

REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR SOUTH ASIA (2018–2021)

Background and Context

1. The UNODC Regional Office for South Asia (UNODC ROSA) is located in New Delhi, India and covers Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. It works with the six Governments of South Asia through technical cooperation projects to address threats posed by drugs, crime, terrorism and corruption. In line with its mandates, UNODC promotes security, justice and health in the South Asia region.
2. The UNODC Regional Programme for South Asia (RPSA) is a strategic framework for the Regional Office that informs and guides UNODC's technical cooperation and delivery of assistance in close consultation with government counterparts of South Asia. **The Regional Programme aims to highlight a set of priorities and operational responses for the period 2018-2021, while offering sufficient flexibility to adapt to evolving threats and Member States' specific needs and constraints.**
3. **In line with the UNODC Strategic Framework 2018 – 2019**, the Regional Programme is structured around the following **five sub-programmes (SP)**, outlined in more detail below:

SUB-PROGRAMME	AREA OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION
Sub-programme 1	Combating Transnational Organized Crime
Sub-programme 2	A comprehensive and balanced approach to counter the drug problem (<i>Drug use prevention, treatment and care and HIV prevention, treatment and care and support services for people who use drugs and for people in prisons</i>)
Sub-programme 3	Countering Corruption
Sub-programme 4	Terrorism prevention
Sub-programme 5	Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

SUB-PROGRAMME 1: COMBATING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

4. South Asian countries continue to face challenges of illicit trafficking and possible linkages with insurgencies, human trafficking, and terrorism as well as related money-laundering of proceeds of crime. Although UNODC has implemented projects to enhance capacities in tackling mainly drug trafficking, human trafficking and smuggling of migrants (to a more limited extent), law enforcement agencies as well as justice administrators across the region face major challenges in both (i) recognizing and understanding the scope and impact of individual and new forms of crime and the nexus between them and (ii) addressing and handling them in a systematic and regional/cross-

border approach using international cooperation and coordination mechanisms. Practical cooperation among countries within and beyond the region.

5. In order to capture the emerging nature, trends and patterns of organized crime in the South Asia region, ROSA envisages to undertake a Regional Threat Assessment that will outline the main transnational organized crimes and underlying mechanisms (i.e., who, how, what, where, when) impacting South Asian countries; identify key knowledge, policy, data and resource gaps that preclude the detection and monitoring of various markets impacting the region and formulate recommendations to plug the gaps and enhance the quality, accuracy, reliability, representativeness, timeliness and quantity of data collected to augment the capacity of South Asian countries to detect, monitor and prevent transnational organized crimes. Upon availability of funding, this assessment will be carried out in close consultation with UNODC HQ thematic sections/ global programme experts and Government counterparts of South Asia.

Strengthening Criminal Information/Intelligence Sharing:

6. Under the RP, UNODC aims to facilitate the establishment of the South Asian Regional Intelligence and Coordination Centre on Transnational Organized Crime (SARICC-TOC). A High Level regional meeting is being organized on 23-24 November 2017 in Colombo, Sri Lanka to discuss the form and structure of SARICC. The outcomes of the meeting will set the path for future course of action.

Container Control and Air Cargo Programme (CCP & ACP)

7. To further tackle illicit trafficking (including of drugs, goods and contraband) and build institutional interdiction capacities at seaports and airports, activities will be implemented through the global CCP.

Maritime Crime Programme (MCP)

8. The trafficking of Afghan opiates along the maritime “Southern Route” from the Makran Coast to the East African coast and South Asia has increased significantly. The key attraction of the southern route for narcotics trafficking is the lack of enforcement capacity on the high seas. The MCP in Sri Lanka will be a catalyst to expand the maritime crime programme activities, especially through the Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime’s “joint declaration”, which was endorsed by most countries in South Asia.

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) & Smuggling of migrants (SOM)

9. Despite the dearth of adequate research and data on the nature and extent of trafficking in persons in South Asia, countries of the region continue to serve as prominent origin, transit and destination countries for women, children and men being trafficked. Newer flows and forms of trafficking are being reported in/from the region, including trafficking for forced surrogacy, organ removal, online exploitation, pornography, illegal adoption. Newer routes for trafficking across countries are also being used. Areas of focus will include research on the scale of trafficking, with a focus on child trafficking and sexual

exploitation in the context of tourism, training of border control officers, a comprehensive TIP/SOM study, strengthening of inter-agency cooperation/coordination on TIP/SOM and rehabilitation mechanisms for victims of trafficking, including regional referral mechanisms, development of protocols for safe repatriation of victims, increased awareness, training on detection and investigation of TIP and SOM etc.

Border Control

10. Under the new RP and through existing and new initiatives, border control mechanisms will be strengthened to address illicit trafficking across the borders of India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. This will also include movement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters through land ports, sea ports or airports at the borders of South Asian countries. UNODC can assist to strengthen individual member states' capacities and promote regional and inter-regional cooperation in border management, sharing of real time data and information exchange by using alert mechanisms and, where possible, regional intelligence and information sharing through SARICC-TOC. UNODC's positive experience gained in recent years in South East Asia of Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) will also be extended to South Asia. Opportunities for South Asian Government counterparts for observing BLOs in Southeast Asia will be undertaken (through study tours). This will be done closely in cooperation with the UNODC Regional Office for Southeast Asia.

Cybercrime

11. As digital technologies are becoming more accessible in South Asia especially India, cybercrime is posing to be an emerging security threat. Special areas of focus will be promoting cyber safety among women, children and youth, preventing online sexual exploitation of women and children, darknet. Programming in this area will be explored.
12. The RP will capitalize on the rich technical expertise available in India and the region as well as the global knowledge products and international best practices developed and supported by UNODC during 2017 and beyond. To ensure sustainable and long-term capacity building in the region the proposed framework will focus on conducting needs analysis within the region and identifying key national priorities for action; assisting member states in legislative drafting and adoption of adequate legislation based on their specific demands; building operational and institutional capacity of law enforcement and judicial bodies; mobilizing and raising awareness among communities, youth and civil society. The primary partner institutions would be the police and criminal justice agencies from the region.

Wildlife and forest crimes

13. UNODC's global Wildlife Crime (WLFC) programme conducted the wildlife and forest crime assessments in Bangladesh (2013) and Nepal (2014) to identify gaps in law and policy to counter such crimes. Further to this, a small project on countering wildlife and forest crimes was implemented in Bangladesh during 2016. In close cooperation with the global programme on WLFC, more programming opportunities will be explored for South Asian countries.

SUB-PROGRAMME 2 - A COMPREHENSIVE AND BALANCED APPROACH TO COUNTER THE DRUG PROBLEM

Combating drug trafficking and strengthening drug law enforcement:

14. This sub-programme will support effective UNODC assistance to the Governments in the region to *build capacities of law enforcement officials (including through eLEARNING)* both at the national and regional levels. These initiatives will play a key role in **building the capacity of law enforcement officers**, specialist personnel and other concerned groups and individuals involved in the fight against drugs and crime. In this regard, focus will be on countering trafficking in precursors, new psychoactive substances (NPS), Amphetamine Type Stimulants and trafficking of drugs via the darknet. The abuse of pharmaceutical drugs containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances continues to be a concern for South Asia. Efforts will be made to enhance capacities of countries in the region to respond to illicit drug trafficking and related offences including in the areas of money laundering, combating illicit financial flows and emerging drug-crime issues.

Drugs and Health

15. UNODC will support governments of the region to implement key recommendations of the UNGASS 2016 outcome document as well as related Conventions. The South Asia region continues to face challenges in reaching at-risk populations such as people who use drugs (PWUD) and people in prisons. UNODC can contribute to building the capacity of Member States to address the emerging situation with regard to drug use, dependence and addiction, including related negative health effects, such as Hepatitis B and C, as well as HIV. This would be undertaken on the basis of international evidence-based practices, as well as lessons learned from regional and local practices. The aim is to empower capacities of governmental bodies and civil society already active in the region to scale up and enhance their ongoing work, to cover a wider area and offer a fuller spectrum of activities that aim at reducing demand for, as well as harm from drugs.
16. A **supportive legal and policy environment** can facilitate the provision of **comprehensive services to drug users** together with the Governments, civil society networks and other development partners. UNODC would advocate and assist the countries in reviewing and improving national legislations and policies concerning narcotic drugs, criminal justice, prison management and HIV, including the protection of young people who use drugs, and women. To support these efforts, UNODC could generate evidence and build strategic information through operational research, impact assessments, (including at the borders of India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal), and **national drug use surveys** in line with specific country needs. The Office can assist in the design and implementation of prevention initiatives for adolescent and young people within and out-of- school as well as for those in vulnerable settings. This also includes persons in closed settings such as women prisoners and women and children in shelter homes.

SUB-PROGRAMME 3: COUNTERING CORRUPTION

17. UNODC will support the implementation of relevant recommendations of the UNCAC reviews in countries of the region. Areas of focus would include countering financial crimes, money laundering and promoting transparency, efficiency and accountability of administrative bodies and the judiciary and capacity building of anti corruption commissions and entities; addressing corruption in the private sector. UNODC-World Bank's StAR (Stolen Asset Recovery) Initiative will also be implemented in countries, upon request.

SUB PROGRAMME 4: TERRORISM PREVENTION

18. UNODC will coordinate the integrated delivery of assistance in the region in countering terrorism, including assisting Member States with the ratification of the 19 universal instruments and the adoption of legal frameworks to fulfil their obligations. In addition, work under this sub-programme will aim to strengthen legal regime against terrorism so as to enable effective and timely response to emerging trends in the nexus between TOC and terrorism; extend technical cooperation on justice and countering TOC and terrorism; support crime and violence prevention, including radicalization and violent extremism.
19. UNODC will implement various initiatives aimed at capacity building of law enforcement personnel, prosecutors and judges in investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating of terror crimes. Capacity building initiatives to track and detect terror funding cases as well as to detect and investigate terror crime over cyberspace will also be undertaken. The RP will also focus on improving intra-regional and inter-regional cooperation and exchange between law enforcement authorities, including extradition and mutual legal assistance.

SUB PROGRAMME 5: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

20. This sub-programme would promote International Standards and Norms on criminal justice and crime prevention. Potential areas of focus will be criminal justice reform with an emphasis on prison reforms, prison rehabilitation, preventing gender based violence, urban crime prevention, community policing, police reform, juvenile justice, judicial integrity, judicial reform, and youth and crime prevention through sports and life skills. It will include particular attention to vulnerable groups through a focus on access to justice and legal empowerment initiatives, and will also work to enhance international cooperation and mutual legal assistance to improve intra- and inter-regional capacities.



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