The workshop was conducted with the support of international and national experts specialized in law-making and rule-making in general, and related to countering illicit firearms trafficking and terrorism in particular.

As a result of the workshop, the national experts provided their feedback to the project implementation team, including specific actions to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework on firearms and promote regional harmonization of laws and practices. The workshop in Uzbekistan was followed by a mission of the Chief of the UNODC Firearms Trafficking Section to Tashkent in December 2022 to discuss with national authorities concrete steps for further legislative initiatives, and available UNODC support for legislative development.

The 'Addressing the terrorism-arms-crime nexus' project conducted a series of Training Courses on 'Preventing and Combatting the Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their Illicit supply to Terrorists in four countries of Central Asia: **Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan**'. The training course's main aim was to develop and strengthen knowledge of Central Asian judicial and law enforcement agencies to detect, interdict, investigate and prosecute terrorism activities involving illicitly manufactured SALW, trafficked or diverted to terrorists, taking into account gender and human rights considerations in all relevant cases.

The training programme included a special session on 'Mainstreaming gender-sensitive approach in illicit SALW, Organized Crime, and Terrorism investigations and increase awareness of the importance of inclusion of female public servants in national response institutions'. The session analysed the impact of firearms trafficking and terrorism, through the perspective of respect for human rights, gender consideration, the involvement of civil society, and the importance of data collection and public awareness and preventive measures. The session was supported with data from UN studies

and documents, and by presentation of practical examples.

Over 67 participants (including 7 women) from relevant judiciary and law enforcement organizations completed the training, including those from Kazakhstan (14 men and 4 women), Kyrgyzstan (16 men and 3 women), Tajikistan (15 men), and Uzbekistan (15 men).

As a result the participants enhanced their knowledge of control, detection, investigation and prosecution of SALW trafficking and its further diversion to terrorists. The participants also learned more about foreign best practices, and contributed their relevant expertise to the investigation and prosecution of complex cases involving terrorists, and illicitly manufactured, trafficked or diverted SALW. Furthermore the participants acquired and deepened their knowledge about illicit trafficking in SALW, identification of firearms, ammunition and explosives, detection of illicitly-trafficked firearms at borders, firearms tracing operations, as well as human rights and rule of law being the fundamental basis in combatting terrorism. The participants developed an informal national community of practice on counterterrorism and SALW trafficking, which will further contribute to improving interagency cooperation and networking. In general, the training provided an opportunity to learn from a wide range of expertise and best practices in implementing SALW control and detection measures to prevent and counter their diversion to terrorists in the global environment, among European countries, and in the Central Asia region.

On 7-8 December 2022, in Almaty, **Kazakhstan**, the UNOCT-UNODC project on 'Addressing the terrorism-arms-crime nexus' conducted the Regional Meeting of Community of Practitioners on fighting illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) trafficking and diversion to terrorists and organized criminal groups in Central Asia. 19 participants (including 1 woman) attended the meeting, representing ministries of internal affairs, prosecutions office and security services from five Central Asian countries, and 14 participants (including 4 women) from international organizations representing the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), the



United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, INTERPOL, the Bureau for International Crime and Terrorism, Global Affairs Canada, and the Embassy of Canada to the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The meeting's main objective was to strengthen common knowledge of investigative strategies and approaches, as well as good practices and common challenges faced, through the exchange and joint peer-to-peer analysis of actual cases relevant to the issue of terrorist use of illicit trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition. Ultimately, the cases shared and discussed during the meeting will contribute to the **SHERLOC Case Law Database**, and form the basis of an analytical

document drafted by UNODC on best practices and lessons learned in relation to illicit trafficking and manufacturing of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, as well as related types of crime (Digest of Illicit Firearms Cases). This digest will be a practical guide and a first-hand tool, available to competent national authorities from different legal systems and designed primarily to guide them in their work against terrorist use of SALW. In addition, the cases will assist in the development of an investigative guide for investigating terrorist use of illicitly-trafficked firearms, drafted by UNODC's Global Firearms Programme with support from UNOCT and other UN Agencies and external partners.

The meeting also improved channels of communication and direct cooperation and exchange of expertise between focal points and practitioners in the different relevant fields.

## Anti-money Laundering and Illicit Financial Flows

Within the framework of the Programme for Central Asia for 2022-2025 and the Global Programme against Money Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism (GPML), UNODC is providing ongoing technical assistance to all Central Asian member states.

Strengthening the legal framework, policies and national strategies, expertise and capacity-building support offered for countering money laundering and the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT), were all priority areas for technical assistance.

UNODC has supported Member States in enhancing legislative frameworks and national AML/CFT strategies through review of legislation and provision of expert advice on complying with international standards. This is promoted through high level meetings, consultations with authorities, and provision of expert assistance.

In 2022, UNODC proactively attended discussions on amending laws and legislative acts towards further implementation of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations in **the Republic of Kazakhstan**. For instance, the amendments in the AML/CFT law were approved on 1 July 2022. The working plan on preparation of the Republic of Kazakhstan for mutual

evaluation was developed and implemented. The Presidential decree of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 6 October 2022 No. 1038 approved the Concept of development of financial monitoring for 2022-2026.

In addition, the Law on banking secrecy and the strategy of development of the national AML/CFT system of **the Republic of Uzbekistan** were developed with UNODC's expert support. The implementation of the national legislation on AML/CFT in Uzbekistan had a positive impact during the mutual evaluation of the Republic of Uzbekistan on FATF international standards.

During the reporting period, UNODC supported **the Republic of Kazakhstan** with the main objective of strengthening effectiveness of the national AML/CFT framework. In regards to technical assistance, UNODC jointly with the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) and competent authorities held several round-table meetings, conducted high-level meetings with the Chairperson of the Financial Monitoring Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and organized and conducted six practical trainings for competent authorities. As a result, over 250 national specialists of the competent authorities of Kazakhstan took part in the events and improved their knowledge and skills on AML/CFT issues.





In April 2022, within **the Kyrgyz Republic**, UNODC launched a project to support the Kyrgyz Government's efforts to recover stolen assets through corruption-related crimes. With the participation of International and national experts, UNODC conducted a comprehensive assessment related to procedures for the search for, identification, confiscation and recovery of stolen assets, and had 15 working meetings and consultations with competent governmental bodies. Over 200 national specialists of the competent authorities of Kyrgyzstan took part in the events, and improved their knowledge and skills on AML/CFT issues.

In September 2022 UNODC arranged four round-table meetings of national beneficiaries with competent state authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic, which were devoted to presenting basic recommendations provided for the development and improvement of national legal acts in the field of search, identification, seizure, confiscation and recovery of stolen assets, and conducting parallel financial investigations.

On 30 September 2022, the AML/CFT Commission under the Cabinet of Ministries of the Kyrgyz Republic

reviewed and approved the Interagency Action Plan in the field of search, seizure and recovery of stolen assets, and conducting parallel financial investigations, that was developed with UNODC's support. As part of the implementation of measures set in the Interagency Action Plan to improve mechanisms for the identification, seizure, confiscation, and recovery of stolen assets and parallel financial investigations, five draft legal documents were developed by competent state authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic with UNODC support.

Moreover in 2022, UNODC supported the operation of three working groups on AML/CFT in **Tajikistan** (on enhancing efficiency of parallel financial investigations), **Uzbekistan** (on parallel financial investigations and disruption of illicit financial flows related to organized crime and drug trafficking), and **Kazakhstan** (National Information System for professional development and accreditation of AML/CFT specialists).

With UNODC's support, more than **10 trainings** on issues of interagency cooperation and demonstration of existing country mechanisms of anti-money laundering measures were held in the region.

Jointly with the law enforcement academies and financial monitoring agencies of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** and the Republic of **Uzbekistan**, UNODC developed the unique simulation training programme 'AML from drug trafficking'. All training materials were adapted to match the national and regional context. A team of national trainers benefited from the series of trainings and national ToTs. UNODC conducted two regional simulation trainings (Kazakh-Kyrgyz and Uzbek-Tajik) in 2022. The training curriculum was developed as a result. Over 40 professionals benefited from the series of trainings conducted by a team of national trainers supported by UNODC. The training curriculum was created and incorporated into relevant academies.

UNODC, having unique potential and long-term experience in providing technical assistance, and taking into account proposals of national partners and with the support of international experts within the framework of The Global Programme on Criminal Network Disruption, developed a methodology for disrupting activities of networks and illegal financial flows from the drug trade (with a focus on opiates of Afghan origin). The methodology was adopted in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and handed over to the law enforcement academies in these countries for future use in training practitioners of competent authorities on countering illicit financial flows from drug trafficking.

The UNODC Advisor on AML/CFT coordinated the creation and development of a pool of national AML/

CFT trainers from representatives of the FIUs and law enforcement agencies in four Central Asia countries (five from Uzbekistan, four from Kazakhstan, three from Tajikistan, and three from Kyrgyzstan).

On 21-23 June, UNODC jointly with international partners and the Law Enforcement Academy of Kazakhstan conducted the International Forum on Financial Investigations in Almaty, **Kazakhstan**. Over 40 representatives of more than 20 competent authorities from Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus took part in the forum. The event gathered international speakers from Ukraine, Georgia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and other countries. Specialists in AML/CFT discussed the issue of financial intelligence, and the search for foreign assets based on open and closed sources. Based on the forum's results, UNODC and national partners developed a manual with recommendations on conducting parallel financial investigations, asset recovery and financial intelligence operations.

As a part of countering the 'financing of terrorism' component, a multi-annual training programme on CFT was implemented in Central Asia. The AML/CFT team organized and delivered CFT trainings (**three in Tajikistan, two in Kazakhstan, one in Turkmenistan and two in Kyrgyzstan**). The regional capacity to detect, investigate and disrupt terrorist networks and counter illegal financial flows was strengthened. Likewise, inter-agency policy, coordination and information sharing mechanisms were all enhanced.



### Number of AML/CFT regional activities implemented in 2022:

Country / organization	High-level meeting	Working group supported	Round table / consultation	National legislation / regulation	Train for trainers	Training / seminar	Trained / participated	Manual
Uzbekistan	3	1	1			1	15	
Kyrgyzstan	2		9	5	1	4	80	
Tajikistan	3	1	2		2	3	54	
Turkmenistan			1			1	16	
Kazakhstan	6	1	4	2		6	152	
Regional						3	83	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>2</b>

In 2022, UNODC supported the Academy of the General Prosecutor's Office, the Department for Combating Economic Crimes under the General Prosecutor's Office (FIU) and the MIA of the Republic of **Uzbekistan**, in successfully implementing activities under the project 'Strengthening the capacity of the competent authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan to conduct parallel financial investigations and

suppress illegal financial flows associated with organized crime and drug trafficking', and the programme 'Combating the Financing of Terrorism'.

Due to these initiatives, the effectiveness of interagency cooperation was increased in line with international best practices, Uzbekistan's capacity to combat ML/TF was strengthened, and the





recommendations of FATF international standards were implemented. The Republic of Uzbekistan was rated as having a substantial level of effectiveness for Immediate Outcome 9 (TF investigation and prosecution) during the second round of the EAG mutual evaluation on FATF Recommendations.

A pool of national trainers from FIU, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** was formed, a methodology for teaching parallel financial investigations was developed in the national language, and more than 50 law enforcement specialists were trained.

The representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** noted successful work in conducting a financial investigation of criminal cases related to terrorism, where a criminal scheme for transferring funds from Uzbekistan to Syria

was uncovered. The recipient of the funds was identified as being a terrorist. The representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs noted that the criminal scheme was uncovered by an officer who had successfully completed the training under the UNODC Programme for Combating the Financing of Terrorism.

A representative of the State Security Service of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** was trained through the UNODC Financial Investigation Programme and the Simulation Programme AML on drug trafficking. A parallel financial investigation was conducted by an officer who is a national trainer. As a result of the knowledge and skills provided by UNODC, in 2022, citizen A., the leader of a transnational criminal group, was convicted of money laundering, among other things, with the confiscation of funds of more than 200,000,000 tenge (over \$400,000), which were identified during a parallel financial investigation.



# JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW





## Youth Focused Crime Prevention Strategies



In 2022 the Central Asian countries undertook a number of reforms in the justice sector, most of which aim to build the capacities of state institutions, ensure judicial independence, and promote access to justice, fair trial standards and humane conditions of detention.

In 2022, further to the UNODC Strategy for 2021-2025 and its commitment to empowering youth, UNODC's Regional Office for Central Asia continued its support to national and regional-wide initiatives to engage young people and strengthen youth resilience to crime and violence. Young people have been active participants of various thematic campaigns and events dedicated to world days against trafficking in persons and violence against women and girls.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, thirty-six youth from orphanages took part in the prevention of trafficking in persons campaign, and received legal and psycho-social guidance to prevent youth crime and trafficking in persons, including for sexual and labour exploitation. Twenty young people (including fifteen girls) aged 13 to 20 took part in the online video, photo and 2D-3D art competition under the theme of 'Don't be scared. Stop it. Live!', in support of the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Against Women and Girls' Global Campaign. The competition was conducted as a part of the UNODC-implemented

project 'Promoting effective investigation and prosecution of gender-based violence in the Kyrgyz Republic', supported by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) of the U.S. State Department.

*"I thank you for the opportunity to be with you today to honour those participants who have utilized their artistic skill and talent to spread the message concerning the dangers of gender-based violence. The United States takes the issue of gender-based violence very seriously and works with our partners, such as UNODC, to not only convey that message but to also develop programmes to educate and reduce the number of gender-based violence cases. Competitions such as this show that the message of combatting gender-based violence can be expressed in many ways. Each of which can reach groups that may not otherwise be aware of the dangers and consequences of gender-based violence,"* said Mr. Charles Hardway, Director of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs in the Kyrgyz Republic.

*“In the 21st century, each person should take responsibility for his actions. Not everyone can explain and judge their actions correctly, especially if a person committed a crime. I think the problem of gender-based violence should not only be discussed but must be solved, eradicated. I believe that life without gender-based violence will develop faster if not only men’s opinions are counted,”* said Mr. Darkhan Talantbaev, first prize winner, when explaining his artwork.

At the regional level, 30 national trainers representing academies of law enforcement authorities, prosecutors and lawyers of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, upgraded their professional skills on child sensitive communication and trauma-informed approaches to child interviewing as part of rehabilitation and reintegration strategies for children returned from conflict zones, contextualized for Central Asian countries and their criminal justice institutions.

In 2022, more than 200 students in Uzbekistan took part in training sessions based on UNODC education-

for-justice materials (including the ‘Zorbs’ cartoon series and Line Up Live Up videos), that will continue to be used in Uzbek language as a part of the official school curricula.

Moreover, 160 young people in Uzbekistan received an opportunity to complete a vocational training course to develop skills in photo and video production, journalism and design, as part of the media hub previously established by UNODC for developing young people’s skills and opportunities.

As part of the social cohesion initiatives in the country’s vulnerable regions, over 200 young people received free legal aid on civil law related issues (such as marriage, business start-ups, real estate issues and others) in legal aid clinics opened previously in Namangan (at the State University Law Faculty), and Andijan city, with UNODC’s support.

In 2022, three tertiary education institutions and one pilot secondary school in Turkmenistan continued application of UNODC’s education-for-justice (E4J) training modules, and have trained their teaching staff (30 persons) in working with the E4J materials. The first pilot lessons using the E4J materials were conducted for school students of 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades.



## Access to Justice



While progressive justice sector reforms have been initiated and are underway in all Central Asian countries, there is yet a need for further strengthening rule of law. Judicial systems of the region's countries continue to face both old and new problems to various extents, which require radical solutions and significant changes aimed at improving the quality of justice and public confidence in the rule of law.

To support Central Asian governments' efforts to implement these reforms, the UNODC Programme Office in **Kazakhstan** launched a sociological survey for recipients of police services, and analysed police work processes within a pilot initiative to support implementation of community-oriented policing in Pavlodar city. Over 180 police officers (40 per cent women) were engaged in specialized training, and upgraded their skills in building and maintaining trust with the community, good communication and public relations tools, and managing open and competitive recruitment processes for the police force.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, standard operating procedures on investigation, prosecution and medical forensic examination were endorsed as part of a multi-sectoral response mechanism for victims of violence. Over 120 police officers strengthened their capacities in applying standard operating procedures in pilot regions covered by the Spotlight Initiative on gender-based violence prevention. To strengthen social partnerships between civil society, police and local authorities, and local communities, women committees were established in 10 pilot municipalities whose members engaged in small-scale initiatives to increase their capacities to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.

In **Uzbekistan**, over 200 people received free legal aid on civil law related issues (marriage, business start-ups, real estate issues, and others) through legal aid clinics opened earlier in the Namangan (at the State University's Law Faculty) and Andijan cities – thereby supporting vulnerable communities and strengthening social cohesion.

## Penitentiary Reform and Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons

A sentence of imprisonment constitutes only a deprivation of the basic right to liberty. It does not entail the restriction of other human rights, except for those which are naturally restricted by the very fact of being in prison. Prison reform is necessary to ensure that this principle is respected, and that the human rights of prisoners are protected and their prospects for social reintegration are increased, in compliance with relevant international standards and norms.

UNODC has a longstanding expertise and mandate in assisting Member States, including those in Central Asia, to build more effective, humane and resilient prison systems as the global custodian of:

- The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules)
- The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial (the Tokyo Rules)
- The United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules)

In 2022, UNODC's legislative support resulted in drafting legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks relating to prison and penal reform, and parole and probation management, including a draft Probation Strategy for 2023-2027 in **Kyrgyzstan**. In **Kazakhstan**, UNODC advocated for the revision of national legislation on the administrative supervision of former violent extremist Foreign Terrorist Fighter (FTF) prisoners, to ensure compliance with international standards and good practices. Similarly in Tajikistan, a detailed analysis of the legal framework regulating the national prison system (including post-release administrative supervision of former violent extremist and FTF prisoners) was conducted, and concrete recommendations were provided to government authorities, members of parliament, national human rights institutions, academia and civil society.

***“A safe, secure and humane prison environment provides the foundation for all other interventions.”***

In 2022, UNODC enhanced security and safety mechanisms and capacity of the prison

administrations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, by supporting increased information sharing among prison service and law enforcement agencies, by developing and piloting a Prison Security Audit Framework, improving prison intelligence functions, and promoting greater involvement of civil society organizations in preventing violent extremism in prisons.

In **Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan**, prison administrations piloted and endorsed the Prison Security Audit Tool, and its Checklist and Reporting Guidelines to maintain proper balance between physical, procedural and dynamic security in prisons. In **Tajikistan**, UNODC exercised the prison security audit in two selected prisons and provided practical recommendations for improvement in line with the Nelson Mandela Rules. Following recommendations, UNODC provided CCTV equipment to the Vakhdat prison in Tajikistan, as well as HT radios, CCTV and lighting for the external prison walls for three pilot prisons in Kyrgyzstan, to enhance physical and procedural security in these facilities.

***“To run efficiently and effectively, prisons must assess and respond to the individual needs and risks of prisoners including violent extremist and foreign terrorist fighter prisoners.”***

In 2022, UNODC continued its support to Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Tajik prison administrations to develop and pilot **Prisoner Risks and Needs Assessment Tools (RNA)**, to ensure safe, secure and humane custody, including for high-risk prisoners. In Kazakhstan the RNA Tool was piloted in seven prisons, including a women's prison, by assessing over 600 prisoners including 85 violent extremist prisoners. As a result of the assessment, individually-tailored prison-based rehabilitation programmes were developed for prisoners, including violent extremist and FTF prisoners, by a multidisciplinary group of prison officers consisting of prison psychologists, PVE inspectors, prison security officers and others. In Kyrgyzstan, UNODC institutionalized a set of RNA Tools for use within the prison system to analyse the security risk individual prisoners pose to themselves, the prison facility and the guards, in addition to identifying criminogenic needs.



The capacities of prison administrations in each country were enhanced through delivery of a series of capacity-building events and engaging over 200 prison officers in respective countries, including on adherence to Nelson Mandela Rules in prisons, dynamic security and prison intelligence, motivational interviewing techniques to ensure effective reintegration planning and programming, the use of verbal conflict de-escalation techniques in prison and probation settings, and use of measured force in responding to disturbances as outlined in the Nelson Mandela Rules.

UNODC supported institutional development of the national training centres for prison and probation officers at the Kostanay Training Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan including *a Research and Training Centre on implementation of the Nelson Mandela Rules, the PVE Training Centre and the Probation Training Centre.*

In October 2022, UNODC organized a study visit of prison and probation officers from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to the Kostanay Training Academy in Kazakhstan to ensure sharing of knowledge and skills on the professional training of prison and probation officers, and to promote regional cooperation among Central Asian prison administrations. The study visit served to share knowledge accumulated by participating countries in regards to the management of high-risk prisoners, including violent extremist and FTFs prisoners, based on international practice. All participants from Central Asian countries highlighted the importance and key

*“The EU-UN joint global initiative supported us to train more than 3,000 prison and probation officers in Kazakhstan. A key focus has been on the risks and needs assessment and classification of violent extremist prisoners, strengthening safety and security mechanisms, and building the institutional capacity to prevent radicalization to violence in prisons in order to facilitate the successful rehabilitation of prisoners and contribute to the safety of the community,”* said Mr. Zhanat Eshmagambetov, Chairperson of the Prison Committee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

role of the Kostanay Training Academy in professional training of prison and probation officers, and as a result:

- **Tajikistan** requested the Kostanay Training Academy share available training materials on Prison Security Audit and Prisoner Risks and Needs Assessment Tools developed and introduced in Kazakhstan.
- **Kyrgyzstan** signed (i) an MoU between the Probation Department of the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic and Kostanay Training Academy; and (ii) an MoU between the Prison Service of the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Kostanay Training Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kazakhstan.



*“I have personally appreciated how the Kostanay Training Academy is organizing the professional training for psychologists and other prison and probation officers working with violent extremist and FTF prisoners. It is important in the future that officers from the Probation Service of the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic attend not only short-term training courses, but also long-term training programmes such as bachelor’s and master’s degrees, as well as PhD studies,”* said Mr. Daniyar Molodkul, Deputy Head of the Probation Department of the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic.

All participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan requested UNODC build a regular platform for exchange visits, with a particular focus on practice-oriented learning/training for prison and probation officers, and they expressed their readiness to host next regional exchange visits in their respective countries.

With the goal of ensuring humane treatment and enhancing social reintegration prospects, UNODC invested in a more rehabilitative approach to prison and community-based offender management. To ensure their successful reintegration into society, it

is critically important that a former violent extremist prisoner is employable and able to support his or her family.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, UNODC supported construction of an automobile repair station in an open-type prison that will enable 50 offenders at a time to gain skills and work experience.

In **Kazakhstan**, UNODC supported vocational training in furniture manufacturing offered to prisoners, including to violent extremist and FTFs prisoners, and assisted prisoners’ furniture manufacturing enterprises inside of prisons by providing production equipment, which resulted in new employment opportunities for 17 prisoners including 12 violent extremist and FTFs prisoners.

*“The exchange visit was organized at a high level, and we strongly believe that such events held on a regular basis will significantly contribute to advancing the professional knowledge and skills of prison and probation officers throughout the Central Asia region,”* said Mr. Ilkhom Makhmudzoda, Deputy Head of the Prison Service of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan.

## The impact of a global EU/UN initiative working with violent extremist prisoners: Nurlan's story

*Pavlodar (Kazakhstan), 30 January 2023* – “My name is Nurlan. I would like to tell you my story.”

Five years ago, Nurlan was sent to a prison in northern Kazakhstan. “I asked myself, how am I going to get through my sentence? What am I going to do?”

Rehabilitation is a key function of prisons. It is vital that time spent in prison is used productively so that on release, ex-prisoners can re-join their communities and safely participate in society. Yet many factors weaken the ability of prisons to effectively provide rehabilitation. These include overcrowding, poor prison conditions, understaffing, lack of financial resources, and little support for prisoners to maintain social ties outside.

Kuanysb Koichubaev is a governor in the prison where Nurlan served his sentence. “We work

extensively with prisoners to support their successful re-socialization,” he says, describing three key strands of support: disengagement from violence; educational and vocational programmes; and active support for maintaining social connections outside the walls. “Evidence shows that those who have someone waiting for them outside are less likely to violate prison rules and will try hard to return home as soon as possible,” Koichubaev adds.

### “UN representatives understood our needs.”

Nurlan decided to make use of the prison's vocational programme, setting up a furniture manufacturing workshop with three other inmates.

*“At first, we took small orders. We made furniture as best we could without any modern equipment. But in 2019, United Nations (UN) representatives visited the*



*workshop. I showed them my orders, my products, my problems, and what we lacked for large-scale work. They understood our needs and helped us procure the necessary equipment.”*

Since 2018, Kazakhstan has been one of three beneficiary countries of a global European Union and UN joint initiative to support member states to manage violent extremist prisoners and prevent radicalization to violence in prisons.

The implementing partners have been the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre and the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

All have worked closely with the national authorities of Kazakhstan, Tunisia and Uganda in four key impact areas: safety and security; risk and needs assessment; disengagement interventions; and social reintegration.

While the initiative has targeted the issue of violent extremism, interventions have also aimed at broader prison reform in order to promote good prison management. This is the foundation for all other targeted interventions, including those for violent extremist prisoners.

The initiative’s impact can be seen across pilot prisons in all three countries – and was felt deeply by Nurlan, who “started taking more prisoners to work.” His number of employees increased from three to 35, including 17 violent extremist prisoners. They were offered meaningful work and income, as well as training that gave them ways to become productive members of society when they leave prison.

Koichubaev states the importance of the prison’s vocational programme: “It’s difficult for prisoners to integrate into society after years of isolation. That’s why family support, professional skills and work opportunities can give prisoners a powerful platform to not only become full members of society, but also prevent repeat offending and make communities safer. We are positively influencing a prisoner’s fate and showing them we care about their life.”

#### **“I’ve got big plans ahead of me.”**

The joint initiative is coming to an end, but great attention is being paid to ensuring its significant achievements are sustained and replicated.

This includes facilitating local ownership of, and continued political commitment to, achieved results; investing in capacity building; developing strategic partnerships with civil society organizations; and shifting policy perspectives towards preventing violent extremism, rather than simply punishing it.

The knowledge gained from the initiative in Kazakhstan, Tunisia and Uganda has enhanced the international evidence base on the management of violent extremist prisoners and the prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons.

Yet there is more to do. In all three countries, continued political commitment will help to embed and extend the changes seen over the course of the programme, leading to well-managed prisons and safer communities.

As for Nurlan, he is hopeful for the future. “I’ve got big plans ahead of me. I’ve got a family and a son waiting for me at home, and I think it’s only a matter of time before I get home and meet them.”



It is important to help violent extremist prisoners maintain or re-establish contact with their families during their time in custody, and particularly in the stages prior to release. UNODC encourages prison administrations to strengthen the family relationships that can be a primary means for disengaging from violent extremism, and support the refurbishing and equipping of prisoners' short visits facilities and children's rooms at extended visit facilities in all seven pilot prisons in Kazakhstan.

Besides, UNODC has continued its efforts on promoting interventions in the outside community to ensure public reassurance and understanding of the positive impact of disengagement interventions on public safety. In 2022, UNODC conducted a first-ever forum on the role of CSOs in rehabilitation and reintegration processes for violent extremist prisoners, in partnership with OSCE and USAID. The hybrid-format forum was attended by 154 participants (33 per cent women) including high-level officials from national authorities and donors, representatives of relevant government agencies, civil society, academia and the international community of Kazakhstan,

*“Without the engagement of civil society, the process of social reintegration of violent extremist prisoners becomes a myth,”* said Mr. Kuat Rakhimberdin, professor and member of the Public Oversight Council of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

and contributed to by international experts from Belgium, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands and the UK.

To ensure public reassurance and understanding, regular work with the media (particularly with newspapers and television) should be implemented to explain the positive disengagement activity taking place in prisons, the types and purpose of interventions being delivered, and evidence of the positive impacts they can have on violent extremist prisoners. In Kazakhstan, UNODC co-organized a media workshop for 44 media representatives (64 per cent women) including journalists, media experts and press service officers of the Prison Committee and Law Enforcement Academy of the GPO, on the media's role in preventing violent extremism in Kazakhstan – in partnership with the OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan, and the Internews Network in Kazakhstan. Workshop participants enhanced their knowledge and skills in media reporting of PVE-related cases, including conflict-sensitive approaches, and the application of journalists' code of ethics while publishing PVE related media materials and partnering with press officers from prison administrations.





In 2022, UNODC produced background papers on the capacity of probation department in the Kyrgyz Republic and the feasibility of the use of electronic monitoring bracelets for detainees, probationers, and parolees, particularly ones sentenced with extremism and terrorism charges. These documents will be presented to the government in 2023 for further input prior to their publication on UNODC ROCA website.

UNODC also provided training on client engagement and conflict de-escalation to 75 probation officers in the Kyrgyz Republic to improve the quality of probation supervision. In consultation with the probation officers, they mentioned that the main reasons why officers find working with violent extremist offenders challenging are that these clients are less likely to engage in conversations and that the officers fear for their safety. To alleviate these issues, UNODC delivered 4-days training which covered topic from identifying opportunities for engagement, conflict resolution style, how to identify agitated clients, and personal safety knowledge.

UNODC provided opportunities for further cooperation with other governments through work-exchange visits to the United States and Latvia, in addition to high-level visit to Indonesia to study the implementation of non-custodial measures on extremist and terrorism cases which resulted in commitment to sign a memorandum of understanding between the countries. In the Kyrgyz Republic, UNODC intended to facilitate a learning experience for a frontline officer working directly with extremist clients and the theologian officers working in Probation Department.

**In Tajikistan** under the Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters Detention Programme funded by the US Bureau of Counterterrorism UNODC conducted security audits in two pilot prisons, Dushanbe and Vakhdat. As a result of these security audits security weaknesses were identified and improvements were recommended. Following up on the recommendations surveys were also conducted in Vakhdat prison for installation of CCTV cameras and establishment of a central control room to improve the safety and security of the prison. Tajikistan faces a particular challenge due to the high proportion of prisoners charged with terrorism and extremism-related offences. With UNODC's assistance prison services are now better able to identify those who actually pose a high level of threat as the result of the ongoing development of a new risk and needs assessment tool, which will be implemented across the country's prisons. This additional knowledge will allow the development of individualized disengagement programmes, and as a result, the risk of radicalization to violence in prisons will be greatly reduced.

Additionally in Tajikistan UNODC continued to build capacity of prison officers in effective management of VEPs and FTF prisoners in line with UN standards and international best practices. Trainings were delivered on Nelson Mandela Rules, Dynamic Security, Risk and Needs Assessments, and developing and implementing specialized training curriculum. As a result capacity of prison staff was enhanced to detect signs of radicalization in prisons and prevent radicalization towards violence inside prisons.



## United Against Corruption



In 2022, UNODC continued providing support to the competent authorities of **Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan** in countering corruption. UNODC provided relevant authorities with recommendations for strengthening legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks, and the capacity to prevent and address corruption in line with UNCAC through commentaries and recommendations for the draft legal acts, including the drafted Criminal Code and Criminal Procedural Code of Uzbekistan, on the issues of criminalization of corruption, and strengthening the methodological base of the anti-corruption expertise of legal acts.

**Kazakhstan** adopted a Concept on Anti-Corruption Policy, adopted the Law 'On amendments and additions to some legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on combating corruption and ensuring the safety of persons subject to state protection', and amendments to the Criminal Code, Labour Law, Law on Countering Corruption, the Law 'On Operational-Investigative Activities', the Law 'On State Secrets', the Law 'On State Protection of Persons Participating in Criminal Procedures', the Law 'On State Statistics and Special Accounting', and the Law 'On Law Enforcement

Service'. Kyrgyzstan adopted the Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2022-2024, while Uzbekistan adopted the Law 'On State Civil Service' and the President's Decree 'On Measures on Establishing Intolerance to Corruption, Significant Reduction of Corruption Factors in State and Public Administration, and Broad Public Involvement in this Process'.

In addition, in **Uzbekistan**, the National Anti-Corruption Council under the Senate officially adopted in June 2022 the methodology for calculating the national index of corruption that was developed with UNODC support. A number of Presidential decrees adopted in Uzbekistan in 2022 to strengthen the anti-corruption system, improve the transparency and public accountability of the Government and public agencies, have been developed with consideration of UNODC recommendations. To support the process of implementing the UNCAC article 13, commentaries and recommendations on strengthening public control over the executive branch of power and enhancing the Anti-Corruption Public Council were delivered to the Anti-Corruption Agency of Uzbekistan.

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan,

with the assistance of the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia, joined the **Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GLOBE Network)**. GLOBE Network participation will provide an enhanced domestic coordination platform for all four countries, as it involves the participation of general prosecutor's offices, anti-corruption agencies and FIUs, that would need to coordinate their domestic actions to ensure their effective role in the GLOBE Network.

UNODC organized the First Central Asian regional workshop of the **Network of Anti-Corruption Practitioners along the Silk Road Economic Belt** in Samarkand, Uzbekistan in May 2022. As a result, over 60 prosecutors, investigators, judges and anti-corruption practitioners from 13 countries (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, Iran, I.R., Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) enhanced their skills in preventing and combating corruption in international investment projects.

In May 2022, 30 senior experts of the Agency on State Financial Control and Countering Corruption, the GPO, the Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court of **Tajikistan** were trained by UNODC on the UNCAC requirements for anti-corruption policy and legislation.

In October 2022, UNODC provided an expert input during the 12th Meeting of the Law Enforcement Meeting of the Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, attended by over 20 law enforcement experts from Central Asia and the South Caucasus.

In November 2022, UNODC trained 20 senior experts of the GPO, the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Court and the FIU of **Turkmenistan** on UNCAC requirements for anti-corruption policy and legislation.

In November 2022, UNODC trained 25 senior experts of the GPO of **Azerbaijan** on financial investigations and asset recovery.

Also in November 2022, UNODC participated in and provided expert input to the 27th High Level and Steering Group Meetings in the framework of the Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, being a regional anti-corruption programme established under the OECD Working Group on Bribery.

In December 2022, UNODC trained 50 senior experts of the Anti-Corruption Agency, GPO, the State Secret Service, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Economy of **Kazakhstan** on best international practices in the area of whistleblower protection and asset declarations.



UNODC conducted the First Regional Expert Forum on Recovering Proceeds of Corruption in Central Asia and South Caucasus in December 2022. The forum gathered together over 60 prosecutors and investigators from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, to exchange and promote good practices on asset recovery. Based on the outcome of the forum, the report on stolen asset recovery was prepared, containing main observations and recommendations based on the results of the discussion.

In 2022, UNODC assisted **Uzbekistan** and the **Kyrgyz Republic** in creating a national pool of lecturers, and developing the Guide for practitioners on anti-corruption expertise of legal acts. As a result, over 26 trainers on anti-corruption evaluation of legal acts were trained in Uzbekistan and over 100 prosecutors and legal experts were trained to perform anti-corruption reviews of legal acts in Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic.

UNODC developed and presented recommendations on improving the conceptual base and core principles for the system of state control over entrepreneurial activities, at the forum **'Integrated approach to the development of the business climate in Uzbekistan: Mechanisms for protecting business rights and reforming state control'**, conducted on 30 June 2022. The recommendations included improving transparency and accountability of inspecting authorities, and engaging public control mechanisms to oversee the quality and impartiality of inspections; enhancing preventive functions within the state

control system; strengthening mechanisms of disciplinary and ethical responsibility of inspecting authorities, and; fostering reforms of law-making and rule-making processes through better integration of tools such as regulatory impact assessment and anti-corruption evaluation of draft legal acts.

17 senior specialists and mid-level managers of the Business Ombudsman Office of **Uzbekistan** and its regional branches were trained in October 2022 to develop survey protocols, collect and analyse the survey data, and collaborate with survey companies when performing research and corruption surveys focused on Government-to-Business and Business-to-Government interactions. The training contributed to advancement in the performance of the Office of Business Ombudsman in Uzbekistan, and improvements to the nation's business environment.

UNODC proposed and supported establishment of a new discussion platform **'Business against corruption'** in Uzbekistan. The platform provides opportunities for entrepreneurs to have direct talks with the heads of the Anti-Corruption Agency, the Business Ombudsman Office and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan. On 10 November 2022 over 40 entrepreneurs from different regions of Uzbekistan had an opportunity to openly discuss urgent issues of corruption, and share their personal experience of facing corrupt practices and opposing them during the first round of discussion on the platform. The 'Business against corruption' dialogue is expected to become a regular biannual event, supported and facilitated by UNODC.





UNODC continues facilitating dialogue on corruption in business in Uzbekistan. Over 115 entrepreneurs from different national economic sectors took part in person, and over 40 participated online in the Second **'Integrity in the Business Community of Uzbekistan'** Business Forum held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on 29 November 2022. The forum was organized by UNODC in cooperation with the Anti-Corruption Agency, Business Ombudsman and Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The Business Integrity Forum has become an annual dialogue platform intended to promote business integrity and prevent corruption in the private sector. The results of the study of corruption risks for Uzbekistan's business sector, and recommendations on removing corruption risks from legislative and decision-making processes, were presented by UNODC at the forum.

To increase youth engagement in the fight against corruption, UNODC supported popularization of the

Conference of States Parties to UNCAC, by organizing the **Model Conference of the State Parties (COSP)** for Master of Law students of Uzbekistan's universities.

On 20 December 2022, seven teams of Uzbekistan's Master of Law students (involving over 60 students) participated in the 3rd Model COSP to UNCAC in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Participants improved their analytical skills, and their knowledge of UNCAC. The Model COSP to UNCAC was organized by UNODC in cooperation with the Law Enforcement Academy of Uzbekistan and the Regional Dialogue NGO. The Model Conference for Master of Law students has become an annual event. With each iteration, the number of participants is growing and the quality of participation is significantly increasing. The Model COSP to UNCAC demonstrates great potential to become a Central Asian regional event promoting youth engagement in the fight against corruption.

## Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment



To further promote gender equality and women's empowerment in Central Asia, the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia in 2022 continued its support to regional governments by conducting thematic information campaigns, supporting UNCT and Member States in implementing different campaigns such as the 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and 100 days against TIP, promoting success stories of women leaders in criminal justice institutions and civil society, developing communication materials including video spots, social media trailers and educational movies, and supporting art exhibitions, hackathons and marathons.

In **Kyrgyzstan** UNODC in cooperation with UNDP provided support to the legal review of the specifics of the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, and the Code of Offences of the Kyrgyz Republic. The review's findings were presented at the broader round-table with the engagement of deputies of the Jogorku Kenesh (Parliament) of the Kyrgyz Republic, representatives of key ministries, civil society organizations promoting women's rights, international and non-governmental organizations, and the media. Participants expressed their concerns regarding the

de-criminalization of legislation, especially on such severe cases as rape (when parties can reconcile), and the lack of harmonization between newly-adopted legislation. It should be noted that since 2021 the Government has been reviewing over 300 legislative acts, as part of a massive legal inventory process.

UNODC has supported the development of SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Health on investigation, prosecution and medical forensic examination services, as a part of the multi-sectoral response mechanism for gender-based violence (GBV). Psychologists with experience working with women and child victims of violence were involved in the process of drafting SOPs for investigators on victim interrogation, considering psychological needs and need for protection against secondary victimization in accordance with international standards for the treatment of GBV survivors, and international standards for information sharing and data protection. A methodological tool was developed for patrol police based on GBV prevention standards. The tool prioritizes standards of treatment for women and girls who have been subjected to violence, as well as specifics of communication with

women and children exposed to multiple forms of discrimination and violence. 120 police officers and 60 prosecutors were trained on SOPs. The SOP for medical forensic experts is to be officially endorsed by the Ministry of Health, and all medical forensic experts will be trained on the SOPs in 2023.

In 2022, UNODC supported establishment of the working group under the Government of the **Kyrgyz Republic** on establishment of the One Window support system for victims of violence. A draft mechanism of interaction between executive authorities such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Protection and Migration, as well as medical forensic expertise including drafting normative legal acts to provide a comprehensive system of services and assistance to victims of gender discrimination and gender-based violence, were all developed. A location for constructing the one window centre was identified, being the Bishkek City emergency hospital.

UNODC facilitated establishment of new women committees in 10 pilot municipalities accompanied by 15 training events and 10 small-scale initiatives intended to increase the capacity of these committees to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. Moreover, gender-transformative e-training modules on applicable legislation for preventing and responding to violence against women and girls for the educational curricula of

justice and security institutions were developed and institutionalized.

**In Uzbekistan**, UNODC raised awareness of over 100 school students on the prevention of gender-based violence. The UNODC ROCA Gender Team participated in developing Uzbekistan's sixth periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as part of the Inter-agency group of the UN Country Team in Uzbekistan for CEDAW. Specific recommendations on better protecting women's and girls' rights, on enlarging their choices and possibilities, and also on eradicating gender-based discrimination and violence, including domestic violence, were developed and provided.

Several concluding observations were adopted (CEDAW/C/UZB/6) at its 1,862nd and 1,864th meetings (CEDAW/C/SR.1862 and CEDAW/C/SR.1864), held on 15 and 16 February 2022. The list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group is provided in CEDAW/C/UZB/Q/6, and Uzbekistan's responses are contained in CEDAW/C/UZB/RQ/6. As a further step, UNODC ROCA as part of UNCT will continue supporting the Government of Uzbekistan and other stakeholders in implementing CEDAW recommendations, and also integrating them into its work and programming. The concluding observations were translated and made available in the six official UN languages on the CEDAW website for the 81st session.







In October 2022, the UNODC as part of the UNCT Gender Theme Group provided its inputs to the Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality in Uzbekistan until 2030, by proposing indicators on gender mainstreaming and upholding human rights through the work of judiciary and law enforcement agencies. The strategy for achieving gender equality in Uzbekistan until 2030 is a nationwide multi-sectoral policy document, which serves to ensure equal participation of men and women in the management of public and state affairs, while providing social and legal support to women, and protecting women from

oppression and violence by promoting legitimacy, democracy, openness and transparency as basic principles of gender equality.

On 14 December 2022, UNODC jointly with the 'Istiqbolli Avlod' Republican Social Information Centre (CSO) organized an event devoted to the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence Against Women and Girls' campaign for over 40 students of the city Tax College, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. UNODC ROCA experts briefed students on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the 16 Days of Activism campaign that begins every year on 25 November, and runs up to Human Rights Day on 10 December.



They also discussed with students the matters of gender mainstreaming and upholding of human rights within law enforcement agencies, with a focus on addressing gender-based violence (GBV). Presentations covered the definition of GBV, the risk factors which contribute to GBV, and different forms of GBV. Comprehensive information on national gender strategies and legislative framework on gender equality and empowerment of women, addressing gender-based discrimination among judiciary and law enforcement as well as GBV, was offered during this meeting in order to deepen student's understanding and engagement to fight, prevent and respond to these types of crimes.



# GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



## Drug Use Prevention

UNODC's activities on drug prevention, treatment and rehabilitation in the region have contributed to SDG 3, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all. UNODC has been working with the Governments of Central Asian countries to improve drug addiction treatment and rehabilitation services

in the country, including supporting the establishment and strengthening of drug treatment facilities, and providing training to healthcare professionals to improve quality of drug treatment services. As a result, access to quality treatment services is increasing and contributing to a decrease in drug-related deaths.

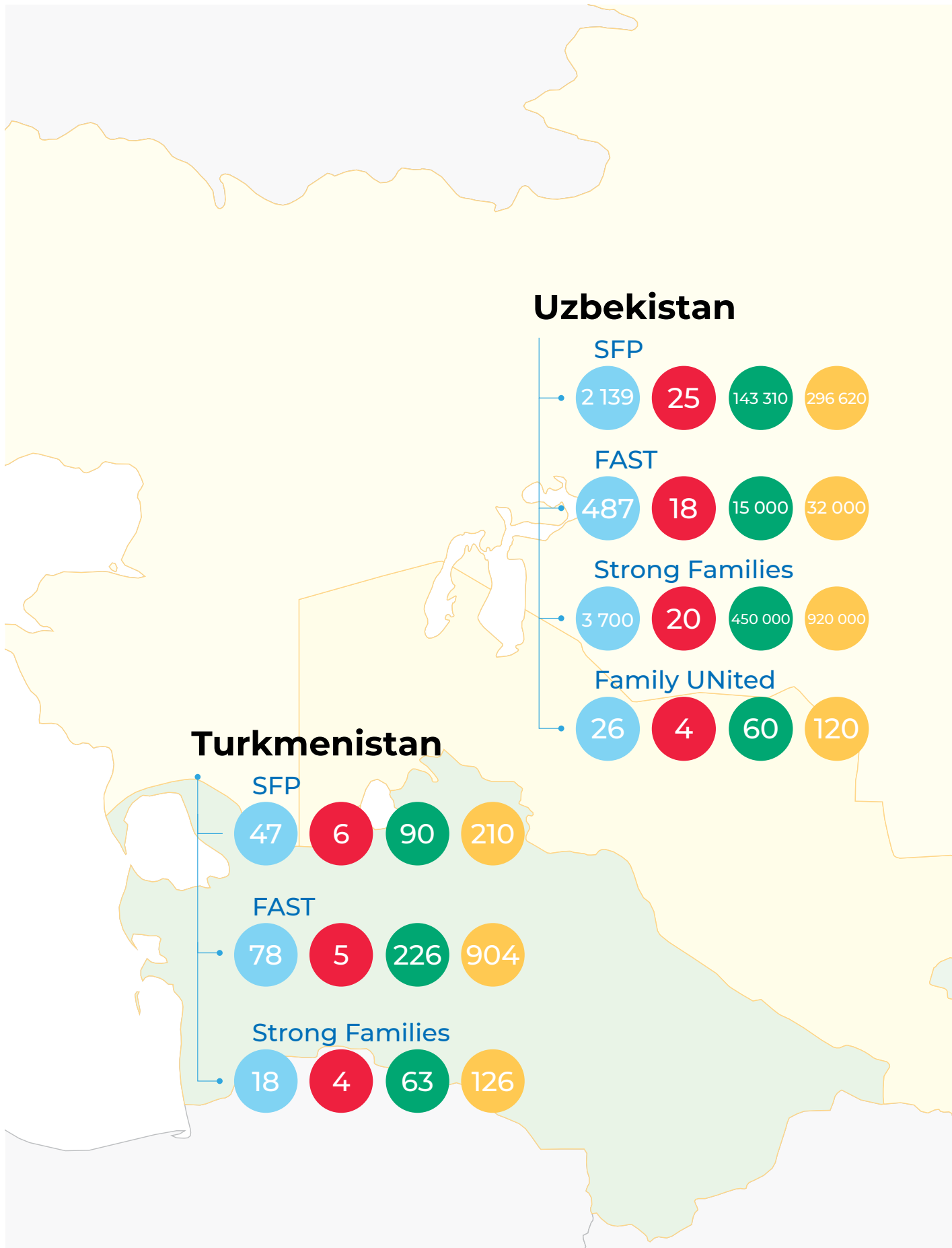


To protect the health and well-being of youth, specifically building a foundation for introducing evidence-based interventions in drug use prevention, UNODC has enhanced the capacity and skills of more than **60 facilitators (psychologists and teachers)** from three pilot districts in Uzbekistan. These activities were implemented within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, namely Target 3.5., and contributed to the implementation of the evidence-based drug use prevention programme 'Family UNited'. These efforts reached more than 1,600 families, who benefited from the piloting and scaling-up of programmes by trained facilitators.

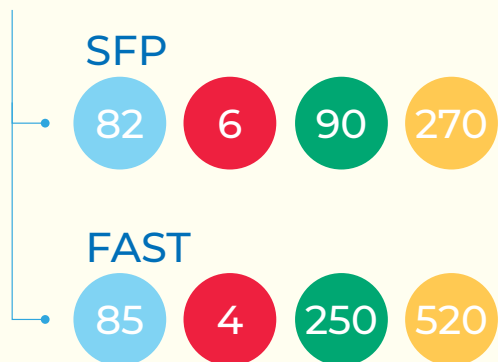
Trained families received valuable skills on normalizing and managing stress related to problems in families and schools (such as teens' difficulties in completing homework, conflicts with peers, lack of money or controversies among family members), improving mental health, and enhancing communication and relationships within the family. Both children and caregivers could see positive changes following the programme sessions.

Between 28 March and 2 April 2022, UNODC ROCA together with the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan conducted a training for psychologists and teachers under the 'Family UNited' family skills training programme in Nukus, in the Republic of Karakalpakstan. The training's purpose was to instruct leading psychologists and teachers on the components of the 'Family UNited' programme, for further scaling up its implementation in three pilot districts (Kungrad, Muynak and Bozatau). The training was conducted by a team of national trainers who were trained under the guidance of UNODC international trainers over 12-14 October 2021.

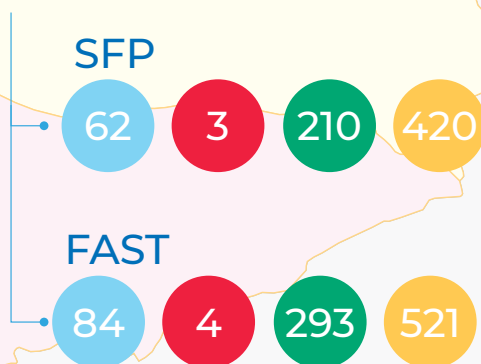
On 7 December 2022 the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, conducted a national round-table in Nukus, Karakalpakstan. This event was held within the framework of the joint UNODC/UNICEF/UNFPA project 'Investing in a resilient future of Karakalpakstan by improving the health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and well-



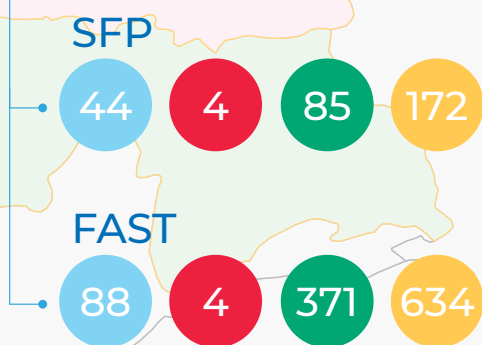
### Kazakhstan



### Kyrgyzstan



### Tajikistan



- Number of national facilitators
- Number of national trainers
- Number of children
- Number of family members



being of adolescents and by harnessing the talents of youth during and after COVID-19' with financial support from the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Human Security for the Aral Sea region in Uzbekistan. The UNODC component of the joint project was implemented through the UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025, with support from the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Section at UNODC in Vienna.

The meeting's main purpose was to present results of introducing the 'Family UNited' family skills training programme at selected schools of the three pilot districts of Muynak, Bozatau and Kungrad. The participants also discussed possible ways of ensuring the programme's sustainability in the region. The experts emphasized the importance of conducting family skills training programmes for psychologists and other healthcare and social support staff working directly with families and children, as well as family skills training programmes to improve the well-being of the region's families.

The event began with a presentation of the results of the 'Family UNited' programme's implementation in the three pilot districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. As part of the joint project, more than 90 trained psychologists and educators conducted the programme for 1,660 families through 60 selected schools. During the programme's course, families gained valuable skills in normalizing and managing stress, expanding their resources for coping with stress, improving mental health, finding positive and healthy ways to fit in with peers, and improving communication and relationships within the family. At the end of the national round-table, possible mechanisms for scaling-up and ensuring sustainability of the programme's implementation in the Republic of Karakalpakstan were discussed with national partners.



## Drug Treatment



Drug dependence is considered a multi-factorial health disorder which often follows the course of a relapsing and remitting chronic disease. Given the individual and socio-economic burden inflicted by drug dependence, the effective treatment and rehabilitation of patients is of significant public health importance.

To support governments in enhancing access to drug treatment, in 2022, UNODC developed the skills and capacities of more than 600 addiction professionals to provide evidence-based treatment and care services. UNODC organized the International Conference 'Uniting the global community to face the challenge of addiction', the national training on 'UNODC Drug Use Disorder Treatment Systems Quality Assurance', a series of trainings on the Universal Treatment Curriculum for Substance Use Disorders (UTC) training package, and a series of round-table meetings with national partners. As a direct result of these initiatives, trained professionals reached around 3,000 patients in the region during the reporting period, and best practices for treating drug use disorders were shared among healthcare experts and policymakers, contributing to the achievement of Target 3.5.

### Capacity-building Activities

Within the framework of the UTC capacity-building activities, a major achievement was that a total of 393 drug dependence treatment and care professionals (48 per cent men and 52 per cent women), enhanced their understanding of evidence-based treatment and care services through a series of trainings on the UTC training package.

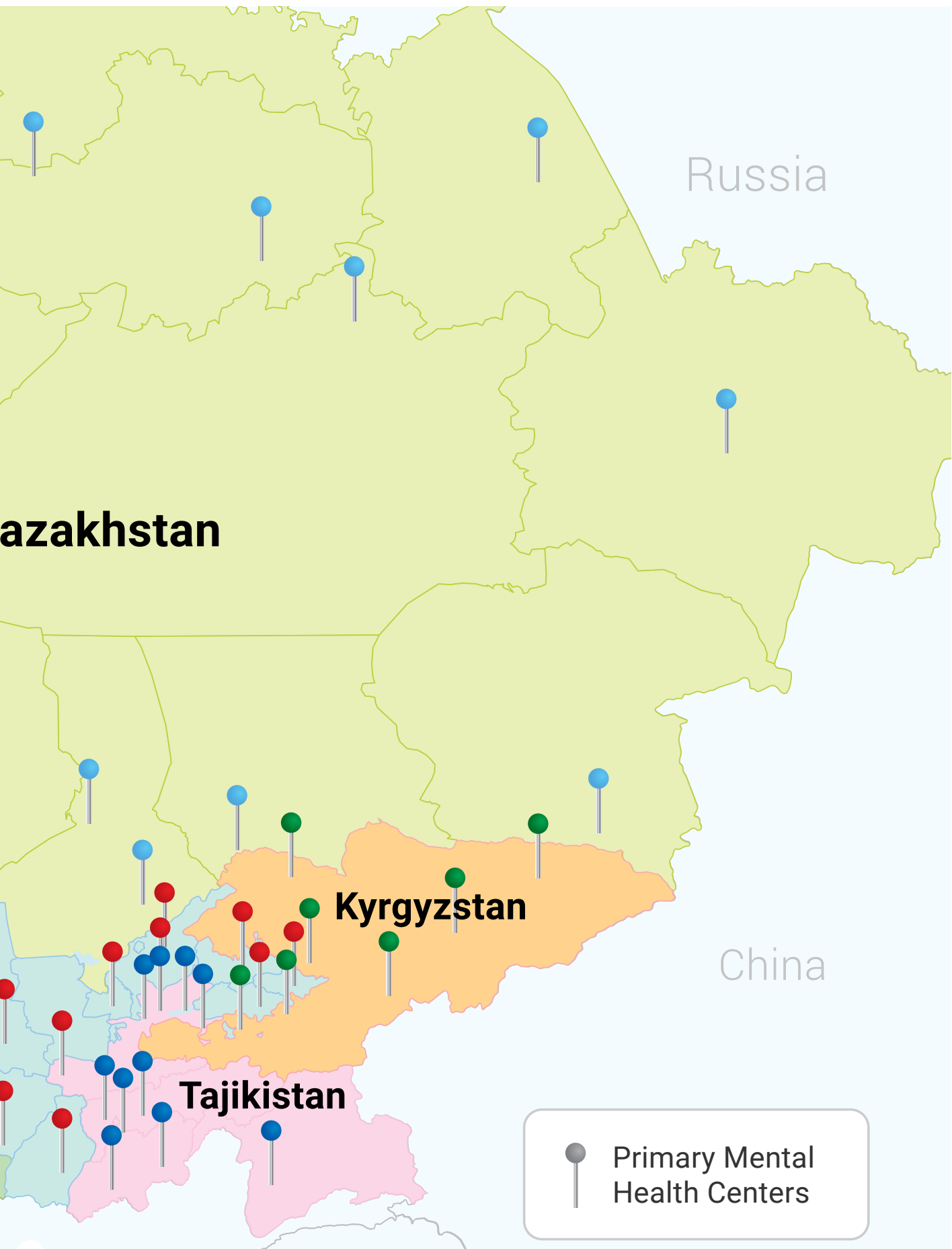
196 addiction professionals were trained in an in-person format on UTC 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17 and 18 during 29 echo trainings with an average knowledge increase of 38.42 per cent, conducted in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

16 national trainers (12 from Kyrgyzstan, 2 from Kazakhstan and 2 from Uzbekistan) attended a Training of Trainers (TOTs) on advanced courses of the UTC training package, to enhance their knowledge on contingency management and clinical supervision. These trainings were held in-person during the Regional TOT on UTC 13 and 18, over 10-18 March 2022 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

# Map of Drug Treatment Facilities in Central Asia Countries









15 national trainers (11 from **Uzbekistan** and 4 from **Tajikistan**) attended Training of Trainers (TOTs) on advanced courses of the UTC training package, to enhance their knowledge of clinical supervision. These trainings were held in-person during the Regional TOT on UTC 18, over 20-24 June 2022 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

20 national trainers (8 from **Kazakhstan**, 6 from **Tajikistan** and 8 from **Uzbekistan**, out of whom 11 were women) attended a Training of Trainers (TOT) on advanced courses of the UTC training package with the aim of enhancing their knowledge of contingency management. The training was held in-person during the Regional TOT on UTC 13, over 27-29 July 2022 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Ten national trainers from **Turkmenistan**, including seven women, attended TOTs on advanced courses of the UTC training package, to enhance their knowledge on the role of pharmacotherapy and pharmacological interventions on a continuum of recovery-oriented interventions, and to present ways of integrating medication-assisted treatment (MAT) services into a comprehensive system of care. The trainings were held in-person during the National TOT on UTC 9 and 10, over 22-29 August 2022 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The event was conducted within the framework of UNODC's joint capacity-building activities undertaken in line with the Colombo Plan.

18 national trainers (7 from **Kazakhstan**, 9 from **Kyrgyzstan** and 2 from **Uzbekistan**) attended a Training of Trainers (TOT) on advanced courses of the UTC training package, to enhance their clinical and group facilitation skills. The training was held in-person during the Regional TOT on UTC 16, over 24-25 October 2022 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

18 national trainers (7 from **Kazakhstan**, 9 from **Kyrgyzstan** and 2 from **Uzbekistan**) attended a Training of Trainers (TOT) on advanced courses of the UTC training package to enhance their clinical and group facilitation skills. The training was held in-person during the Regional TOT on UTC 19, over 26-29 October 2022 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

In August – September 2022, UNODC, with the support of USAID and UNAIDS, and jointly with civil society partners, organized in **Tajikistan** a series of trainings aimed at strengthening the collaboration of community-led organizations working with people who use drugs and law enforcement officers, as well as promoting the role of law enforcement in public health. The series of trainings were aimed at community empowerment to address the social, cultural, and political determinants that affect health and sought community-led organizations to build partnerships with other sectors in finding solutions.

### Assessment/data Collection-related Activities

A series of round-table meetings were initiated in the region, with the purpose of presenting the results of piloting international quality assurance (QA) tools and a study on the mapping of existing and potential services for treating drug use disorders. In addition, the event was a platform for discussing possible mechanisms, and means of introducing them into the country's national narcology system.

The first meeting, held on 25 March 2022 in **Uzbekistan** in a hybrid format, was attended by 20 officials of the national Ministry of Health and specialists of the drug treatment system, as well as representatives of other interested organizations involved in the process of organizing narcological services. 30 representatives of the regional narcology dispensaries joined the meeting online.

The meeting, held on 8 April 2022 in **Tajikistan**, was attended by 20 officials of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Tajikistan and specialists of the drug treatment system, as well as representatives of other interested organizations involved in the process of organizing the narcological services. The UNODC Mentor held a presentation on the experience of successfully introducing UNODC/WHO quality assurance and mapping tools for drug treatment services in Central Asia. Participants were also

informed of progress achieved towards introducing selected courses of the UTC training package. National experts gave presentations on the results of piloting international quality assurance tools for drug treatment services, and research on mapping existing and potential drug dependency treatment services in Tajikistan. The participants were also informed of the outcomes of the Stop Overdose Safely (S-O-S) initiative implemented in Tajikistan. The presentations were followed by a discussion of recommendations on mechanisms of incorporating piloted tools for diagnosis and treatment of drug use disorders into the national system of drug treatment services.

The meeting, held on 15 April 2022 in **Kazakhstan** in a hybrid format, was attended by 20 senior specialists from the ministries of health and internal affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the WHO Country Office, and the UNODC Programme Office in Kazakhstan. 20 heads and representatives of mental health service organizations from the cities of Nur-Sultan, Almaty and Shymkent, and regional centres, as well as specialized departments of the Kazakh Medical University and the Semey Medical University, all joined the meeting online. The issues of the pilot implementation of international tools and standards for the treatment of drug use disorders (a quality assurance tool based on the International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders (UNODC/

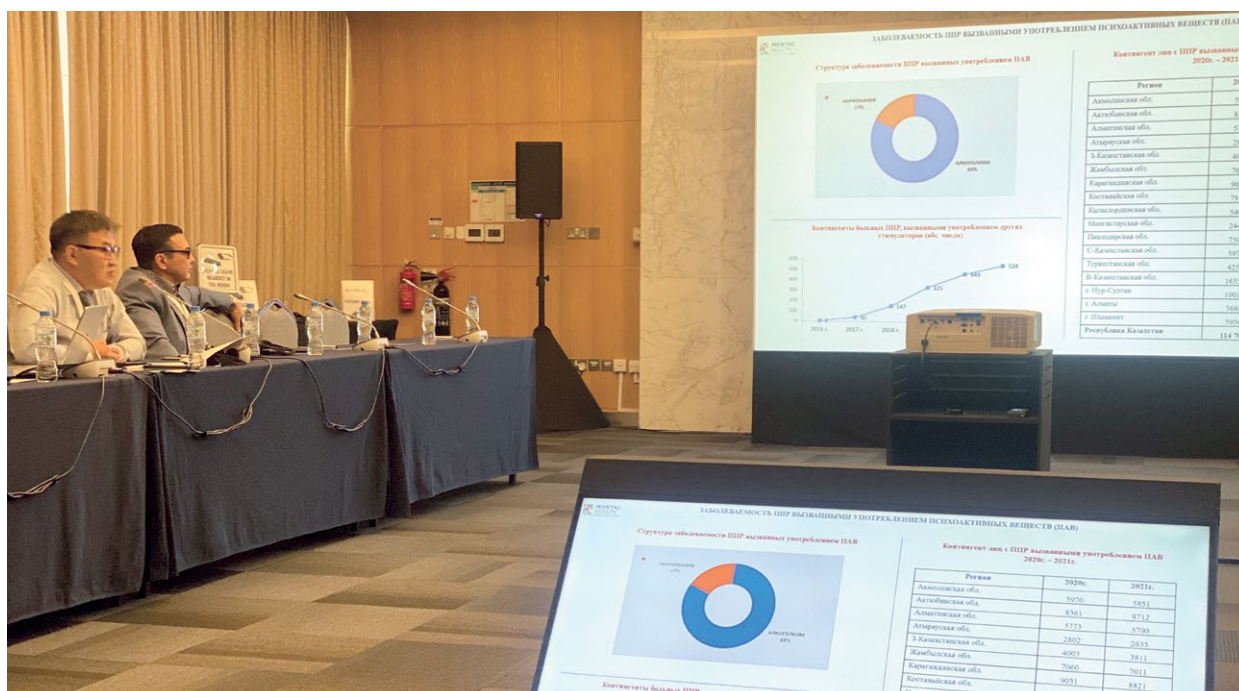


WHO 2020) and the WHO/UNODC substance use disorder treatment facility survey), overdose prevention, and the needs of and access to HIV prevention and treatment services for people who use psychoactive substances, were all discussed. As a result of the meeting, it was agreed that there is a need to provide affordable and high-quality medical care for people with mental and behavioural disorders caused by using psychoactive substances. It was decided to continue the implementation of international standards for diagnosis and treatment, as well as for measures for effectively preventing drug use disorders.

To provide an updated mapping of drug use disorder treatment services with the WHO/UNODC Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facility Survey in the region, during the reporting period a Regional Consultant performed data cleaning of the collected information from the recently-conducted assessment of the drug dependence treatment and care facilities in **Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan** and **Uzbekistan**. The consultant also produced the final regional report along with the recommendation for further use of the treatment facility mapping instrument in four countries of the region.

To provide technical assistance in developing and institutionalizing quality assurance for drug treatment services, the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia conducted a National Training 'UNODC Drug Use Disorder Treatment Systems Quality Assurance' in Bishkek, **Kyrgyzstan**, over 28-30 November 2022. The training aimed to provide support to national stakeholders in System Quality Assurance, sensitising them to drug use and drug use disorders, and evidence-based responses, while building the capacity of national expertise on conducting quality assurance of the drug use disorder treatment services and systems. The event gathered some 24 professionals and experts from all regions of Kyrgyzstan, including 19 women and 5 men. These participants represented the institutions and departments responsible for quality assurance services, including representatives of the Department of Medical Care Organization and Drug Policy of the Ministry of Health, members of the National Working Group on quality assurance of drug dependency treatment services, heads and coordinators of the Republican and Regional Psychiatry and Narcology Centres, as well as representatives of the Republican and Regional Compulsory Medical Insurance Fund. The training was delivered by a UNODC International





trainer and two national co-trainers from Kyrgyzstan. This capacity-building exercise aimed to look at national system standards, and compare the local system's quality in line with International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders.

A Working Group consisting of experts from **Kazakhstan** developed Methodological Recommendations for specialists working in the field of drug demand reduction on the introduction of a quality assurance tool based on the UNODC/WHO International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders. Methodological Recommendations were approved by the Republican Healthcare Development Centre, and will be included in the 'Road Map on Developing Mental Health Services of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2022-2024 years'.

UNODC ROCA in collaboration with the UNODC Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Section (PTRS) supported the participation of 19 members of country delegations from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (7 women and 8 men) at the **International Society of Substance Use Professionals (ISSUP) Conference 2022** on the top of 'Uniting the global community to face the challenge of addiction' event, held over 11-16 May 2022 in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The conference's main goals were to present latest developments in the field of drug use prevention and treatment of drug use disorders, as well as to provide an opportunity for addiction professionals from all over

the world to meet and exchange experiences. As part of the conference, UNODC ROCA organized a UNODC Central Asian Governments Symposium on Substance Use to strengthen collaboration and experience exchange among regional countries and between national counterparts, international organizations and relevant NGOs in Central Asia, held over 13-15 May 2022. The symposium also included a round-table discussion on drug demand reduction activities in Central Asia, covering topics such as COVID-19 drug treatment continuity, alternatives to incarceration, and mental health and drug use disorders in prison settings, which was followed by a meeting with representatives from international partners organization including Colombo Plan, ISSUP, ICUDDR/ITTC, CADCA and INL, to discuss future opportunities for collaboration. The symposium gave each country an opportunity to report on their progress and efforts in regards to implementing drug demand reduction activities over recent years. The meeting sought to promote dialogue between regional countries and within broader networks. Relevant international stakeholders working in the region were able to interact and share their work and available tools with stakeholders from Central Asia. Future opportunities for collaboration on prevention and treatment of drug use disorders in the region were also discussed. In addition, on 12 May 2022, members of country delegations attended the official opening ceremony of the ISSUP Abu Dhabi 2022 Conference 'Uniting the global community to face the challenge of addiction'.

## HIV prevention



All people have the right to health, and access to services, including access to life-saving HIV harm reduction services and programmes in the community, as well as health care services in prisons. Moreover, people who inject drugs (PWID) are disproportionately affected by blood-borne infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C.

To address such issues, UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia closely collaborated with the Governments of Central Asian countries in 2022. Particularly, **23 selected community leaders representing NGOs** providing services to people in prisons, people living with HIV, and people who use drugs, law enforcement officials and representatives of international organisations from **Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan** strengthened their visual storytelling by advancing their understanding on the strategic use of photo and video materials to advocate for positive change; got equipped with the basics of photography and filmmaking skills; enhanced their visual presentation and speaking skills by acquiring tips and practice on how to pitch advocacy projects using images and networked with human rights practitioners from Central Asia working on similar issues through

participation in the Regional Workshop on Visual Storytelling for Human Rights Advocacy that took place in Dushanbe on 16-18 May 2022.

UNODC brought together ten representatives of law enforcement agencies including the representatives of the Ministries of Internal Affairs from Central Asian countries, and 37 CSO representatives from Eastern Europe and Central Asia in a dialogue on the role of law enforcement in response to the challenges the countries in the region of Central Asia are facing today. The discussed issues included HIV and COVID-19 epidemics, proliferation of new psychoactive substances. The participants discussed what needs to be done for enhancing the role of law enforcement in response to these challenges and for establishing and sustaining the partnership between the law enforcement and civil society sectors. The regional consultations **“Meaningful partnership, meaningful achievements: Law enforcement and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) cooperation for a better HIV and public health response”** took place in Almaty on 30-31 May 2022 in a hybrid format.

UNODC organized a training for 68 activists and leaders of communities of people who use drugs from

**Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan**, specialists of NGOs and CSOs providing services to PWUD and people in prisons on how and why to implement comprehensive HIV and HCV programmes with people who use drugs through participation in a series of national advocacy capacity building trainings held in July-September 2022.

Capacity development training was provided for 50 high/mid-level law enforcement officers from Kazakhstan and 27 high/mid-level law enforcement

officers from **Tajikistan** on human rights based policing approaches, police drug referral schemes, alternatives to incarceration for people who use drugs, HIV related stigma and discrimination, and the role of law enforcement officers in HIV response through participation in the respective trainings held in September 2022.

During the reporting period, UNODC organized training on HIV/HCV/TB transmission and harm reduction services for 67 street police officers/



inspectors from Tajikistan. Jointly with 30 representatives of CSOs and community-based organizations, UNODC developed the local road maps for joint activities during the awareness raising workshops for law enforcement officers and civil society leaders on cooperation for a better HIV and public health response in August – September 2022.

The scale-up of the opioid maintenance programme continues to be high on the UNODC agenda in the region. High-level decision makers from Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, representatives of the Ministries of Health, Ministries of Internal Affairs, and Drug Control Agency, and leaders of civil society organizations learned about the experience of Belarus in developing the multisectoral approach and interagency

cooperation (health, law enforcement, community) in support of evidence-based drug treatment, and HIV prevention and care services. In Tajikistan, through continued UNODC advocacy and financial support, an Order on establishing opioid maintenance programme sites in two colonies and one pretrial detention facility was signed by the Head of the Prison system.

In December 2022, UNODC opened **the first opioid (methadone) substitution therapy (OST) site** in the pre-trial facility in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. UNODC renovated two rooms and purchased equipment for the site. UNODC is one of the main organizations advocating for the implementation of OST in the community and prison system in Tajikistan, including via coordination and active collaboration with other stakeholders.



# **TERRORISM PREVENTION**





**The Central Asia Network on Prevention of Violent Extremism (CAPVE)** was established by UNODC with the generous support of Japan, Germany and Sweden in 2018. Since then, UNODC continues to support and consolidate the CAPVE, aiming to enhance regional cooperation, facilitate networking, and share good practices and internationally-recognized PVE approaches. The network also encourages a “whole of society” approach to prevent violent extremism conducive to terrorism, and establish better civil society and community engagement in PVE efforts.

In 2022, the CAPVE Network continued to function as a comprehensive framework for parties to share research, evidence and data, to assess and respond to drivers of radicalization, and to understand current approaches and good practices for preventing crimes associated with radicalization, incitement and recruitment of individuals for terrorist purposes. Furthermore, the Network aims to enhance awareness and willingness to embrace the important roles of women, youth, and victims of terrorism. Under the network, UNODC has undertaken a series of activities including training, dialogue and interaction to strengthen the region against terrorism and violent extremism, in a manner consistent with the rule of law and human rights.

UNODC, in cooperation with the Academy of Law Enforcement Agencies under the General Prosecutor’s Office, the Ministry of Information and Social Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the ‘Aq-niet’ Public Foundation, convened the annual meeting of the CAPVE network over 5-6 December 2022 in Astana, Kazakhstan. This meeting focused on sharing the unique experiences of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in implementing gender-sensitive and age-specific rehabilitation and reintegration of women and children returning from conflict zones. The event was organized within the framework of the EU-UN Global Framework ‘Support to States in Central Asia for Third Country Nationals returning from Syria and Iraq – Security and Accountability Action funded by the European Union’. Over 110 participants representing various government agencies, civil society organizations, academic and research institutions from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as international partners, all joined the meeting and contributed to discussions on effective and evidence-based rehabilitation and reintegration strategies. The meeting was a good opportunity for participants to exchange good practices and share country experiences in repatriation, rehabilitation



and reintegration of women and children returned from Syria and Iraq, while promoting interaction of government agencies with civil society organizations to implement gender-responsive and age-specific rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. During the discussions, the participants of the CAPVE meeting highlighted that the rehabilitation and reintegration processes were playing an important role and contributing to the empowerment of vulnerable individuals and communities, elevating their potential for wider socio-economic integration, reducing poverty and marginalization, and ensuring peace and prosperity in Central Asia.

UNODC continues supporting Central Asian states in the rehabilitation and reintegration of children who have been returned from Syria and Iraq – thanks to the newly-formed partnership between the European Union and UN agencies under the Global Framework on **United Nations (UN) Support on Syria / Iraq Third Country National (TCN) Returnees**.

Since 2018, UNODC has been supporting Central

Asian states in this area of work. As a result of consultations, assessments and training workshops targeting national stakeholders, UNODC has identified “communication with children” and “child-sensitive interviewing techniques” as being important topics to include in the curricula and trainings of academies for law enforcement authorities, prosecutors and lawyers, to enhance the protection of impacted children.

When children have lived in areas of conflict, their lives change. They experience violence and trauma, and their bonds with society are impacted. These children require that any professional or practitioners in contact with them are trained in child-sensitive communication and trauma-informed approaches, to prevent secondary victimization and re-victimization.

Accordingly, UNODC organized and carried out a **Regional Training of Trainers on child-sensitive communication and trauma-informed approaches to child interviewing**, bringing together 28 trainers from Kazakh and Uzbek law enforcement academies over 7-9 December 2022.

The three-day event was an opportunity for participants to: (i) learn about approaches and practical guidance supporting government efforts to better treat children who have returned from conflict areas, in line with international law; (ii) gain knowledge on child sensitive interviews and techniques that are applicable in a broader context, not only for children who have been victims of terrorism but also for any child victim, witness of crime and violence, as well as children in conflict with the law; (iii) integrate different aspects of emotional intelligence for interviewers and the psychological barriers of communication into interviewing techniques, and; (iv) develop their soft skills needed to help them become effective interviewers of children, which includes collecting evidence in line with the best interest of the child and also mitigation of risks of re-traumatisation and secondary victimisation before, during and after the interview process.

UNODC jointly with UNOCT, and the UN Women and Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), contributed to national efforts to effectively

mainstream gender and human rights perspectives in policy frameworks, processes and measures for screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration (SPRR) of **citizens returned from Syria and Iraq in Uzbekistan**. In the project's initial phase, a series of meetings and consultations with key government and civil society partners were held to discuss the project objectives and implementation plan. Following these consultations, it was agreed to assess ongoing rehabilitation and reintegration interventions in two regions of Uzbekistan (Surkhandarya and Namangan). The assessment aimed to collect and analyse data on good practices, challenges and barriers in the process of reintegrating women and children returned from conflict zones to develop recommendations on further improving evidence-based, gender-responsive and age-specific services for this target group.

A team of national consultants led by the NGO Barqaror Hayot were identified and recruited to assess the situation in the Surkhandarya and Namangan regions. All necessary methodological and technical tools were procured and delivered to



the assessment team. In June 2022, the assessment team undertook field missions to selected regions to conduct interviews with representatives of local governments, and local branches of various ministries and agencies involved in providing services to returned women and children. The assessment team also interviewed 30 women and 62 children who had returned from conflict zones, to document their experiences and needs. The assessments' key findings were presented during the national stakeholders meeting conducted over 2-3 November 2022. The final assessment report is currently being finalised.

Over 2-3 November 2022, UNODC in cooperation with the State Committee on Family and Women Affairs, UNOCT, UN Women, CTED and UNICEF organized an advocacy workshop in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on 'Gender-sensitive Approaches to Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Women and Children Returned from Conflict Zones'. The event brought together over 50 participants representing various ministries and state agencies, as well as civil society partners, to: (i) discuss key principles for age- and gender-sensitive rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees based on international standards and global policy frameworks, and; (ii) review current and ongoing challenges and needs to increase national capacity in Uzbekistan and provide gender-responsive support to returning citizens, particularly to women and children. The workshop was a platform for national and regional partners, as well as various UN entities, to forge a coherent and shared understanding of the current situation, emerging issues and future actions.

UNODC also contributed to a two-day capacity-building online training conducted by UN Women and UNICEF over 5-6 October 2022 for 30 experts from government entities and national stakeholders in Uzbekistan, on 'Gender-responsive community-based rehabilitation and reintegration support including empowerment of women returnees and their children'.

In response to the takeover by the Taliban in August 2021, the international community is re-assessing risks of spill-over effects impacting their Member States and regions. The situation in Afghanistan could produce an increased number of violent

extremist followers in the region, through increased radicalization to violence and access to illicit financial flows derived from organized criminal activity, that would facilitate violent extremist ideologies in spreading to other Member States. This represents a threat to Central Asia and other regions of the world.

Effective border security is the first line of defence against terrorist travel, and for preventing illegal cross-border movement of goods and cargo. Maintaining secure air, land and maritime borders is a challenge faced by all Member States.

In order to address the above situation, UNODC with support from the Government of Germany has begun implementing a project on '**Enhancing Border Management and Security in Response to Terrorism Threats in Central Asia**'. This project focuses on those Member States bordering with Afghanistan (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). It aims to increase the capacity of the relevant competent bodies to detect, prevent and investigate cross-border movement of terrorists. In line with the UNODC Global Programme on Preventing and Countering Terrorism for 2022-2027, the Strategic Stability Grid in and around Afghanistan, and the UNODC Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025, the project addresses challenges related to ensuring effective border security as an integral part of comprehensive and integrated national counter-terrorism strategies in Central Asia.

During the reporting period, UNODC conducted missions to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and held consultations with national counterparts and expert missions to discuss perspectives of cooperation in enhancing border management and security in response to terrorism threats. The members of the mission presented and discussed the project with relevant national agencies, and identified gaps and opportunities for improving the border control frameworks of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan (UNODC did not conduct a mission in Turkmenistan due to COVID-related travel restrictions). As a result of the missions, several activities have been proposed to be undertaken under the project in 2023-2024.

The project and work in the area were referenced by Ms. Ghada Waly, UNODC Executive Director, and Mr.



Masood Karimipour, Chief of the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB), at the opening session of the high-level conference “**International and Regional Border Security and Management Cooperation to Counter Terrorism and Prevent the Movement of Terrorists**” held on 18-19 October 2022 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The project and relevant activities in the region were presented at the side event “UNODC Integrated Border Management and Countering

Terrorism Portfolio in Central Asia” conducted on the margins of the high-level conference. UNODC organized an exhibition to showcase its work and achievements in border management and security and countering terrorism in Central Asia on the margins of the high-level conference.

Together with OSCE, UNODC co-organised the **17th Conference of the Central Asia Border Management Initiative on ‘Addressing Border Security and Management Challenges Emanating from Afghanistan’**, which took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, over 13-15 December 2022. The conference’s main focus was on border security challenges in the Central Asia region, with emphasis on developments in Afghanistan and the resulting transnational threats affecting neighbouring States. Over 70 officials participated at the conference, both online and in-person. These participants included border and customs representatives from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as experts from AIRPOL, the EU’s Border Management in Central Asia programme (BOMCA), EUROPOL, INTERPOL, the International Migration Organization, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, UNOCT, Germany, Türkiye and the US. UNODC representatives and experts highlighted the project’s importance and relevance to the region.





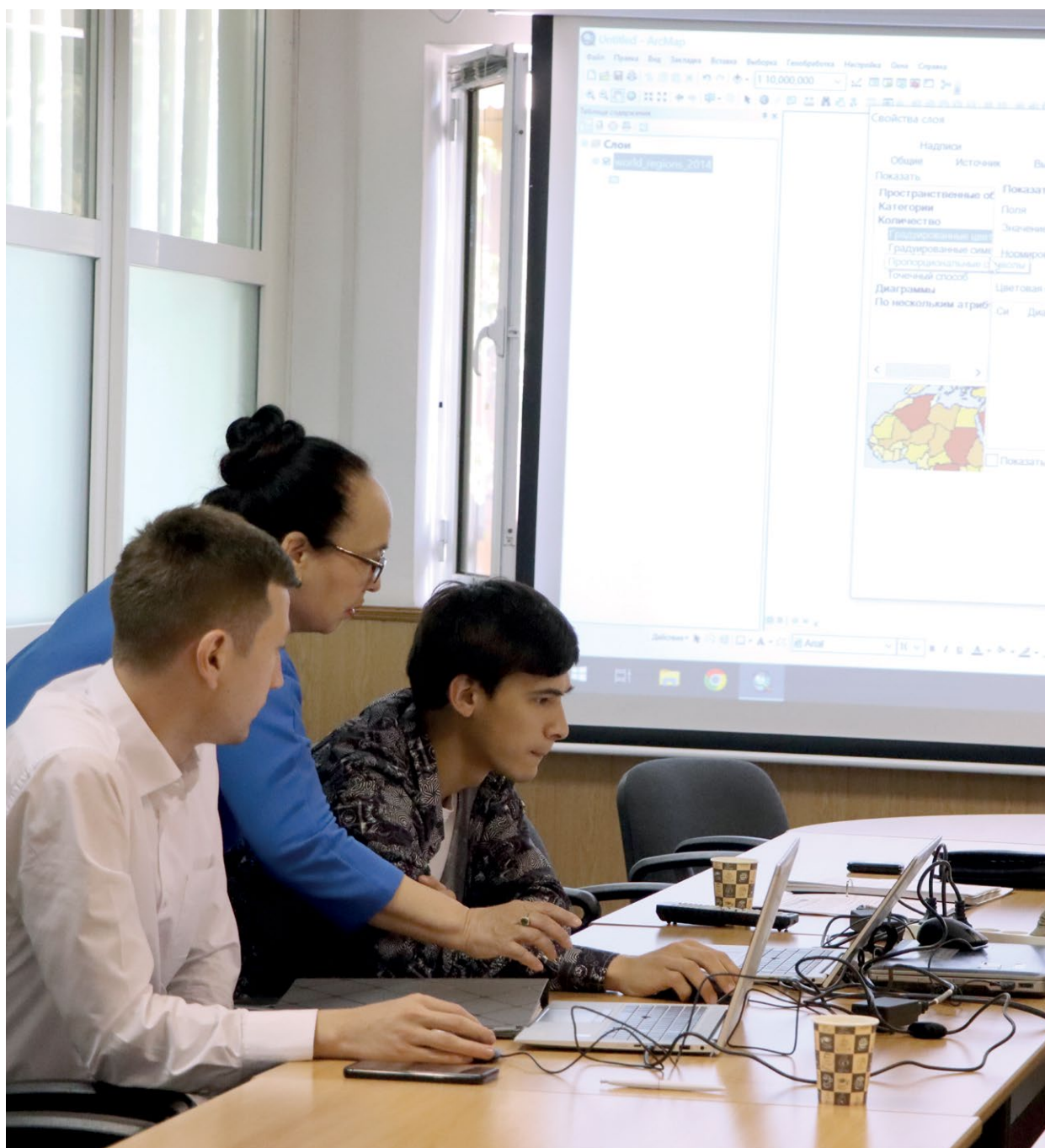
**PARTNERSHIPS  
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## Evidence Generation for Policy Dialogue and Development

Research and trends analysis have always been a key part of UNODC's programmes of assistance to Central Asia. It makes the comprehensive programmatic approach complete by identifying and studying trends in law enforcement, legal, legislative, societal and health issues, and their interrelation. As an organization with specialized areas of technical expertise, UNODC is committed to implementing evidence-based operational and policy responses

for addressing drugs, crime and terrorism-related challenges.

UNODC activities on research and trend analysis aim to enhance knowledge of thematic and cross-sectoral trends on drugs and crime issues to ensure effective policy formulation and operational response, including for reviewing progress made towards the Sustainable Development Goals in Central Asia.



## Data Collection, Analysis and Dissemination

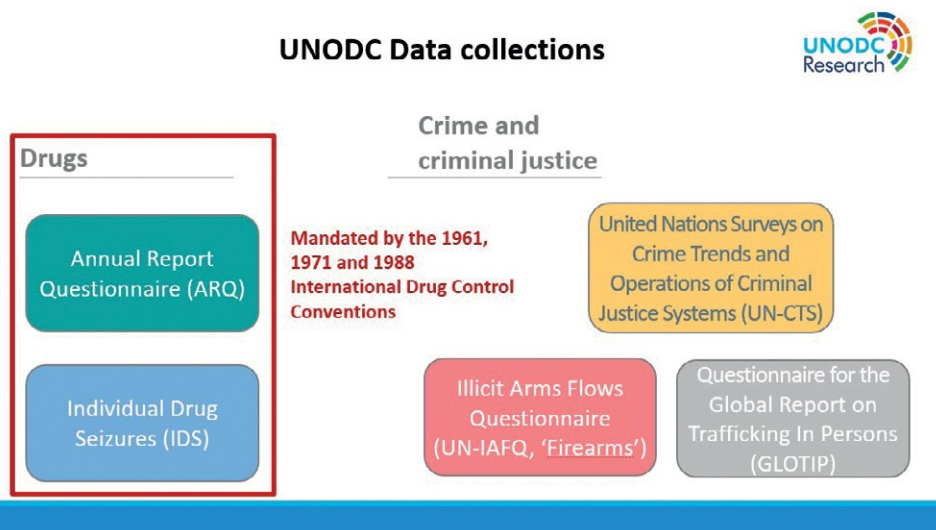
During the reporting period, UNODC ROCA continued its close collaboration with relevant national counterparts to facilitate timely submission of the country’s responses to the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ), Individual Drug Seizures Reports (IDS), the Questionnaire on New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), the

UN Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (UN-CTS), the Questionnaire for the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (GLOTIP), and the Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaire (UN-IAFQ).

On 28 September 2022, UNODC held an online regional briefing for countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus on UNODC’s drug data collection. The briefing was an additional opportunity to familiarize national focal points and other relevant authorities with ARQ and IDS data collections, as well as to provide training on the use of the Data eXchange

Platform (DXP), which is the web-based data platform for collecting ARQ and IDS questionnaires. UNODC ROCA facilitated the participation of 30 national partners from Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus in these online briefings.

UNODC launched five questionnaires (ARQ, IDS, UN-CTS, GLOTIP and UN-IAFQ) in May 2022. As of 1 January 2023, 13 completed questionnaires out of 20 were submitted by Central Asia countries. The current status of completion of the questionnaires is shown in the below table:



Data collection	ARM	AZB	GEO	KAZ	KYR	TAJ	TKM	UZB
ARQ	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
IDS	✓			✓				✓
CTS		✓			✓			✓
GLOTIP		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
IAFQ		✓						✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>5</b>



UNODC, with expert inputs from the Paris Pact Initiative, continues to strengthen the analytical capacities of Uzbek law enforcement agencies to better respond to threats of cross-border organized crime, including illicit drug trafficking, and to ensure effective border control. In this effort, intelligence processing and analysis form a key component for effective and efficient law enforcement activities.

Within the **Paris Pact Initiative**, UNODC jointly with the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for Combating Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and

their Precursors (CARICC), supported capacity development activities for law enforcement officers on processing and analysing information through using special and open programmes.

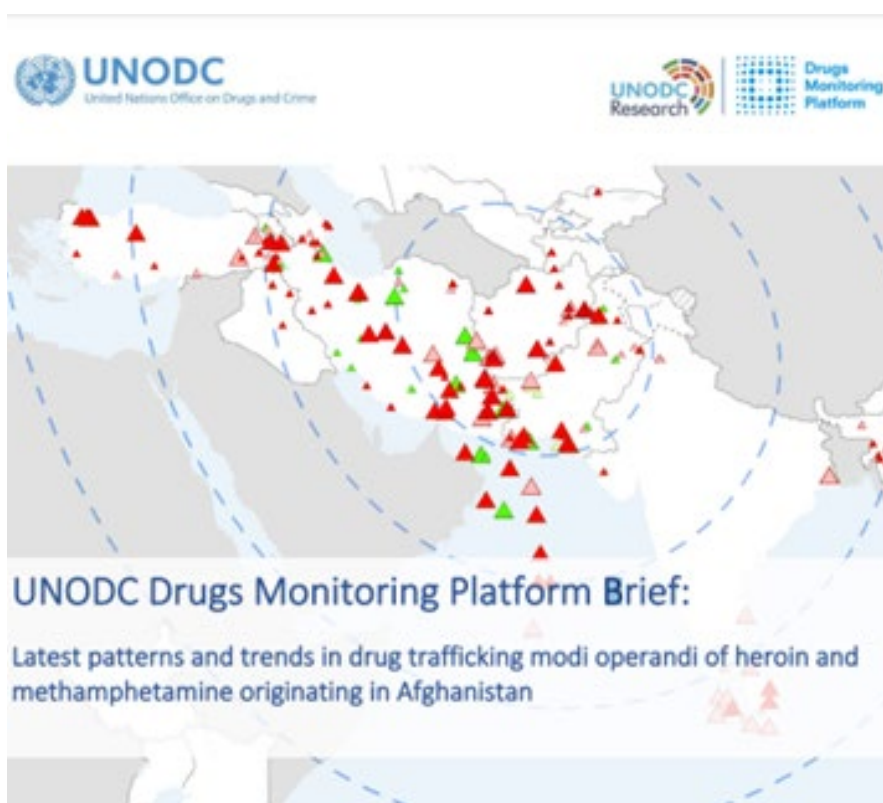
Moreover, the analytical capacity of law enforcement officers in compiling and processing information using analytical software tools was developed through practical exercises and review of case studies. The challenges related to making dashboards and diagrammes, and working with billing data and the ArcGIS geoinformation system, were also reviewed.

## Drugs Monitoring Platform

The UNODC Drugs Monitoring Platform (DMP) is a multi-source system for collecting, visualizing and sharing drug data, with the purpose of providing access to near real-time data on drug trafficking trends, delivering data using interactive visualizations adapted to user-specific needs, and improving early warning drug threat identification for law enforcement and analysts. The Drugs Monitoring Platform provides additional geographical insight into current drug trafficking trends, with over 534,000 geo-coded drug seizure data points obtained from countries around the world.

In 2022, UNODC issued a DMP brief which examines dimensions of seizure event data, to enable early assessments of possible changes in trafficking patterns. It builds on earlier efforts of the UNODC Drugs

Monitoring Platform, including analysis of trafficking groups by country of nationality of traffickers arrested in Afghan heroin and methamphetamine-related seizure events.



## Forensics



Forensic science capabilities and facilities, from the crime scene to the courtroom, provide accurate, objective and timely information not only to law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system, but also to regulatory and public health authorities. Forensic science is a major component of objective, fair and transparent criminal justice systems. It is used to develop traditional court evidence to build cases based on physical evidence rather than confessions and witness testimony. Consequently, it supports effective and fair criminal investigations and proceedings. Forensic science is also part of the investigative process for operational crime analysis and intelligence.

Since 2017, UNODC with financial support from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) has been working closely with forensic science centres of the Republic of Uzbekistan to strengthen their capacity to provide reliable and objective analysis in a number of forensic fields, in accordance with international standards. This cooperation resulted in three forensic centres (the Republican Centre of Forensic Expertise under the Ministry of Justice, the Main Expert and Criminalistics Centre of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Central Customs Laboratory of the

State Customs Committee), obtaining international accreditation.

During the reporting period, the 'Kh. Sulaymanova' Republican Centre of Forensic Expertise under the Ministry of Justice, the Main Expert and Criminalistics Centre of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Expert and Criminalistics Centre of the Tashkent City Department of Internal Affairs, the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre of the Medical Forensic Centre of the Ministry of Health, and the Central Customs Laboratory of the State Customs Committee, all benefited from technical assistance and capacity development activities implemented under the project 'Strengthening Forensic Services in Uzbekistan – Phase II'.

Over 23-30 March 2022, a field mission to Tashkent was organized for two UNODC international consultants. The UNODC consultant on management systems visited the audio-phonographic examination laboratory and laboratory on criminalistic examination of documents of the Republican Centre of Forensic Expertise, the ballistics laboratory of the Main Expert and Criminalistics Centre, the chemical examination laboratory of the Expert and Criminalistics Centre, the forensic biology and chemistry laboratories of

the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre of the Medical Forensic Centre, and the Central Customs Laboratory. The consultant reviewed implementation of the developed management system requirements in the laboratories, and provided recommendations on the accreditation process. Another UNODC consultant visited drug-testing labs of the Republican Centre of Forensic Expertise, the Main Expert and Criminalistics Centre, and the Central Customs Laboratory, and also delivered on-the-job trainings for experts on qualitative identification and quantitative analysis using the Internal Standard Method of seized narcotic and psychotropic substances. The consultant provided advisory services for the beneficiary labs' personnel, and developed recommendations for further improving laboratory practices. On 30 March 2022, a project partners meeting was convened to present the outcomes of the consultants' mission to Tashkent.

Laboratory equipment and supplies were procured and delivered to the beneficiary labs of the participating agencies. This included laboratory precision and analytical balances, high-resolution bench scales, and sets of test weights. At the request of the National Information-Analytical Centre on Drug Control under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the project arranged the provision of reference materials on 21 narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for the drug testing labs of the Republican Centre of Forensic Expertise and the Main Expert and Criminalistics Centre through the Laboratory and Scientific Section of UNODC's HQ in Vienna.

Assistance has been provided to four labs for their enrolment in the UNODC ICE Programme 2022/1 and 2022/2 rounds. On 25 January 2022, the project facilitated the participation of Uzbek labs in the virtual ICE briefing organized by the Laboratory and Scientific Section of the UNODC HQ. During the briefing the participants were updated on Laboratory and Scientific Section activities, the performance overview of the ICE rounds 2021/1, and the status of the open ICE rounds 2021/2 and 2022/1 and 2.

At the request of the Republican Centre of Forensic Expertise and the Main Expert and Criminalistics Centre, the project facilitated calibration of measuring devices as per requirements of the ISO/IEC 17025 standard.

In the course of justice sector reforms, Kyrgyzstan and other countries in the region are introducing some new digital solutions to ensure open and accountable justice systems are in place to support fair, human rights-compliant justice in line with international standards and good practices. Thus, Kyrgyzstan developed the content and electronic architecture of a new e-system for selection of judges, allowing for a more transparent and independent selection processes. Following the developed system's establishment, it was used to appoint 20 new judges.

In Turkmenistan, the Central Forensic Bureau was supported in developing its quality management system and applying for international accreditation in line with global standards (ISO/IEC17025:2017) for testing laboratories. 26 quality management policies and guidelines on validation procedures and methods, the use and maintenance of equipment, handling data, credibility assurance, documentation management, handling risks, internal audits and management review, and other related matters, were developed and introduced in the quality management system. 40 forensics practitioners were trained on international standards on conducting internal audits and management review, crime scene and evidence management, reading and interpreting laboratory equipment's metrics, and using control charts in laboratory examinations.



## Advocacy, Outreach and Public Affairs



To ensure seamless communication and information flow, UNODC ROCA has continued its efforts to inform stakeholders of progress and results achieved, through using different communication means. UNODC has actively utilized different social platforms and webpages to provide information on achievements, and to communicate and advocate for policy change to ensure that the rights of the most marginalized and the most vulnerable are duly addressed. UNODC ROCA has explored new and creative approaches to communicating with stakeholders, to improve and increase the visibility of its initiatives.

Specifically, in **Kazakhstan**, UNODC together with the OSCE Programme Office in Astana and Internews, kicked off Kazakhstan's first two-day workshop for mass media representatives on the media's role in preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism. It also conducted a national forum on the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the rehabilitation and social reintegration of violent extremist prisoners, as part of the joint global EU-UN (UNODC-UNCCT-UNCTED) initiative 'Supporting the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons'.

In the **Kyrgyz Republic**, the World Day against Trafficking in Persons on 30 July was marked by

the conducting of awareness-raising activities for vulnerable children from orphanages and children of migrants, on how not to become victims of trafficking, and to build their knowledge of cyber security. The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Against Women and Girls campaign was actively promoted through a photo/video/design competition conducted among youth aged 13-20, as a means of helping them counter gender-based violence. For the first time for the UN in Kyrgyzstan, UNODC in cooperation with the NFT production studio conducted a master class for over 50 young people on how to create with the use of Artificial Intelligence a set of #YouthAgainstViolence products for further fundraising initiatives.

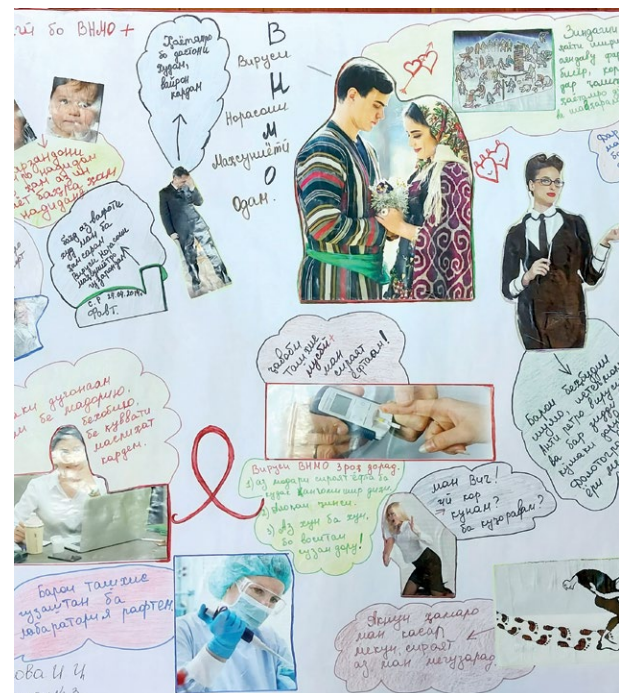
In **Turkmenistan**, UNODC jointly with international and national partners marked the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons with a series of outreach events for youth, together with the private sector for youth. Related events included a public awareness campaign in the Shopping and Entertainment Centre in Ashgabat, a presentation of thematic video ads devoted to the international day, placement of a selfie frame, organization of a dancing flash mob, conducting thematic quizzes and games, and disseminating thematic booklets on the threats and risks of trafficking in persons. A 10-day summer



To mark World AIDS Day, UNODC conducted an awareness-raising campaign in the female prison in Norak, Tajikistan. Representatives of UNODC and the National Center for AIDS Prevention and Control under the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan met with female inmates and informed them about HIV/AIDS, the ways of HIV transmission, prevention and treatment as well as provided answers to the questions raised. Before the meeting, the women had produced illustrations dedicated to World AIDS Day and HIV prevention. Women living with HIV depicted their personal experiences and stories.

camp was conducted for students of a specialized training and educational school with a focus on the use of Education for Justice (E4J) training materials, to promote the culture of lawfulness among youth, and develop youth’s communication and ethical behaviour skills. Thematic booklets on the threats and risks of trafficking in persons were disseminated.

In **Tajikistan**, UNODC jointly with the national youth network Y-Peer Tajikistan made a video for the International Day against Trafficking in Persons, serving to raise public awareness on how to avoid becoming a victim of human (labour and sex) trafficking. The video provided useful tips and advice for those who plan to work, study and marry abroad, for disseminating among social media pages.





In **Uzbekistan**, on the occasion of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26 June, UNODC conducted the Zumba Flash Mob 'For a Drug Free World!' in Tashkent, Uzbekistan – a sign of its determination to strengthen activities and cooperation to achieve the goal of creating an international society free of drug addiction. This event was organized on the initiative of UNODC ROCA, the National Information and Analytical Centre for Drug Control under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and the ZUMBA FITNESS UZBEKISTAN movement, with support from the NIKA Sport fitness club in Tashkent.

UNODC conducted a video contest with a call to the youth of Central Asia to help change the world by creating videos devoted to World Drug Day, drawing attention to the problem of drug addiction, and the need to promote healthy lifestyles, limit the impact of drugs on youth health, and suggest how youth can change the situation. Watch the creative works of the winners from Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan here:



Thematic public outreach campaigns play an important role in the fight against illicit drugs. It is crucial to inform, in particular, young people, who make up more than half of the population in Central Asian countries about the risks posed by drug use and illicit drug trafficking. In June 2022, UNODC conducted a public outreach campaign at the selected border crossing points and international airports in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. During the campaign, the UNODC team and law enforcement officers placed information banners and disseminated visibility materials in English, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, and Uzbek languages among people crossing the borders.

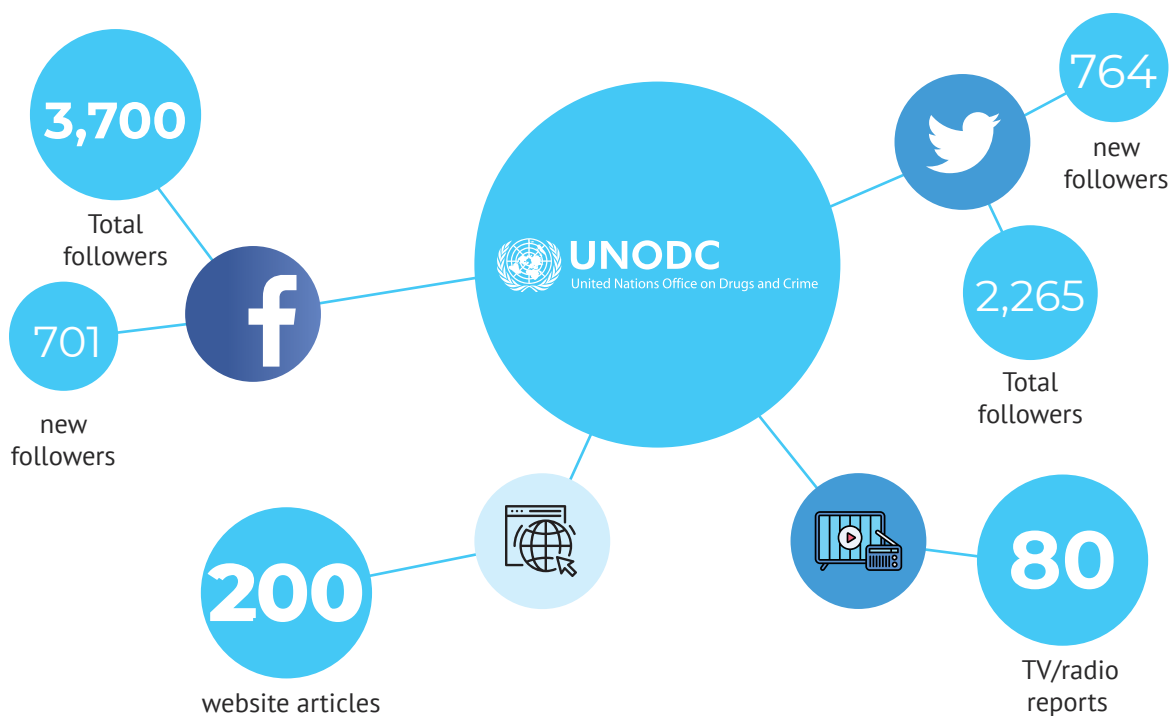
To increase outreach on UNODC's regional activities, its Twitter and Facebook accounts were used to inform the public on developments and activities undertaken both inside and outside the region. In 2022, the number of Facebook followers grew by 20 per cent, reaching 3,700. Twitter account followers grew from 1,501 to 2,265. All events conducted by UNODC were covered in both social media accounts, through text, photo and video posts. To ensure better coverage, around 200 articles, 36 publications and 23 press-releases were published on the UNODC ROCA official website. During 2022, Facebook posts



and videos reached\* over 270,000 persons, and had impressions of over 319,000 persons, while Twitter posts reached around 200,000 persons.

To diversify means of communication, more than 50 videos and slideshows were produced jointly with partners, and shared across UNODC social media accounts, to raise key stakeholders' understanding and awareness of UNODC activities. At least 80 TV/radio reports and articles were produced on UNODC

ROCA activities during the reporting period. These included news features, human interest stories, and extended interviews with the Regional Representative and international programme coordinators on events like World Drug Day, the World Day against Trafficking in Persons and broader issues, all broadcast through radio and TV channels. Ten stories by UNODC ROCA were featured on the UNODC Global Website, and three stories were featured in the 'UNODC in 60 seconds' series.



\*Reach is the number of people who saw any content from the Page or about the Page. This metric is estimated. Impressions are the number of times any content from the Page or about the Page entered a person's screen.

## Fundraising and Donor Relations

All of UNODC’s activities in Central Asia are covered by voluntary contributions from Member States, Multi-Partner Trust Funds and other donors. UNODC delivered **\$16,563,840** in 2022 to implement and further strengthen initiatives designed to counter transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, crime prevention and criminal justice reform, reduce radicalization to violence in prisons and drug use, and enhance HIV prevention, as well as initiatives designed to counter firearms and human trafficking, money laundering, and terrorism financing.

In 2022, the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia was able to secure around **\$19 million** in donor funding to support regional Member States in their efforts to make Central Asia safer from drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism. An additional \$8 million was transferred from the programme’s previous cycle. This is an important milestone, as the Programme for Central Asia 2022-2025 sets an ambitious target of delivering \$90 million.

UNODC expresses its gratitude for donor contributions provided by the governments of Germany, Japan, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United States of America, and also funding from the European Union, UNAIDS, UNOCT and the Spotlight Initiative Fund, for implementing activities in the region. The Regional Office also expresses its appreciation for the in-kind contributions of regional governments for establishing infrastructure for ongoing programmes, without which these programmes would not be fully undertaken.

UNODC has made all required efforts to ensure that financial commitments are honoured in a timely manner, addressing the needs and priorities of beneficiaries and people in need. The UNODC team constantly monitored the respective pledge duration dates, and implemented activities in line with donor requirements.





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