Regional Programme for South Asia (2024-2028)

A FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION

United Nations
Office on Drugs and Crime

REGIONAL PROGRAMME
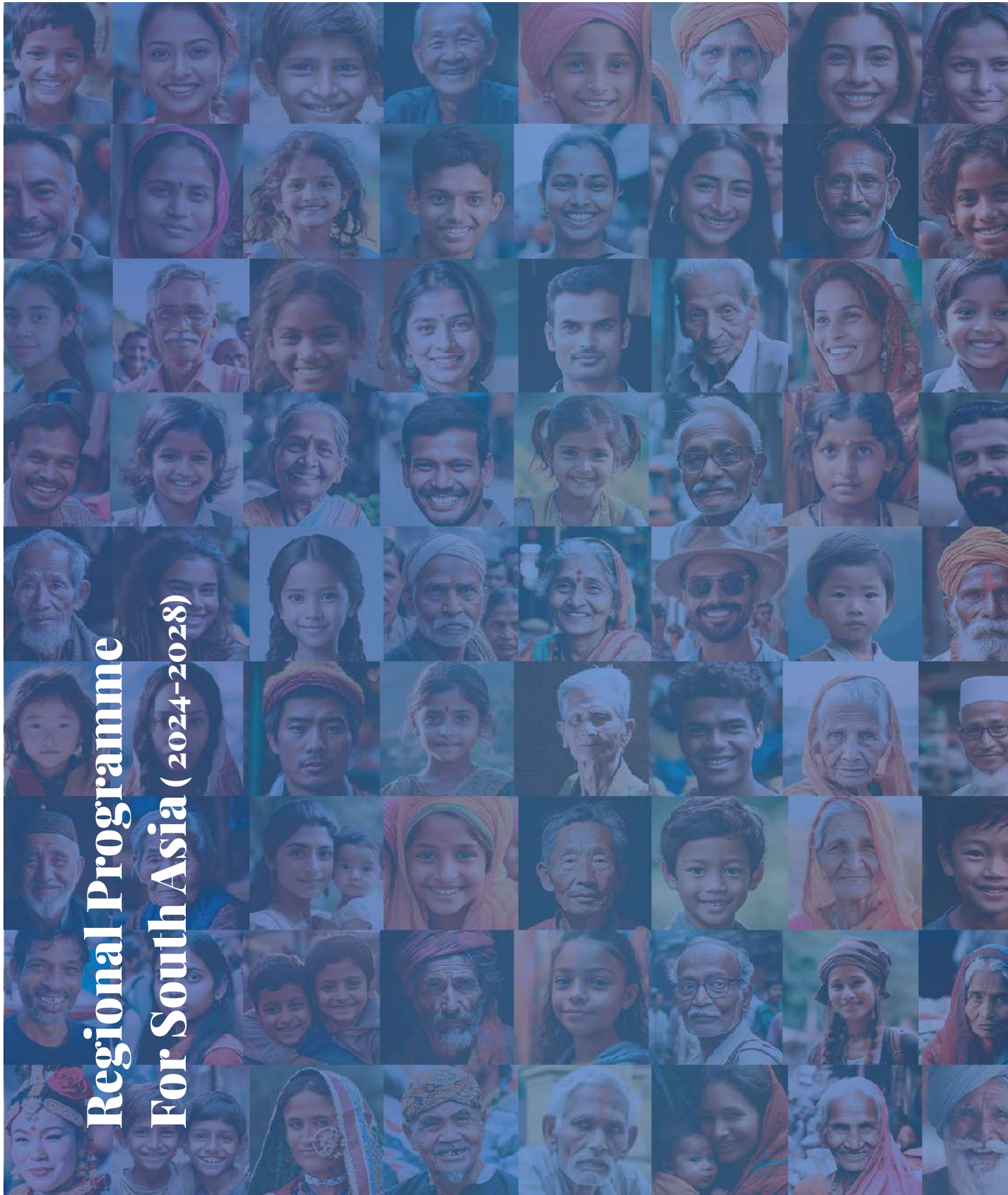For South Asia 2024-2028

REGIONAL PROGRAMME

For South Asia 2024-2028

Table of Contents

Regional Programme
For South Asia (2024–2028)

Programme Information

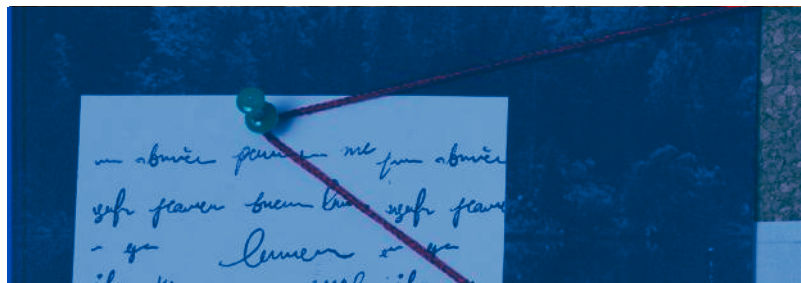|	
Programme Title	Regional Programme for South Asia (2024-2028)
Actual Start and End Dates	TBD
Location of End Beneficiaries	South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka)
Synergies with Global Programmes	Cross cutting cooperation with Global Programmes under DPA (RAB, DLSSB, SPIA), DO (RS, BMB), DTA (HTMSS, TPB, CPCJS, OCB, CEB), OED (Gender, IES).
Thematic Areas as per UNODC Strategy	World Drug Problem; Organized Crime; Corruption and Economic Crime; Terrorism; Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
Relevant SDG Goals	Goal 3, 4, 5, 8, 14, 15, 16 and 17
Linkages with other Regional Programmes	Regional Programme for Southeast Asia and the Pacific (2022-2026); Regional Programmes in West and Central Asia (2022-2025)
Organizational Unit	Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA)
Target Group(s)	Governments, civil society organizations, academia, media, private sector
Implementing Partners	Governments, civil society organizations, academia, media, private sector, UN and other international organizations
Total Programme Budget	USD 22.8 million

Executive Summary

This Regional Programme (RP) for South Asia outlines the scope and strategic focus of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)'s programmatic action in South Asia from 2024 to 2028[1]. The region continues to be affected by drugs and crime-related risks, including the expansion and evolution of transnational organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism. This RP has been designed to address both present and emerging needs in South Asia and provides a strategic framework for UNODC's work in support of Member States. **Its ultimate objective is to secure and reinforce the rule of law, strengthen regional cooperation and protect vulnerable groups and communities from drugs and crime.**
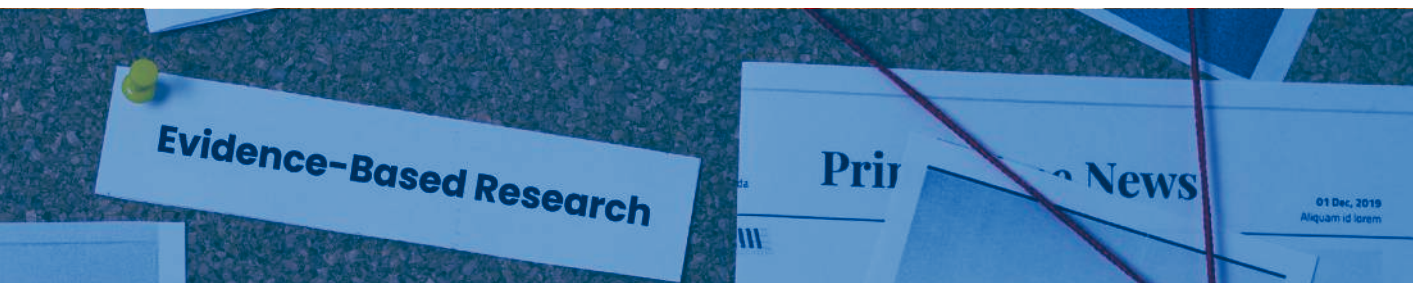
The RP has been designed and developed through extensive and inclusive consultations with key counterparts and on the basis of various assessments, workshops, project evaluations and capacity-building initiatives. The RP duly takes into consideration the lessons learned and the best practices identified during the implementation of the previous RP for South Asia (2018-2023), including in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact.

The Programme is aligned with the overall UNODC corporate strategy (2021-2025) and harmonized with the wider UN system's approach to promote sustainable development in the region. This RP, in fact, serves as a framework for UNODC's action to support Member States in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as they pertain to the Office's mandate. SDG Goal 16 – related to peace, justice, corruption and illicit financial flows – is of particular importance, as it ensures that these topics are embedded in the sustainable development agenda. The RP is also fully inscribed within the UNODC inter-regional approach and is linked to other Regional Programmes and global strategies – such as the UNODC Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2022-2026).

This RP is designed to act as an umbrella for programming, with sufficient flexibility to respond to emerging threats. Furthermore, given the links between the interconnectedness of crimes and their relation to corruption and the rule of law, the RP encourages increased synergies and cooperation between its sub-programmes, with a view to better serving Member States. The outcomes, outputs and activities under each sub-programme/outcome are reflected in the RP logical framework. In line with the UNODC Strategy 2021-2025, the Regional Programme thus aims to act along five outcomes/sub-programmes:

1 **Effective and evidence-based responses to the production, trafficking and non-medical use of drugs:** enhanced regional cooperation and information sharing on drugs, evidence-based studies/research, capacity enhancement of law enforcement and civil society.

2 **Effective prevention of, and response to, transnational organized crime and illicit trafficking:** enhanced regional and international cooperation (Mutual Legal Assistance/MLA) to tackle organised crimes, capacity building, legislative assistance and research.

3 **Prevention and countering of corruption and economic crime:** strengthening capacities of anti-corruption commissions/bodies.

4 **Enhanced prevention and countering of terrorism,** including terrorism financing and the spread of violent extremism.

5 **Fair, effective, accountable criminal justice systems accessible to all:** strengthening prison systems, non-custodial measures, Nelson Mandela Rules (NMR), addressing gender-based violence (GBV), crime prevention.

It is within this framework that UNODC is committed to implement the RP, together with its government partners, and will work towards these goals, by maintaining a focus on the five sub-programmes/outcomes, which are all grounded in a gender and youth responsive, human rights-based approach. Furthermore, with its strong comparative advantages, UNODC brings a unique set of capacity and skills, especially in terms of:

1. A strong normative mandate, including by being the custodian of key international conventions and treaties, such as the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Supplementary Protocols, drug-related conventions, 19 international legal instruments against terrorism as well as Standards and Norms on crime prevention and criminal justice.
2. Significant in-house expertise on all the thematic areas identified in the Strategy.
3. Widespread field presence (through several Programme Offices) and longstanding trust and relationships with key national, regional and international institutions, which enable the joint identification of solutions to the problems identified.

The RP seeks to diversify and expand UNODC's current work in South Asia into a broader programme, which encompasses critical elements of crime prevention and the rule of law at national, regional and inter-regional level, while taking into full account the nature and scope of the key challenges identified by the Governments in the region. In particular, the new RP will strive to: a) invest on the generation of reliable data and research products and on their dissemination, so as to raise public awareness; b) promote the adoption of legislation, strategies and policies that comply with international standards; c) further strengthen the capacities of public officials and practitioners; and d) foster cross-border, regional and inter-regional cooperation, including by promoting the strengthening of coordination to counter transnational crime, with a particular focus on illicit drug trafficking.

The RP thus promotes and supports the development of instruments needed to foster cooperation, in support of existing regional cooperation mechanisms, such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). The RP will also seek to establish – as appropriate – links and synergies beyond the geographical boundaries of the region. These will include cooperation with other UNODC Regional Offices covering Southeast Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia and with the Country Office in Afghanistan. Synergies will also be pursued with UNODC's Strategic Stability Grid for Afghanistan, which serves as a framework for tackling drugs, terrorism, corruption, and organized crime threats in and around the country.

The Programme will be implemented by UNODC, under the lead of the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) based in New Delhi, India, making effective use of the expertise and resources available across the Programme Offices located in all other countries of the region, and at its Headquarters in Vienna. The implementation of the RP is predicated upon a regular dialogue between UNODC and the countries in South Asia: the Regional Programme Steering Committee, which includes Government representatives of all six Member States, will periodically discuss regional trends regarding drugs, crime and policy options; review the progress made by the RP's implementation; and provide policy guidance as well as strategic advice that will inform UNODC's approach towards supporting the countries of the region.
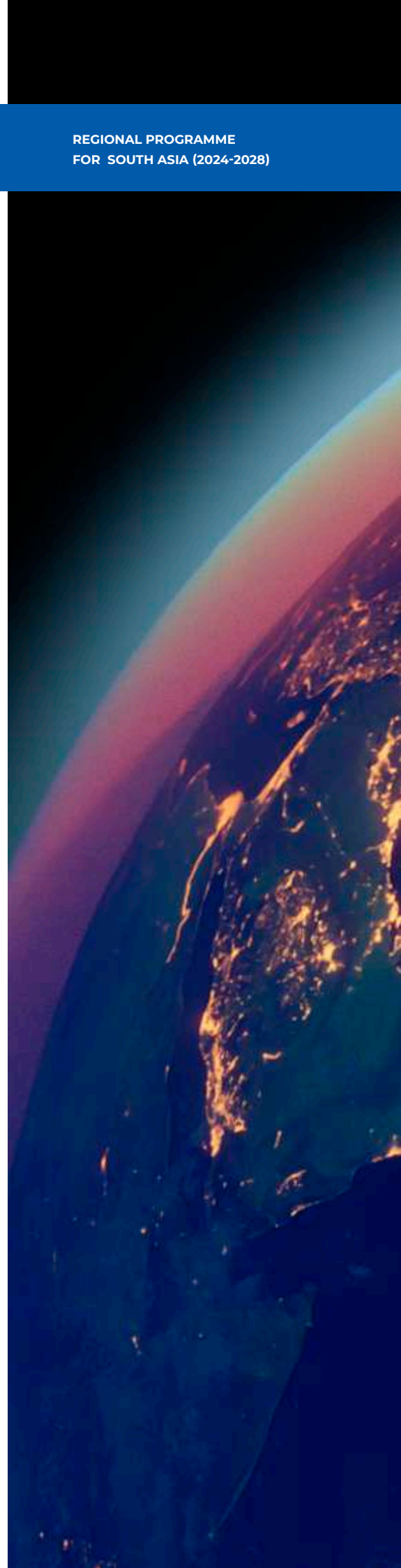
Problem and Situational Analysis

Problem Analysis

With over 1.6 billion people, South Asia is home to almost 20% of the global population, of which more than 40% comprise youth below 24 years of age. While the six South Asian countries covered by ROSA[2] have made considerable progress during the last years towards meeting development goals and overcoming conflict and crisis, instabilities and uncertainty at the global level are still impacting lives in South Asia. The region is also one of the most vulnerable in terms of climate change challenges, which have a significant impact on peace, security and sustainable development prospects. Considering new global challenges and threats, the region faces considerable challenges to the rule of law and human security, in the form of known and newly emerging forms of organized crime and related governance and criminal justice responses to it.

A substantial segment of the South Asian population relies on ocean-related activities. Coastal communities in countries such as India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives depend on the ocean to sustain livelihoods and diverse economic sectors encompassing fishing, maritime trade, shipping, tourism etc. Coastal tourism etc., also significantly contributes to local economies, furnishing employment opportunities. Furthermore, the shipping industry assumes a pivotal role in regional and international trade. The ocean's importance extends beyond coastal States, supporting inland regions through maritime trade and contributing to food security and economic prosperity. Nonetheless, the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal have become conduits for illicit activities, including drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, crimes in the fisheries sector, and marine pollution, posing security and stability challenges that require comprehensive analysis and concerted action.

Bangladesh has been hosting Rohingyas for decades, and since 2017 has expended considerable effort to ensure their protection and provide shelter and vital humanitarian assistance to almost one million refugees who are living in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar . The Cox's Bazar district has also become vulnerable to a number of crimes, like human trafficking, drug trafficking, robbery, murder, which, in turn have become a cause of concern for all[3].

1. Drugs: Drug Trafficking & Drugs and Health

Incidents of Contraband Smuggling

04 — Others

23 — Weapons

49 — Alcohol

106 — Natural Resources

87 — Wildlife

102 — Tobacco

161 — Fuel

170 — Domestic Products

295 — Drugs

Data Source: Information Fusion Centre-
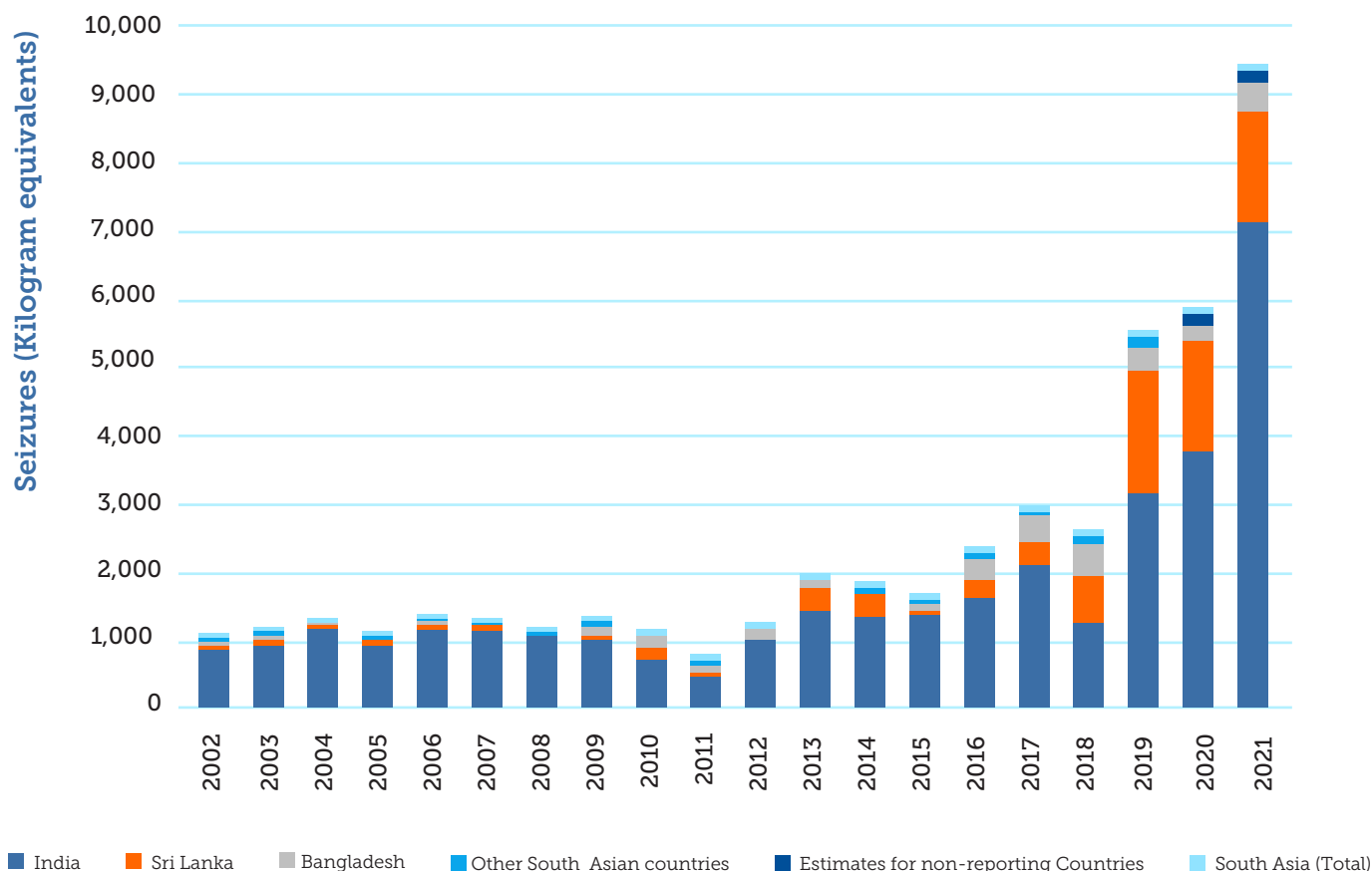Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) Report, 2023

South Asia, located in between the world's two largest opiate producing areas of South-West Asia and South-East Asia,

has experienced some of the sharpest increases worldwide in the number of opiate users over the past two decades. The proportion of the global total of opiate users residing in South Asia almost doubled, from 20% in 2002 to 39% in 2021, for a total of 12 million people – a significantly larger number than in the Near and Middle East/South-West Asia combined, which accounted for 19 per cent of the global total, or in Europe (10 per cent)[4]. At 1.2 per cent, the prevalence of opiate use in South Asia was twice the estimated global average (0.6 per cent) in 2021.[5] Key drug production regions are: the one comprising illicit opium production areas in Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan ("Crescent") and the second largest opium production region in the world, covering Myanmar, Thailand and Laos ("Triangle"). Heroin produced in the "Crescent" is trafficked through the Southern Route, using dhows, reaching transit or small markets in Sri Lanka and Maldives, to later reach more profitable destinations, such as Southeast Asia or Oceania. Drug production in the "Triangle" has recently shifted to methamphetamines, including yaba, that are smuggled into South and Southeast Asian countries by sea.

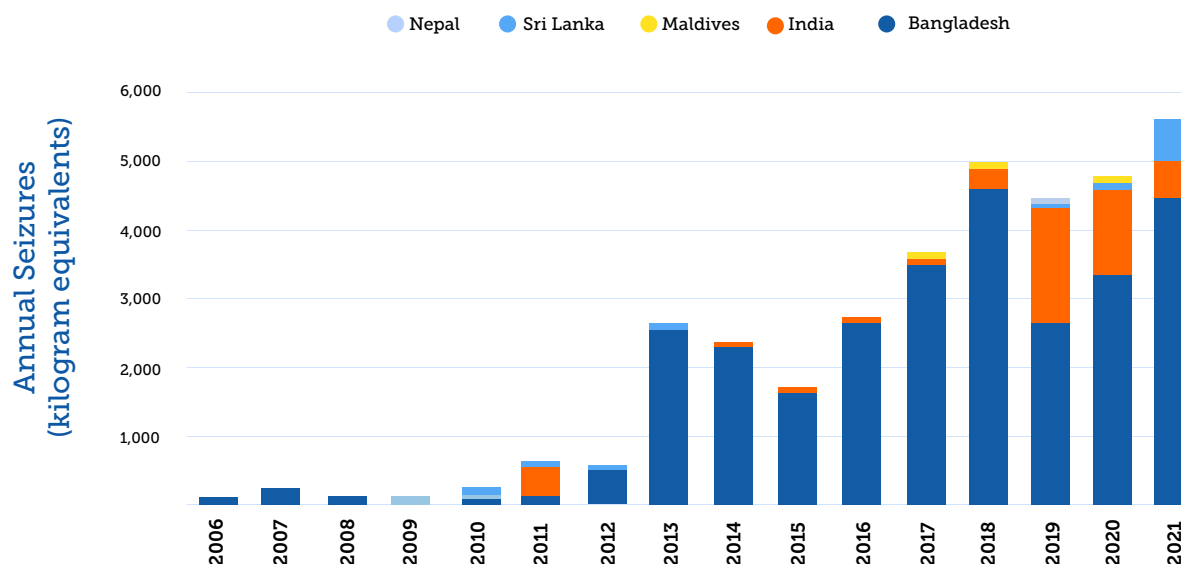## Seizure of Heroin in South Asia, by country, 2002-2021

(Data source: RAB Research/UNODC, 2023)

Seizures (Kilogram equivalents)

- ■ India
- ■ Sri Lanka
- ■ Bangladesh
- ■ Other South Asian countries
- ■ Estimates for non-reporting Countries
- ■ South Asia (Total)

Quantities of methamphetamine
seized in South Asia, 2006-2021

(Data source: RAB Research/UNODC, 2023)

Legend: Nepal · Sri Lanka · Maldives · India · Bangladesh

Y-axis: Annual Seizures (kilogram equivalents)

X-axis years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

South Asia remains a target for traffickers smuggling illicitly produced opiates from Afghanistan to Europe and North America along the "alternate" southern route. In addition, coastal states in South Asia are vulnerable to maritime trafficking, as a result of their exposure to trafficking routes across the Indian Ocean. The instability in Afghanistan has further heightened the risk of increased narcotics trafficking to South Asia and beyond.

Heroin trafficking is on the rise, as reflected in the rise in seizures in South Asia. Although the global economy slowed down, the organized criminal groups that dominated Asian markets appeared to have quickly adapted to new *modi operandi*. An increase in maritime trafficking in heroin and other opiates sourced from West and Southeast Asia has continued to be observed in the region; several major seizures were recorded on both the eastern and western sides of the Indian Ocean.

The synthetic drug problem has become graver in recent years and has evolved into a significant human security threat. The expansion of the global synthetic drugs market, including amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances, coupled with a high prevalence and the number of people who use opioids, is causing increasing concern. The continued 'spill over' of methamphetamine produced in Myanmar impacts countries across not only East and Southeast Asia,

but also Oceania, increasingly South Asia, particularly Bangladesh and, more recently, Northeast India.[6] Yaba has become widely popular in Bangladesh, where the drug is trafficked into the country through the Naf River, a fluvial bordering area with Myanmar. Seizures of opiates – and methamphetamine – have also been increasing in the Indian Ocean.
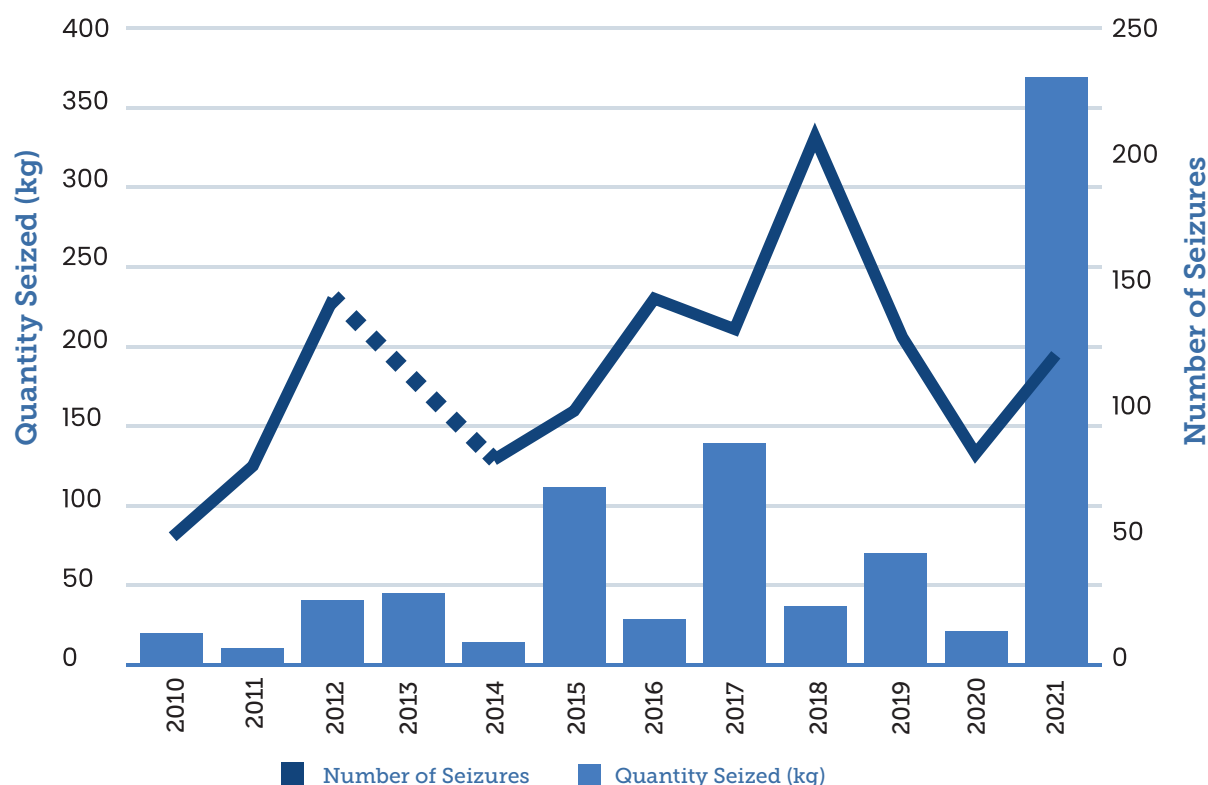
The drastic increase in methamphetamine seizures in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries indicates that methamphetamine trafficking is expanding rapidly, thus changing illicit drug markets that have traditionally been focused on the trafficking of opiates from Afghanistan.[7] According to data from UNODC's Drug Monitoring Platform from 2019 to 2022, the methamphetamine trade from Afghanistan has already impacted two countries in the South Asian region: India and Sri Lanka, with potential to expand to other locations. An analysis of significant individual drug seizures shows that an increasing amount of methamphetamine seized in South Asian neighbouring countries reportedly originated in Afghanistan.

South Asia has seen a rise in cocaine trafficking in the last 2-3 years. Seizures show that India is becoming a destination and transit country, with new modus operandi adopted regularly, including the postal, passenger and sea routes. Concealment in fruit consignments from South America, South Africa, postal and courier parcels from Europe and in-person carriers from Africa are become increasingly common.[8]

Expansion of global cocaine market

Cocaine seizures in India,
2010-2021

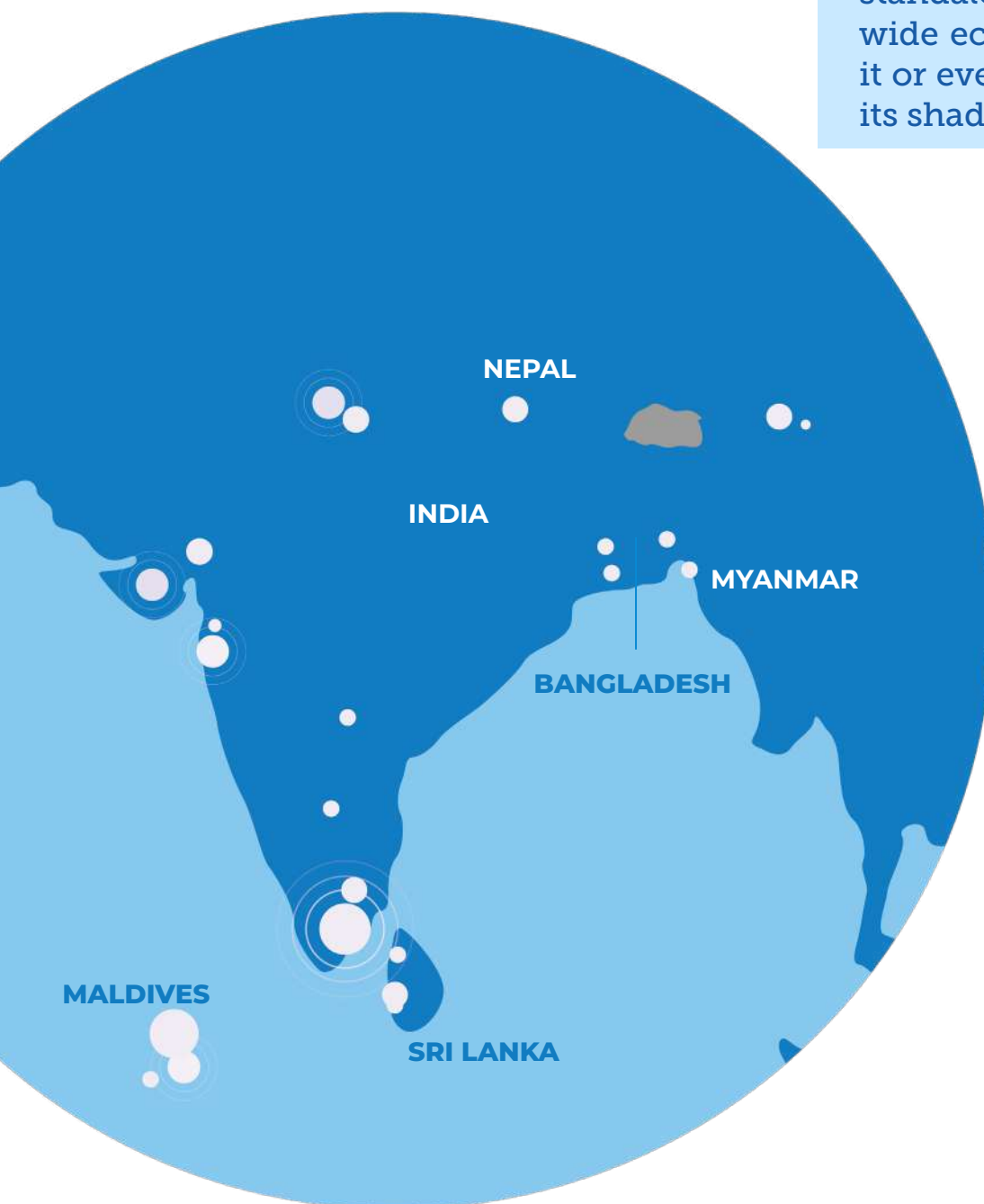Data Source: RAB Research/
UNODC, 2023

To address this challenging situation, regional and inter-regional coordination in information/intelligence sharing needs to be strengthened. Under the Regional Programme for South Asia, efforts will be made to strengthen linkages to the **UNODC Strategic Stability Grid[9]** that has been developed for Afghanistan, in order to tackle intersecting drugs, terrorism, corruption, and organized crime threats in and around the country. This would also be catalytic in slowing down the spill over of drug-related threats to South Asia. The role of India, which has a strong interest in curbing the rising illicit flow of drugs originating from Afghanistan, would be key to achieve this goal.

Drug trafficking is not a standalone crime and has a wide ecosystem supporting it or even flourishing under its shadow. Faster modes of communication and difficult terrains, coupled with thin resources for enforcement and prevention make inter-agency cooperation within the state and international cooperation imperative. Often, due to the lack of regular and structured information sharing mechanisms, several follow-up actions to nab operators or plug resources situated in different countries becomes near impossible, exacerbating the problem. **There is a strong demand by law enforcement agencies, at different levels, to develop an information sharing platform for the South Asian region, which in turn, can facilitate inter-regional and international cooperation in follow-up actions**. It is therefore worthwhile to note that regional bodies, like the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), BIMSTEC, and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), have made combating non-traditional threats to maritime security one of their pillars of work, giving special attention to drug trafficking.

Significant individual cocaine seizures in transit regions emerging cocaine markets in South Asia, 2020-2021

Drug trafficking is not a standalone crime and has a wide ecosystem supporting it or even flourishing under its shadow.

NEPAL

INDIA

MYANMAR

BANGLADESH

MALDIVES

SRI LANKA

Cocaine Seizures (kg)
2020-2021

- ·   ≤1
- •   >1–10
- ●   >10–100
- ◎   >100–1000
- ◉   >1,000–8,200

▇   Excluded from analysis /no data available

While drug supply continues to expand, there is lesser evidence on the extent, emerging patterns, and trends of drug use. As a result, evidence-based drug prevention, treatment and care programmes remain limited and under-funded across the region, especially those aiming to prevent drug use and other risky behaviours to support families and the healthy and safe development of children and youth. Although the risk of acquiring HIV is many times higher among people who inject drugs, HIV prevention efforts remain limited and inaccessible, with the largest barrier to uptake of HIV and drug dependence treatment being fear of stigma and discrimination. This is even more relevant for women who use drugs, as they face an added layer of gendered stigma and consequences. In addition, the surge of synthetic drugs and associated high-risk behaviour has brought additional risk factors for HIV transmission to the region.

Factors affecting drug use in South Asia are, in general, not that different from those reported in other regions, which include curiosity, peer pressure, pain reduction, anxiety and work efficiency. Demographic dynamics may specifically affect South Asia, not least due to the increasing rate of urbanization.

The global trend of purchasing drugs and other controlled substances through darknet trading platforms and the use of cryptocurrencies on the internet has also been on the rise in the region. **Promoting criminal justice reforms, to enable a human rights-based response to the drug problem and supporting drug treatment as well as rehabilitation (as opposed to detention), is also a priority.**

Another important area of work entails improving the access to and availability of controlled drugs for medical purposes, particularly for the management of pain. The aim is to increase the number of patients receiving appropriate treatment for conditions requiring the use of specific medication, while controlling the diversion and non-medical use of those substances. This is also important in the context of South Asia which could benefit from building capacity for healthcare professionals, working with the community and care givers and strengthening legal and policy responses.

2. Organized Crime

Transnational organized crime (TOC) – including trafficking in illicit goods (drugs and precursor chemicals, wildlife and forest products, cultural property, precious metals and gems, counterfeits, etc.), trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants (SOM), cyber-crimes, illicit financial flows and maritime crimes – continues to cause concern, while terrorist and violent extremism threats continue to loom over the region. In addition to illicit profits, transnational organized crime in the region has a profound impact on the lives of people within the region and beyond. Mirroring a trend in other regions of the globe,[10] studies highlight trends in various Asian countries, wherein livelihood loss and limited conservation enforcement have inadvertently increased the likelihood of poaching of wildlife.[11] Weak border controls, inadequate legal frameworks and digitally networked financial systems make South Asia an ideal place for money laundering and thus attractive to TOC groups. Various types of **cybercrimes or cyber-enabled crimes** – from online fraud, ransomware, hacking of health systems to sexual exploitation of women and children[12] – have rapidly increased.
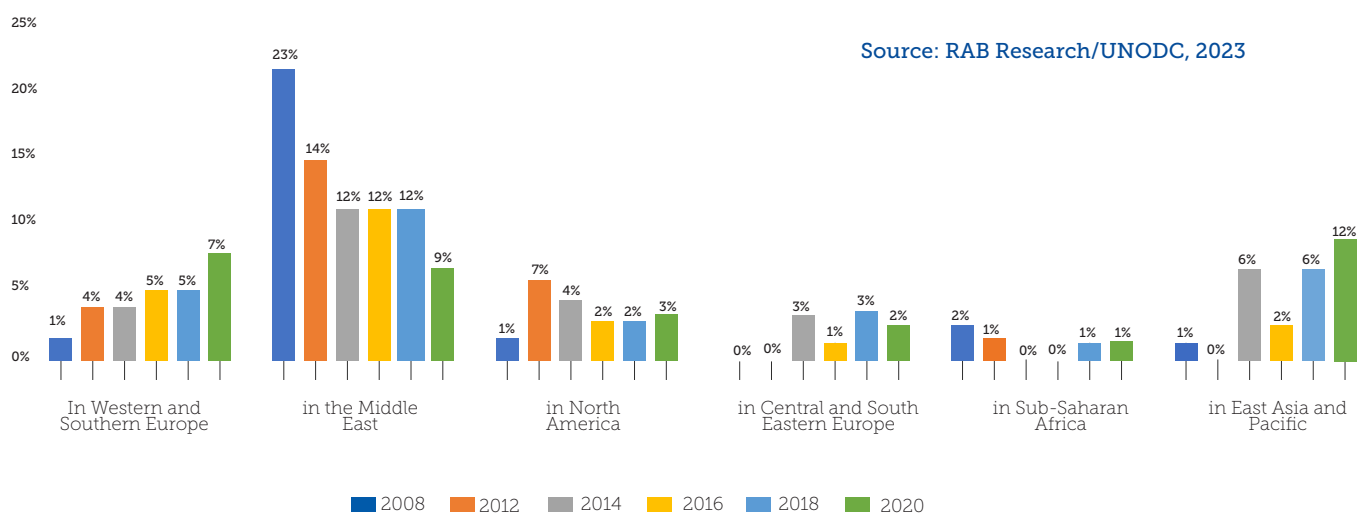
Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants

Populations in South Asia are even more vulnerable to trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants than before. While South Asian countries have made progress in strengthening their capacity to manage migration more efficiently and effectively, significant challenges remain. South Asian countries are either source, transit, destination countries for **trafficking in persons** for various purposes, including forced labour, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, and organ removal.

The share of detected trafficked victims exploited for forced criminal activity has been increasing. According to UNODC's Global Trafficking in Persons 2022 Report, South Asian countries detect female and male victims almost equally. Detected victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, by age group, in South Asia are 67% women and 33% children – primarily girls. About 99% of human trafficking victims detected in South Asia are trafficked domestically. In addition, many South Asia victims are increasingly detected outside the region. They are trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation and, to a lesser degree, for forced marriage.[13] South Asia is among the regions where the fewest convictions took place.[14]

South Asian victims to total victims
detected in destination regions (2008-2020)

Source: RAB Research/UNODC, 2023

In South Asia, despite the overall increase in counter trafficking and migrant smuggling efforts, impunity for perpetrators remains high and weaknesses in victim identification, case management and data collection persist. While basic legislation on trafficking in persons (TiP) is in place across South Asia, **smuggling of migrants** laws are lacking entirely in most of these countries and the policy frameworks are often uncoordinated and incomplete. Owing to the low detection levels, investigations and prosecutions, migrant smuggling and human trafficking continue to remain low-risk-high-profit activities with a very real culture of impunity.

There is strong need to bolster regional and cross-border cooperation to address challenges of rescue and repatriation of vulnerable persons that are trafficked across the borders. Referral mechanisms are needed to protect trafficking victims from being exploited further. New challenges like cyber enabled trafficking and climate induced trafficking and smuggling need to be studied in depth.

There have been concerns regarding **online scam operations**, including their link to human trafficking and other crimes. The majority of people trafficked into online scam operations are men, although women and children are also among the victims. Most are not citizens of the countries in which the trafficking occurs, although reports have indicated that at least in some countries nationals are also being targeted.[15] The profile of people trafficked into these recent online scam operations is different: many of the victims are well-educated, sometimes coming from professional jobs or with graduate or even postgraduate degrees, computer-literate and multi-lingual. Victims have come from across the ASEAN region as well as from countries in South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal).[16]

South Asia: Lowest conviction rates for human trafficking globally

Conviction rates per 100,000 population, by region, 2020

EUROPE		
Western and Southern Europe	**0.12**	
Central and South-Eastern Europe	**0.28**	
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	**0.12**	

THE AMERICAS		
North America	**0.08**	
Central America and the Caribbean	**0.11**	
South America	**0.06**	

ASIA AND PACIFIC		
South Asia	**0.01**	
East Asia and the Pacific	**0.12**	

AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST		
North Africa and the Middle East	**0.10**	
Sub-Saharan Africa	**0.02**	

GLOBAL	
	0.07

Source: RAB Research/UNODC, 2023

In 2021, 23.7 million people were internally displaced by weather-induced natural disasters while many others crossed borders to escape climate-induced poverty

Source: RAB Research/UNODC, 2023

Crop Loss

Economic vulnerability to trafficking in persons

Weather-induced disasters

Climate-induced migration vulnerable to trafficking

Climate change is increasing vulnerability to trafficking in persons by acting as a stress multiplier

In 2022 UNODC, in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh, commissioned the first national study on trafficking in persons in Bangladesh. According to the report, women and girls are trafficked and sexually exploited, while men and boys are trafficked into forced labour, both domestically and internationally. Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants may be committed by the same perpetrators, and/or with the same people as victims/objects of the offence, which poses significant challenges for investigation, prosecution and conviction, as well as for protection of victims of trafficking and of abuses in the context of migrant smuggling.[17]

Crimes that affect the environment

Countries in the region also continue to be affected by the illegal wildlife trade supply chain, as countries of origin, transit, and destination of endangered species. A study released in 2022 indicates extensive use of airports in India for trafficking of over 70,000 native and exotic wild animals, including their body parts or derivatives, with 140 seizure incidents at 18 Indian airports between 2011-2020.[18] Tigers, leopards, rhinos (for horns) and pangolins (for scales), and sandalwood and rosewood remain some the most seriously impacted species, with products from their parts and derivatives trafficked in the region. The pandemic also highlighted the dangers of zoonotic spill-over from wild animals to humans through illegal wildlife trade as well as facilities in which humans and wild species come into close contact.

India seizes the most live turtle and tortoise species of any country, largely for the pet and collectors' trade, which highlights the scope and modus operandi of the **regional illegal wildlife trade[19]**.Offender interviews in the region show that while enforcement is increasing, the individuals it targets are not high-level enough to shut down the trade.[20] Other crimes that affect the environment, such as electronic waste dumping, waste trafficking, e-waste and illegal ship breaking and dumping, are thought to be problematic, but in need of further research, as are high risks associated with emerging issues, such as access to water, the vulnerability of climate financing projects to criminal exploitation, and illegal mining and trafficking of precious metals. The vulnerability of South Asian cultural heritage to trafficking has yet to be comprehensively assessed. In addition, South Asian governments have expressed: (i) the need to strengthen capacities of national Wildlife Crime Control Units in the region, on prioritised areas (e.g. cyber-enabled wildlife trafficking, tracking financial flows and money laundering); and (ii) the need to enhance capacities for forensic investigation of wildlife and forest crime, including scientific analysis of evidence recovered from a crime scene.

Cybercrime

Digital services are at the heart of economic, educational, social and political affairs across the globe. However, the fast-paced development of new technologies and the immense volume of online activity also generate continuous risks to people, communities, and societies. This has also impacted South Asian countries, where there is a need to focus on effective risk management to be more proactive and effective in fostering a safer online environment.[21]

Constant technological advances in the form of ransomware, darknet, crypto-currencies and Metaverse have complicated the threat landscape for law enforcement in South Asia. The most significant challenge comes from darknet marketplaces, where perpetrators have provided an anonymous but thriving cyberspace for criminal elements to sell narcotic substances, contraband, stolen personal and financial data, along with tools for committing cybercrimes. **There are new emerging dimensions of criminal activity, like online gaming, which have proved to be flourishing sanctuaries for hacking, identity theft, cyberstalking, doxing and social engineering attacks.** Then there are Non-Fungible Tokens, which also have been linked to crime payments and wash trading (a form of money laundering). **The trade-based money laundering (TBML)** is also one of the main methods for ML in South Asia. On the other end of the spectrum is Metaverse, the online immersive environment, which is giving rise to concerns in terms of child safety and simulated attack scenarios.

These technological advancements underscore the importance of regional and international cooperation for law enforcement agencies to tackle and prevent these crimes, as their consequences and implications span national boundaries. In this context, international cooperation should cover three aspects: information-sharing, forensic investigations and skills, and capacity-building.

Another related area of work pertains to **new and emerging technologies**, which provide both opportunities for law enforcement agencies and, at the same time, for traffickers. According to various studies, there are at least five upcoming technologies that would need special preparation by the LEAs across the globe, and particularly in India and in the larger South Asia region. These include: the use of drones; the use of unmanned underwater vehicles; the rise in the use of cryptocurrencies; the emergence of newer darknet markets; and the leverage of artificial intelligence (AI).

The United Nations Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNCTC) is also giving attention to the misuse of drone technology as part of its broader focus on the growing threats posed by new and emerging technologies, in particular, to gather best practices from the Member States in addressing the misuse of emerging technologies by terrorist organizations.

3. Corruption and economic crime

Corruption is a key enabler for the crimes described above. According to a global survey from UNODC and the World Economic Forum,[22] 74% of young people in emerging and developing Asia (aged 18-34) named corruption as the biggest challenge they face, holding their country back and causing the loss of opportunities for their generation.

Corruption and crime impede and threaten all development aspects, including the positive contribution of sport – an activity which has the power to inspire and unite. Particularly when linked to abuse and exploitation of vulnerable groups and youth, its impact has a devastating effect on societies. An essential element to build a prosperous and empowered society is the provision of inclusive education, which, as a key to equality and development, is a crucial instrument in promoting a culture of integrity and building a generation that stands for resilience to corruption. To this end, UNODC's Global Resource for Anti-Corruption Education and Youth Empowerment (GRACE) initiative will be implemented to promote further the role of education and youth empowerment in preventing and countering corruption.

Through the RP, UNODC will support the implementation of relevant recommendations of the UNCAC reviews in countries of the region, by providing its expertise and sharing knowledge, skills and best practices, regionally and internationally, through a range of tailored technical assistance activities. Countries in South Asia also need to strengthen corruption prevention measures, provide for effective access to public information and strengthen the protection of reporting persons and witnesses. Corruption also affects the private and public-sector entities in most countries. With all the challenges that these concepts represent to the criminal justice systems, there is an evident need to enhance this capacity and skills and to address challenges in laws, regulations and procedures that would allow for more effective response mechanisms.

Combatting **illicit financial flows (IFFs)** has been recognized as a crucial component of the campaign to promote peace, justice and strong institutions, as the United Nations set out in Goal 16 of its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Illicit financial flows have

the highest impact on the poor, women, youth, migrants and other marginalized and vulnerable groups at risk of falling into poverty and being left behind, particularly as a consequence of the economic crisis caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic, which makes it imperative to curb IFFs in order to recover assets to finance sustainable development. However, the capacity to monitor achievement towards SDG Target 16.4 has been limited, due to the lack of robust and reliable statistics on the monetary value of inward and outward IFFs. UNODC, jointly with UNCTAD, has developed a framework to measure illicit financial flows for statistical purposes (SDG indicator 16.4.1). UNODC has worked with Nepal, Bangladesh and the Maldives to calculate inward and outward IFF related to drug trafficking (cannabis, heroin and methamphetamine) as well as TiP. The main TiP modalities are related to sexual exploitation and forced labour. These generate IFFs that are primarily related to the recruitment phase (local proceeds) and, to a lesser extent, the exploitation phase.[23] UNODC is making efforts to bridge the gap between knowledge on the destination of IFFs and their source.

Money laundering

Money laundering has a corrosive and corrupting effect on society and on the economic system as a whole. Both corruption and money laundering are of great concern, because of the numerous disruptive consequences that each has on national and regional economies. UNODC can assist Member States in a variety of ways to develop sound anti-money laundering and countering of terrorism financing (AML/CFT) regimes. This includes developing or strengthening legislation, so as to criminalize the laundering of the proceeds of crime and comply with FATF standards; training of officials; and increasing the ability to identify and interdict cross-border transportation of illegal cash or other negotiable instruments. While all South Asia countries have established Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs), improving their capacities and strengthening of regional cooperation and coordination remains a key concern.

4. Terrorism and violent extremism

Global terrorism can only be countered through cooperation, mutual collaboration, and confidence building within the international community. In response to the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban in August 2021, countries in the region have been re-assessing the risks of possible spill-over effects. In South Asia, immediate and heightened risks exist which could produce an increased number of violent extremist followers and fighters, through heightened radicalization and increased access to organized crime activities, with greater opportunities to generate money for terror. The spread of violent extremism through different means, including the internet and social media, constitutes a powerful tool used by terrorists to fuel insecurity, discord, hate, and conflict, thus resulting in a major threat to regional and international security.

Social media has become the most effective way to radicalise and spread anti-national elements. Cyberspace's unique virtual characteristic makes it difficult to detect cybercriminals.

Extremists also seek to exploit gaming and gaming-related content. Terrorist organizations have propagated their ideologies through games. It is believed that there are approximately 3 billion gamers worldwide, and the average age of gamers is 34, thus covering the ideal age group that could be easily manipulated.[24] Demonstrations and violent attacks have highlighted the need for an improved understanding of the role of internet-based technologies in aiding and amplifying the spread of extremist ideologies. Since the early days of the internet, radical groups and movements across the ideological spectrum have demonstrated their intent and ability to harness virtual platforms to perform critical functions.[25] South Asia is particularly at risk of witnessing stronger links between terrorism and illicit trafficking in drugs, given its geographical location between the two main illicit opiates producing and trafficking regions of the world.

Effectively identifying and addressing these linkages presents a range of challenges for Member States. Based upon the "Report of the Secretary-General on actions taken by Member States and United Nations Entities to address the issue of linkages between terrorism and organized crime" (S/2020/754), and on UNODC's experience of working on this issue, there are a number of significant gaps, to address which South Asian Member States would need support, including: insufficient awareness by frontline national officials regarding how organized crime and terrorism can be linked, thus reducing the likelihood that the links are detected and investigated in a timely manner; a need to strengthen national and regional law enforcement as well as inter-agency judicial collaboration and intelligence sharing – with agencies working in isolation, as well as limited involvement of the private sector and other non-traditional stakeholders; and gaps in normative and institutional frameworks to effectively criminalize, investigate, and prosecute crimes involving the nexus between terrorism and organized crime.

5. Crime prevention and criminal justice

Effective, fair and humane criminal justice systems constitute a cornerstone of the rule of law, and an essential foundation for the efforts of Member States to counter illicit drugs, organized crime, corruption, terrorism and their negative social consequences. All measures employed by Member States to counter these threats effectively require as a foundation a criminal justice system in which the police, prosecution, courts and prisons, as well as other justice actors such as lawyers and legal aid providers, function and interact effectively, contribute to the prevention of crime, and respect rule of law and human rights standards.

Judicial and prison systems around the globe continue to face fundamental challenges that undermine the ultimate purpose of incarceration as a sentence, namely, to protect society from crime and to prevent recidivism by supporting rehabilitation and preparing prisoners for their social reintegration upon release.[26]

With some exceptions, systemic deficiencies affect criminal justice systems in the region, including with respect to the conditions of **prison systems**, which can be taken as a valuable indicator for reform needs in the criminal justice system as a whole. One of the most significant challenges of prison systems is overcrowding. Although South Asian countries have shown a commitment to improve the situation in prisons and to consider the need for an overall reform of the criminal justice system, the underlying problems – prison overcrowding, poor prison conditions, inadequate prison management policies, and insufficient professional capacity of prison staff, etc. – persist. Effective and sustainable reform efforts, therefore, require a holistic reform approach aimed at addressing the root causes of overincarceration and overcrowding and shifting policies towards prevention and alternatives to imprisonment.

The number of male prisoners per 100,000 male population in Asia has remained a constant between 2000-2019, at around 200. The number of female prisoners per 100,000 female population has been increasing slightly as of 2012, reaching approximately 18 female prisoners in 2019.

Prison Population and Unsentenced Prisoners
Source: RAB Research/UNODC, 2023

Number of prisoners per 100,000 in selected sub-regions in Asia and Oceania (2000-2019)

The number of male prisoners per 100,000 male population in Asia has remained constant between 2000-2019, at around 200. The number of female prisoners per 100,000 female population has been increasing slightly as of 2012, reaching approximately 18 female prisoners in 2019.
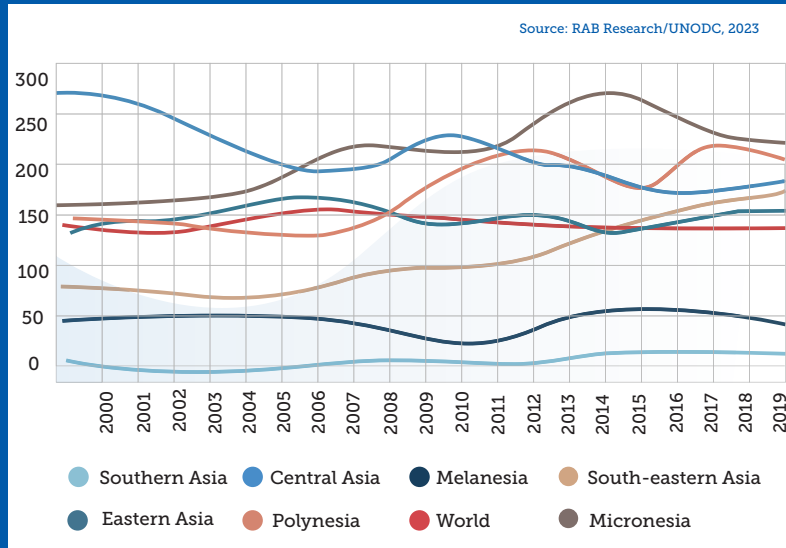

Source: RAB Research/UNODC, 2023

Prevention of recidivism is also a major concern, which calls for better programmes and interventions. **Community policing** has been introduced in some countries of the region. At the same time, there are concerns over police brutality and violence as well as the inability to implement human rights and gender-based approaches as well as build trust with local communities. Although some countries have tackled police reform and promoted policing strategies that include community and problem-oriented policing, there is a need for comprehensive policies and approaches to crime prevention at the national and community level.

Ensuring equal access to justice for all is a key component of a fair, humane, effective and efficient criminal justice system and a foundation for all of UNODC's work on crime prevention and criminal justice. It includes human rights- and gender-sensitive police reform as well as ensuring access to legal aid services, victims' services, and restorative justice mechanisms, as appropriate, and is paramount for sustainable development in the region. While efforts have been and are being made at the national level, needs among the population remain, including to ensure that justice is accessible nationwide, including in rural areas, and that the population is informed about their rights and existing institutions and processes. To advance the overarching cause of fair and equitable justice systems in South Asia, experts in the region acknowledged, in particular, the criticality of providing **early access to legal aid in police stations**, ensuring that justice is not delayed or denied

to those in need, with tailored services available to groups with specific rights and needs without discrimination based on gender, age, disability, or victimization status.

The establishment of an inclusive regional network of criminal legal aid providers, to build capacity and allow for coordination of providers with law enforcement, prosecution, and the judiciary, as well as other sectors such as health and social work, has been called for by experts, with a view to fostering cooperation and continuous exchanges concerning shared challenges and best practices.

Restorative justice is an inclusive, flexible and participatory approach to crime that can be complementary, or alternative, to the conventional criminal justice process. It provides an opportunity to all affected parties – offenders, victims, their families and the community – to participate in addressing the crime and repairing the harm caused by it. This type of informal justice is practised across South Asia, and guidance is needed to ensure that mechanisms are well-suited to address the needs of victims of crime, specifically violent crimes, prevent secondary victimization, and adequately address the behaviour of offenders. Nationally funded and sustainable **victims/survivor** support, assistance and protection programmes and institutions require investment in the region, in order to prevent secondary victimization and meaningful participation in the criminal justice process.

While **police reforms** have been discussed and have taken place in several countries in the region, police services continue being under-resourced and in need of a further orientation towards human-rights based and gender-sensitive policing services that apply evidence-based approaches and enjoy the trust of the population, including those in the most vulnerable situations. Advances in technology have the potential to strengthen the efficiency, transparency and accountability of criminal justice institutions, providing that all technology is used only where rigorous human rights assessments demonstrate that it is both effective and protective of human rights.

A lot still needs to be done to further strengthen capacity with respect to cross-border investigations, prosecution and adjudication of transnational organized crimes, sharing information and data on TOC and expeditious Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) in criminal matters. Ensuring international standards in criminal justice systems in the region is critical and presents a rather vast spectrum for possible action. In view of the scope of the required action, UNODC will focus on its engagement in South Asia interventions on/for women, youth and children as well as vulnerable groups in prisons, as they are confronted with the most challenging situations.

Gender-based violence is a complex multi-sectoral challenge. The pandemic was associated with a global spike in cases of **domestic violence**, and South Asia was no exception. Pre-existing gender gaps have amplified the pandemic crisis asymmetrically between men and women, even as women have been at the frontlines of managing the crisis. At the current relative pace, gender gaps can only potentially be closed in 195.4 years in South Asia.[27] Violence against women and girls (VAW/G) remains a significant concern, with numerous consequences for the health, psychological, social and economic well-being of victims. Limited access to justice and the lack of support services, coupled with family and community pressure to reconcile with perpetrators without accountability, have been linked with high levels of suicides among survivors.

Research and Data Analytics

As an organization with specialized areas of technical expertise, one of the core roles of UNODC's research is to help Member States formulate data-driven, evidence-based policies. In this regard, the Office's research has been instrumental in positively shaping responses to threats and placing these on the international agenda, by providing the evidence necessary to step-up the action. Research and information from data gathering thus provide the basis for trend analysis, which is used for priority setting. To be effective, drug and crime policies must be firmly based on evidence. Policymakers and experts need reliable data to identify and analyse trends in crime levels and in drug demand and supply and, with national resources becoming scarce, to pinpoint areas where interventions are most likely to achieve positive results. Because drugs and crime are tightly intertwined and have repercussions at the local, regional and transnational levels; research and analysis that take a cross-cutting approach offer the firmest foundation for policy making and operational responses to counteract these problems.

An informal study conducted by the South Asia component of the UNODC Global SMART programme regarding the methodologies and the gaps in data collection in three countries (Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka) has pointed to major gaps in the data fields, its fidelity and flow to the apex level in the segment of drug crime data.[28] The study has revealed several shortcomings, both in the flow of data from different empowered agencies to the apex level and in the flow (or sharing) of the data between different agencies within the country and among the countries of the region. The data tables, the fields captured and the architecture of the design for analytics leave a wide gap needing standardisation – an essential precondition for successful regional cooperation.

The Regional Programme, while fostering regional and international cooperation, will aim to build foundations for a robust data collection and analytics framework among the member states of the South Asia region.

South Asia: Some priority research areas for evidence based programmes and policies

Drug market (demand, trafficking flows, illicit financial flows and related organized crime threats)	**TIP and SOM trends and research into the drivers and modus operandi**

Transnational Organized Crime Assessment for South Asia (possibly covering drugs, TIP, SOM, trafficking in cultural property, wildlife trafficking, environmental crime as well as cross cutting issues such as corruption, threats to peace, stability and sustainable development)

Stakeholder analysis and capacity assessment

The substantive elements of this Programme have been developed in close consultation with a wide range of partners across South Asia. The analysis, priorities, and needs captured below reflect the analysis and views of the Member States concerned. Although somewhat different in their outlook, each of the six South Asian States faces similar threats and challenges. All Member States require additional support to develop strong national institutions that can effectively communicate sub-regionally with partner organizations in neighbouring countries, in order to build sustainable solutions.

As part of the process of consultations held to develop this Regional Programme framework, the UNODC Regional Office for South Asia organized a regional Steering Committee[29] meeting on 17 May 2023 in New Delhi, India with participation of members from the six countries as well as UNODC personnel from South Asia, Vienna and other locations. The meeting was attended by 17 government representatives and experts from various Ministries and Departments from the Governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The SC members discussed key national and regional priorities of/for their countries vis-à-vis the priorities mapped under UNODC's RP priorities for the period 2024-2028. The forum also provided an opportunity for Member States to share key initiatives undertaken by their government and propose a way forward in terms of thematic priorities. The recommendations and suggestions from this Steering Committee meeting have been reflected into this RP document.

Dialogue with partners has identified different comprehensive approaches to implementation, including capacity development and training of trainers, legislative and normative support, knowledge management, infrastructure improvement, evidence generation and research, policy dialogue and communication, and innovative approaches.

To achieve its objectives, the Regional Programme will engage with a broad range of partners, actors and frameworks to promote and prioritize evidence-based inclusive policies and strengthen capacities to respond – and build the resilience of communities – to, drugs, crime and terrorism. Some of the stakeholders include governments; civil society organizations at national, international, regional and community levels; multilateral and bilateral donors; the private sector; regional bodies, including (but not limited to) BIMSTEC; IORA, academic institutions, think tanks and other UN agencies.

The following are some of the key stakeholders and frameworks for the Programme:

- **Member State governments**[30], in particular Ministries in charge of internal security portfolios/Home Affairs, Defence Ministry, Foreign/External Affairs, Departments of Revenue/Customs/Finance, Ministries/Departments of Women & Children, Social Justice/Welfare, Women's Commissions, Anti-Corruption Commissions and Agencies, Law and Justice, and health functions. These are primary counterparts for many activities and are direct beneficiaries of policy support and capacity building efforts. Depending on the country, they require technical capacity development, resources and equipment, needed to conduct advanced investigations, and normative assistance to establish policies and legislation in line with international standards.

- **Civil society organizations**, at international, regional, national and community levels. They play a key role in delivering UNODC support to people, for example by providing legal aid and support services to vulnerable groups (victims of human trafficking and juveniles in conflict with the law), delivering drug prevention and services for people who use drugs and people with drug use disorders, and in holding governments accountable.

- **Additional stakeholders will include other UN funds and programmes**, through a range of coordination mechanisms and frameworks including the UN Sustainable Development Group, and UN Country Teams and the Resident Coordinators leading them, as well as contributing actively to the development and implementation of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs).

- **Multilateral and bilateral funding partners** are crucial, given UNODC's significant dependence on extra-budgetary funding to implement programmes for its Member States. Coordination among different donor-funded initiatives remains a priority and UNODC will continue to support such donor coordination efforts at the national and regional levels.

- **Regional organizations:** UNODC will make efforts to strengthen existing partnerships and cooperation mechanisms with regional bodies and initiatives, like BIMSTEC[31], the Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) – and the Secretariat of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Partnerships with regional bodies will be used to promote, *inter alia*, South-South cooperation between participating countries. MOUs with regional bodies will be pursued to promote and strengthen cooperation.

- In the spirit of **South-South Cooperation**, collaboration with ASEAN will be explored, especially in light of the recently signed Joint Statement between ASEAN and India to enhance cooperation in various areas, such as maritime activities, counter-terrorism, transnational crimes, cyber security, digital economy, regional connectivity etc.

✴ In the area of drug demand reduction, treatment and care, possible synergies with the Colombo Plan's Drug Advisory Programme will be explored.

✴ Synergies will also be explored with the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (the Bali Process) which facilitates regional cooperation in addressing the transnational crimes of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.

The Regional Programme, while keeping a structure based on thematic sub-programmes, will also place more emphasis on regional and integrated interventions. A fundamental cross-cutting objective under this RP is to promote regional cooperation between national players involved in addressing drugs and crime matters. UNODC will continue to foster regional and international cooperation, not only in the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism, but also in the prevention and treatment of drug use and HIV/AIDS. This will include support to law-enforcement, prosecutors or judicial integrity networks and other networks of practitioners (the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities/GlobE, the South Asia Network on the Prevention of Violent Extremism/ SAN-PVE and Youth Networks). The RP will also aim to better coordinate and streamline the activities of these initiatives and networks to ensure synergies between them and a greater impact.

Mandate and justification for UNODC's involvement

The mission of UNODC is to contribute to the achievement of security and justice for all by making the world safer from crime, drugs, corruption and terrorism. The activities of UNODC are grounded in a series of international instruments, for which UNODC acts as the worldwide advocate. Such instruments include the three international drug conventions, UNCAC, UNTOC and its supplementing Protocols on Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, and Trafficking in Firearms, the universal instruments against terrorism, and the UN Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Against this background, the UNODC Strategy aims to build trust, inclusivity and resilient societies that leave no one behind.

UNODC offers targeted expertise and actions, in line with and linked to standards set by relevant international conventions and bodies, including the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ). This, in combination with its strong analytical understanding derived from a long-standing partnership and presence in the region, means that UNODC is uniquely placed to support South Asia in addressing related challenges and reduce their impact on the people of the region.

In South Asia, UNODC's unique mandates and technical expertise are recognised by Member States: UNODC is acknowledged as an important partner and a convening actor for advancing a regional agenda in areas considered as key priorities for the region's sustainable development, peace and security.

Evidence Used

This Regional Programme for South Asia 2024-2028 is based on the previous programme 2018-2023, which was developed for and with the six Member States. Its implementation demonstrated that an integrated approach:

a. Increased sub-regional cooperation and ownership

b. Contributed to better visibility of UNODC's work

c. Ensured that all UNODC interventions contribute to a common goal and aligned with the global strategy and the SDG framework

d. Enhanced results-based monitoring and reporting

e. Facilitated the pooling of expertise for all Member States in the region and the cross-fertilization of expertise, thus contributing to the development of a strategic vision

In addition, the Regional Programme will be based on a foundation of research and analysis, in close coordination with UNODC's Research and Trend Analysis Branch/Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs (RAB/DPA), which will draw from regular research projects, such as TOC assessments, synthetic drug reports and surveys, as well as targeted issue-based and/or integrated threat assessments and geographic research, such as on new emerging patterns.

The Programme will reflect the needs and priorities articulated by Member States and civil society in the region, be it through the various formal governance and steering committee meetings, broader regional policy frameworks (such as BIMSTEC, the Colombo Plan, SAARC, IORA, etc) or through direct feedback from expert participants in, or end beneficiaries of, UNODC activities. The Regional Programme will also provide an overarching framework for the expansion of national level cooperation, strategic partnership,

technical assistance and programming in the countries of South Asia.[32]

To elaborate the Problem Analysis section of this programme document, UNODC ROSA conducted a desk review of available related reports, research, and different analytical documents, which provided evidence to better understand the current situation. The existing CCAs and UNSDCFs, in each South Asian country were also used to better understand the situation. The programme structure was informed by national priorities, collected during national consultations with each country in the region.[33] These consultations assisted UNODC to understand national priorities and comprehend the challenges in each country. Moreover, the technical expertise of the UNODC ROSA staff was also used to elaborate the programme structure to fit the needs of national counterparts.

Uptake of recommendations and lessons learned

The Regional Programme 2018-2023 has been responding to drugs- and crime-related challenges through five sub-programmes:
1) Countering transnational organized crime
2) Comprehensive response to the drug problem
3) Anti-corruption
4) Terrorism prevention
5) Crime prevention and criminal justice

The new Programme has been developed in consultation with Member States and institutional partners, taking into account, *inter alia*, recommendations from national consultations, the Programme Steering Committee[34],expert group meetings[35], and audits. For example, one of the prior evaluations which informed the design of key outputs and approaches of this RP is related to the project Promoting the use of non-custodial measures in Sri Lanka (SLKAB8), carried out in 2021. One of the recommendations from this project evaluation noted the "need for enhanced awareness among counterparts related to non-custodial options". This recommendation has been duly included under the relevant Outcome/Outputs of the sub-programme on crime prevention and criminal justice of the new RP.

In another evaluation, on the project Support to Maldives on counter-terrorism (GLOR35, GLOW63, MDVAB9), carried out in 2021, a key lesson was found in the field of integrated programming. The concept invites – in theory –synergies between different levels. The new Regional Programme adopts this approach of maintaining close synergies between global, regional and national programmes.

The evaluation of the project Support to Sri Lanka on Counter terrorism (GLOR35 and GLOW63), carried out in 2022, recommended the need to advance gender equality and strengthen gender mainstreaming; continue with the application of human rights standards and principles; and continue and widen the application of the principle of leaving no one behind. All these principles have been duly reflected under relevant sub programmes of this Regional Programme.

In addition, discussions with counterparts focused on how the new Programme should be designed, what its main results should be, as well as details related to its implementation and coordination. The development of this Programme is based on previous work and the ongoing cycle of identifying and lessons learned during implementation.

National consultations conducted by ROSA (through meetings, trainings, etc.) over the years resulted in recommendations from national counterparts and other key stakeholders being incorporated into the programme.

The lessons that guided the development of this Programme can be summarized as:

1 Greater coherence between UNODC programme and UNSDCFs.

2 Closer alignment with the UNODC Strategy 2021-2025.

3 Establish a pool of subject matter experts at ROSA level.

4 Strengthen coordination with global programmes.

5 Ensure communication and visibility costs in project/programme design.

6 Greater stakeholder engagement and consultations.

7 Develop multi-partner partnership frameworks.

8 Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Some glimpses of UNODC's initiatives in South Asia over the years:

Counter Narcotics:

Drug Policy & laws; LE Training-Cryptocurrencies and Darknet investigations, OSINT; ELEARNING; strengthening cross-border responses to drugs; synthetic drugs and forensics, Research; Delivery of drug kits/devices & training; Regional cooperation, information sharing; Strengthening Training Capacities

Maritime Crime:

Improving the capabilities of Member States' criminal justice systems to prevent, interdict, investigate and prosecute maritime crime, through a sound rule of law framework and effective international cooperation. Delivery of assistance through the Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP)

Drugs and Health:

Addressing COVID management and health in prisons; cross- regional learnings related to prisons; Family Skills programme; drug prevention strategy; needs assessments; training in prison settings; mental health; Amphetamine- Type-Stimulant (ATS) training; Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT) training; HIV prevention treatment for drug users, both in prisons as well as in community. COVID-19 Response: Provision of health and sanitary supplies, PPE, awareness raising material (government institutions, prisons and community).

Crimes That Affect The Environment:

Trainings: open-source investigations of online wildlife crime; crime scene management; cross-border investigations; specialized equipment; regional cooperation and collaboration.

Trafficking In Persons and Smuggling Of Migrants:

Legislative reviews; Anti-TIP Platform for raising awareness on TIP among youth and educational institutions; National TIP Study in Bangladesh; capacity building of LE & criminal justice practitioners-sensitizing criminal justice practitioners including investigators, prosecutors and judicial officers to better investigate and prosecute human trafficking (Mock Trials); SOPs; research/assessments; cyber-TIP training; support for anti-SOM legislation; implementation of GLO.ACT project; STARSOM activities.

Anti Corruption:

UNCAC Review Implementation; GRACE Initiative; Globe initiative; safeguarding sports against corruption; workshops on international cooperation & financial investigations with links to money laundering; enhancing integrity in the public sector; support for participation in IRG meetings.

Youth And Education:

Lockdown Learners; building a culture of lawfulness among young people; integrity (GRACE); engaging schools and educators in crime prevention; support to MUNs; supporting inputs for Kyoto declaration; marginalised and underprivileged children reached through education on SDGs, rule of law and human rights issues.

Prevention Of Terrorism and Violent Extremism:

Training on digital evidence,SAN-PVE network to prevent VE in South Asia; Community policing to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism; workshops on investigation of FTF cases, mock criminal investigation, CVE, countering financing of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, gender mainstreaming in CJ responses; Training on PVE, dynamic security, NMR, prisoner classification, Rehabilitation and Risk assessments.

Passenger And Cargo Border Programme:

Establishment of Port Control Units and Aircargo Control Units; inter-regional trainings (also focused on gender); seizure of illicit drugs and goods.

Crime Prevention And Criminal Justice:

Access to Justice: Promoting fundamental rights and access to justice; Legal Aid; Prisons: Reducing overcrowding; promoting non-custodial measures; NMR training including eLEARNING; PVE; management of high-risk prisons; infrastructure support; COVID management; mental health, needs assessments; Addressing Gender based violence: Strengthen CJ responses; study on criminal justice responses to rape; National Action Plan for the implementation of UN SCR 1325 and 1820 (Nepal); handbook for Judiciary (CJ) responses; community outreach & mass awareness; Preventing Violence against Children: technical support on juvenile justice; Supporting the responsible use of technology in the criminal justice system; Community policing

Strategic Context

The Regional Programme is a strategic framework that informs and guides UNODC's technical cooperation and delivery of assistance, in close consultation with government counterparts of South Asia. It aims to set a strategic vision for UNODC cooperation in the region. The Programme highlights a set of priorities and operational responses for the period of 2024-2028, while remaining a living document and offering sufficient flexibility to adapt to evolving threats and Member States' specific needs and constraints. The Programme articulates ongoing and future global, regional and national programming efforts. In addition to ensuring coordination and, whenever possible, synergies between these efforts, it promotes integrated and transnational responses.

Mirroring the thematic structure of the UNODC Strategy (2021-2025), the Regional Programme is designed to translate the UNODC Strategy into concrete results, responding to specific needs and priorities of South Asia. Each of its outcomes is derived from, and built around, commitments made within the five key thematic areas, and the RP's results will feed directly into the Strategy's overall aim of bringing meaningful change to people's lives and building inclusive, equitable and just societies, resilient to threats from drugs, crime and terrorism.

In line with the Strategy, this Programme has embedded three cross-cutting commitments: human rights; gender equality and empowerment of women; and participation and the empowerment of children and youth. Research will be inbuilt into each Sub-programme.

ROSA aims at developing a forward-looking Regional Programme for the region (2024-2028) on the following building-blocks:

a. Building and capitalizing on the achievements and the partnerships, with Governments and civil society, established under the Regional Programme (2018-23).

b. Developing regional and country specific cooperation in the area of preventing and countering TOC, both at land and at sea, including trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, corruption and terrorism, and building on existing partnerships and achievements in regional drug law enforcement, information sharing, addressing trafficking in persons and priorities agreed with Governments and relevant non-state actors.

c. Diversifying the Programme in the area of criminal justice reform and anti-corruption, illicit financial flows, cybercrime and counter terrorism, and countering/ preventing violent extremism, in line with merging evidence and opportunities.

d. Developing strong cross-cutting initiatives involving youth and the education agenda, and increase engagement and build partnerships with various stakeholders in the field of youth and education.

e. Through strengthened research capacity in the field and technical oversight at headquarters, improving the quality and relevance of data and analysis, with a view to increase knowledge on drugs and crime areas, support evidence-informed programme development and boost impact.

f. Promoting innovation as a cross-cutting element of the new Regional Programme's work, including through innovative activities that leverage advancements in information technologies and artificial intelligence.

g. Underscoring commitment to human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as the protection of children and harnessing the transformative power of youth. Aiming at a people-centred approach to achieving sustainable improvements in the lives of the most vulnerable, including people with disabilities. Increase advocacy to mobilize the general public to act for the rule of law and understand UNODC's role in this regard.

Link to the UNSDCFs and to the Peace and Security Pillar

UNODC will look at joint programming and joint resource mobilization within the UN system. UNODC will also continue to align its Regional Programme with the on-going activities of the UN in the region, including through existing UNSDCFs, which are jointly developed by Member States and the United Nations Country Teams. UNODC contributes to joint thematic working groups under the UNSDCFs, including the PSEA (prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse) pillars in each country. UNODC will explore and forge partnerships with UN sister agencies in delivering its sub-programmes, as possible and relevant, especially in the areas of trafficking in persons, health (in the context of drug use and HIV), social protection, governance, safety of women, peace and security, gender-based violence, and the youth agenda.[36]

The Programme contributes to the Peace and Security Pillar of the United Nations system and the broader UN Reform initiated by UN Secretary- General in 2017. UNODC will support the Pillar by reducing the destabilizing impact of organized crime and terrorist groups, and by strengthening the rule of law and governance to ensure that human rights are respected. UNODC will engage with partners across and outside the UN system, and with governments in the region, thus promoting cooperation at all levels.

Human Rights

Respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights are the guiding considerations for the design and implementation of this Programme. This includes upholding the principles of equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion. To effectively inform strategic decision making and measure progress, qualitative and quantitative data gathered throughout implementation will be disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, class, age, disability, religion and nationality (and other parameters as appropriate), also allowing for analysis on intersectionality. Regardless of the thematic areas being targeted, all UNODC capacity-building activities will include a session on human rights.

The integration and mainstreaming of Human Rights in UNODC's programming, research and normative work is one of the main cross-cutting commitments embedded in the UNODC Strategy (2021-2025). In particular, UNODC projects have human rights checklist to ensure that human rights-related aspects are properly highlighted and given due attention in each stage of the programming cycle. In addition, UNODC adheres to Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) which is a UN-wide policy which applies to any support to non-UN security forces, calling for the respect and promotion of international human rights law in all programming concerning law enforcement. Lastly, UNODC adheres to the UN Secretary General's call to action on human rights in all 7 thematic areas: sustainable development, time of crisis, gender equality, civic space, future generations, collective action and new frontiers.

Gender equality and empowerment of women

This Programme has been developed in line with the UNODC Strategy for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (2022-2026), which provides a framework for coherence and for safeguarding UNODC's support of the achievement by Member States of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Through engagement with Member States under this Programme, UNODC will continuously seek entry points and encourage policymakers to mainstream gender considerations within their national and regional institutions, policies and practices. All capacity building and technical assistance activities under this Programme will aim for at least a 30% engagement of the underrepresented sex. People of South Asia include women, men, girls, boys and underrepresented sections of society. UNODC will also advocate for substantive equality and increased representation of these minority groups within Member States' institutions, including criminal justice and law enforcement agencies.

Youth vulnerabilities

South Asia is a region where a large proportion of the population is young. According to the UNFPA, the youth population in South Asia comprises 29% of the total, which is the highest in the world. This youth population is particularly vulnerable to various threats, including drug use, cybercrime, extremism and radicalization, and human trafficking. According to UNODC's estimates, the prevalence of drug use in South Asia has increased over the years, particularly among young people. Around 6.5% of children aged 15-16 years in South Asia had used cannabis at least once in their lifetime. With the increasing use of technology and the internet, cybercrime has become a major concern in the region. According to a report by the Indian National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), cybercrime in India has increased by 63.5% over the last few years, and a significant number of victims are young people, who are particularly affected by online harassment, cyberbullying, payment frauds and identity theft. Due to factors such as poverty, unemployment and lack of education, the potential for radicalization and violent extremism among young people remains a serious threat. In 2018, it was estimated that around 66% of human trafficking victims in South Asia were below the age of 25. Addressing these vulnerabilities requires a multi-pronged approach that involves addressing their root causes, strengthening law enforcement efforts, and sensitizing and empowering young people on the risks and dangers associated with these threats.

An overall increase in the severity of crimes involving youth is visible in most countries in the region and coincides with an increase in youth gang violence. An overall rise in youth engagement in crimes, both as victims (mainly women and girls) and perpetrators (men and boys), is evident. Youth crime has always been an issue in urban settings. It seems that violence is also concentrated among youth in areas/ camps with refugees/ IDP populations, for example in Bangladesh.

However, in some countries it seems that community violence is also becoming a concern in rural areas. Root causes identified are high illiteracy rates, youth unemployment, low quality education, lack of opportunities, family challenges, poor parenting, lack of social support opportunities, absence of structured activities and support frameworks for youth, inequalities (including structural inequalities), and weak rule of law. These conditions converge with problematic social norms and stereotypes.
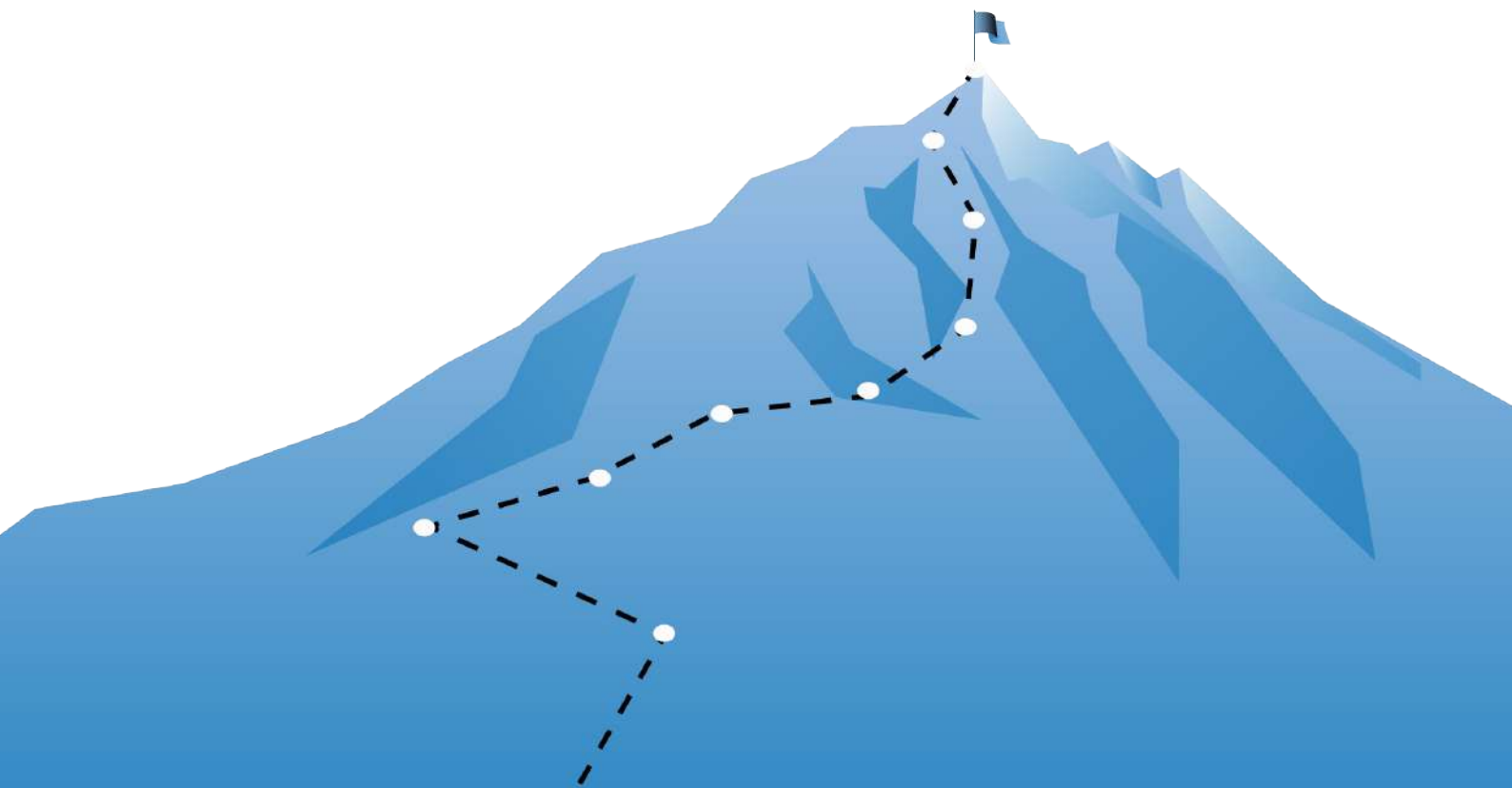
Overall Goal And Programme Objectives

[The Regional Programme will aim to address both present and emerging needs within the region. A detailed logical framework[37] is presented later in the document. It will be based on the objective and goal of the Programme as well as detailing outcome, output and indicative activities under each sub-programme].

The Programme will be clustered around five main thematic areas, including cross-cutting elements. Strong cross-fertilization across the components of the Programme is expected, which may enable certain products and tools developed by one of its components to be contextualized and utilized by another component.

Objective: To contribute towards safe and resilient societies in South Asia free from threats of organised crime, drugs, corruption and terrorism, in line with the 2030 Goals for Sustainable Development.

The overarching goal of the Programme is to meet specific national and regional needs. This will be articulated through an inclusive, participatory process, while at the same time ensuring that outcomes at the national level are integrated within a harmonized regional and inter-regional approach, in line with the Strategy and, more broadly, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Participating countries will thus be supported in promoting the rule of law, reducing organised crime and related threats, countering corruption, increasing safety, expanding coverage of treatment and prevention of drug use and strengthening the protection of vulnerable groups and communities.

In line with the UNODC Strategy (2021-2025), the RP aims to realise the below 5 outcomes/sub-programmes:

Sub-Programme 1 — **Addressing And Countering The World Drug Problem**

Sub-Programme 2 — **Preventing And Countering Organized Crime**

Sub-Programme 3 — **Preventing And Countering Corruption And Economic Crime**

Sub-Programme 4 — **Preventing And Countering Terrorism**

Sub-Programme 5 — **Crime Prevention And Criminal Justice**

Sub-programme 1: Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem

SP 1 aims to achieve key targets under SDGs:

South Asian governments and non-government actors respond to the issue of drug production, trafficking and use and their social and health consequences, based on evidence and in-line with international standards and norms.
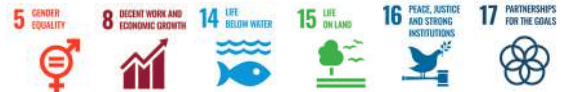
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING · 5 GENDER EQUALITY · 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS · 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Sub-programme 2: Preventing and Countering Organized Crime

SP 2 aims to achieve key targets under SDGs:

South Asian governments develop and apply effective legal and policy frameworks, and respond effectively to TOC, utilizing detailed analyses of crime trends.

5 GENDER EQUALITY · 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH · 14 LIFE BELOW WATER · 15 LIFE ON LAND · 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS · 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Sub-programme 3: Preventing and Countering Corruption and Economic Crime

SP 3 aims to achieve key targets under SDGs:

In-line with UNCAC and UNTOC, South Asian governments implement a whole-of-society approach to counter corruption and economic crime.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION · 5 GENDER EQUALITY · 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS · 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Sub-programme 4: Preventing and Countering Terrorism

SP 4 aims to achieve key targets under SDGs:

Member States more effectively prevent terrorist attacks and the spread of violent extremism, using human rights-compliant, gender inclusive and accountable approaches.

5 GENDER EQUALITY · 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS · 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Sub-programme 5: Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

SP 5 aims to achieve key targets under SDGs:

Member States address and prevent crimes in a fair and accountable manner.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION · 5 GENDER EQUALITY · 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS · 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

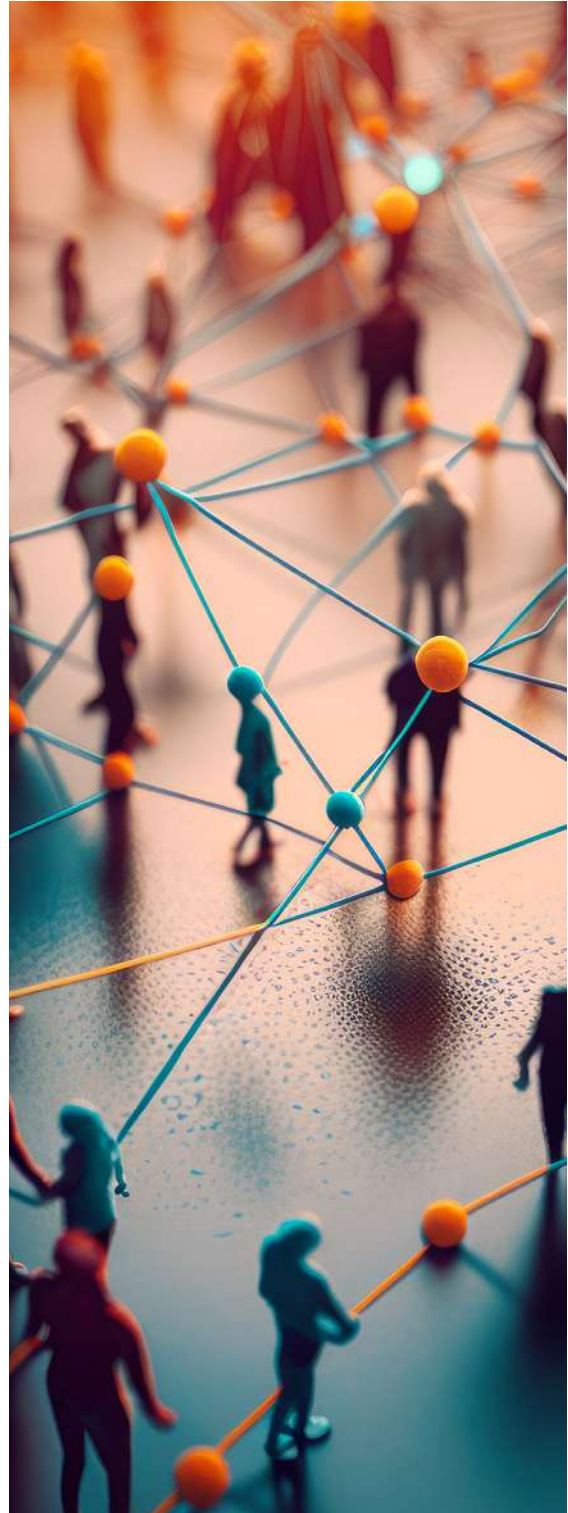Research and Trend Analysis is a foundational and guiding element of the Regional Programme. It will be cross-cutting across all thematic areas/subprogrammes. Under the Regional Programme, efforts will be made to enhance capacities to collect and report on data regarding drugs and crime and to monitor progress against relevant SDGs and targets, in particular SDG Goals 3, 5, 15 and 16, as they relate to drug use, trafficking, illicit financial flows, justice, corruption, crime and crime-related violence.

Consultation with counterparts and key partnerships

The stakeholders identified below will be involved in the implementation of the Programme:

- Key government counterparts.

- Civil society interlocutors, think-tanks, academic institutions, and the private sector.

- Regional bodies and initiatives, such as BIMSTEC, the IFC-IOR and the Secretariat of SAARC.

- UN Country Teams, Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) and other UN entities, through a range of coordination mechanisms established in the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), including in the context of the development of country-level UNSDCFs.

UNODC's support to the beneficiaries (i.e., knowledge products, technical assistance, etc.) is always informed by and aligned with the relevant normative international standards (i.e. conventions, legal instruments and framework, etc.). The Programme underscores UNODC's commitment to human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as the protection of children and the importance of harnessing the transformative power of youth. It lays out a people-centred approach to achieving sustainable improvements in the lives of the most vulnerable, including people with disabilities, thus leaving no one behind.

UNODC REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR SOUTH ASIA 2024-2028: Theory Of Change

Input	Thematic Expertise	Delivery	Outcomes

Programme Management

Needs assessment

Resource mobilization

M&E

Drugs → **RESEARCH ASSESSMENT TREND ANALYSIS**

Organized Crime → **POLICY ADVISORY**

Anti-corruption → **CAPACITY BUILDING**

Terrorism Prevention → **PARTNERSHIPS**

Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice → **REGIONAL/ INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Outcomes:
- Effective and evidence-based responses to the production, trafficking and non-medical use of drugs
- Effective prevention of, and response to, transnational organized crime and illicit trafficking
- Prevention and countering of corruption and economic crime
- Enhanced prevention and countering of terrorism, including terrorism financing and the spread of violent extremism
- Fair, effective, and accountable criminal justice systems accessible to all
- Timely approach to crime and security threats in emergency, fragility and transition
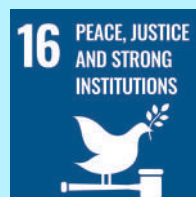
Key assumptions (not exhaustive)

1. Member States and relevant regional bodies (e.g. BIMSTEC, SAARC) are willing to work with UNODC and to cooperate with each other on the issues falling under UNODC mandates
2. Governments engage on commitments to policy/operational reforms with UNODC
3. Governments support full implementation of thematic areas
4. Engaged stakeholders have sufficient financial and human capacity to engage meaningfully
5. Public and private stakeholders understand the benefits to engage on workstreams developed by UNODC and its partners

External factors

1. Political and financial commitments
2. Drastic changes in society, politics and economy in partner countries
3. Governments commitment to reduce Transnational Organized Crime, corruption and terrorism
4. Rotation among public entities engaged, i.e. national and local officials, policy-makers and decision-makers
5. Maintained interest and engagement of public and private stakeholders to collaborate with development interventions
6. Natural and man-made disasters

Objective

The rule of law and health in South Asia are secured and reinforced, and vulnerable groups and communities in the region are protected from drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Empowerment of youth and protection of children

Gender equality and women's empowerment

Protection and promotion of human rights

Programme Management And Implementation

Coordination Arrangements

The overall responsibility for overseeing the Regional Programme will rest with the Regional Representative, who will be supported by a regional core management team responsible for overseeing implementation and monitoring of the Programme. The core management team consists of a pool of Regional Office staff responsible for various aspects of operations, including finance, human resources, resource mobilization, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, who work under the guidance of the Deputy Regional Representative. All staff on the programme also bear responsibility for ensuring that the commitments outlined in the UNODC gender strategy are integrated throughout the work of the office.

Managers primarily responsible for the programme implementation and for managing relationships in specific countries of the region are also attached to the management core team, advising the Regional Representative on relevant matters. The core management team will be supported by UNODC HQ management, including the Regional Section for South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific in the Division for Operations and relevant thematic branches and sections, including through the periodic convening of Inter Divisional Task Team/ (IDTT) meetings.

Implementation of Regional Programme activities will be delegated to regional coordinators, supported by programming teams consisting of programme officers and assistants, who will ensure technical delivery. The regional coordinators will ensure collaboration with relevant sections and branches of UNODC headquarters, ensuring that this Programme brings together all the technical expertise and knowledge available within UNODC. Particular emphasis will be put on cross-fertilization and definition of joint objectives between programming teams, to avoid the creation of siloes along internal workstreams.

Importantly, both the regional coordinators and members of programming teams can be staff from either field-based or HQ-based programmes. The presence of staff associated with UNODC Global Programmes and guided by global expert managers in Vienna, is a strong advantage in a region where Member States often possess significant capacities, and UNODC's specialized expertise is a key added value. Building on past practice, the Regional Programme will foresee an emphasis on ensuring their full integration in regional programmatic and administrative workflows, as well as regular coordination and joint initiatives and projects. This should allow for smooth delivery around needs and priorities identified in the region; coherent reporting across the full breadth of UNODC's work; and maintaining a joint focus on results and impact.

These coordination arrangements are designed to ensure ownership and shared accountability for achieving the RP's outcomes and objective, and efficient and timely delivery of activities, as well as flexible responses to emerging needs and opportunities.

Governance Arrangements

Programme Governance: The Programme's governance mechanism was designed to ensure full ownership by the national governments of South Asia. It introduces a number of formal levels of policy dialogue and review that aim to shape UNODC's interventions across all South Asian States and provide sufficient accountability at the output level of implementation. The governance structure of the programme does not duplicate existing project governance arrangements; instead, it seeks to build on them using the principle of subsidiarity. The Regional Programme for South Asia has established a senior-level **Regional Programme Steering Committee (RPSC)** as its highest level of programme governance for the RP itself. The RPSC consists of Government representatives of all six Member States and will provide policy guidance and strategic advice with respect to the focus of UNODC's support, and review implementation and results-based progress reports provided prior to its annual meetings. The RPSC will be briefed on programme progress by UNODC and will review and endorse strategic and operational priorities at the regional level. Only the RPSC will endorse amendments to the programme via UNODC ROSA, which acts as the Secretariat. UNODC ROSA will support the convening of the annual meetings, during which it will present the achievements of the previous year as well as the plans for the following year.

ROSA is the central coordination hub for all UNODC programmes and interventions within the South Asia region and all assistance will be coordinated and resourced through ROSA. Detailed planning and coordination and the physical delivery of assistance will be conducted via the network of Programme Offices in the region. Interactions among Programme Offices will be conducted formally: they will not have the ability to alter or amend the planned delivery, as this is the role of the RP governance structure.

National Consultation: National Governments, assisted by the UNODC Programme Offices, will review UNODC technical assistance in their country on an annual basis. These meetings will build on the work that is already conducted and will provide the first layer in the formal RP governance structure.

Resource Mobilization Plan

In terms of fundraising, ROSA expects to mobilise resources for the new Programme from a variety of sources. Against this background, ROSA has already launched active efforts and engaged in a multi-pronged approach to secure sufficient funding for the Programme as follows:

- ROSA will strengthen the management of resource mobilization. Through the governance structure, clearly articulated priorities will be set. In line with corporate and regional standards, ROSA will develop funding proposals to present to partners and donors with clear outcome/output descriptions, strategies, and indicative budgets. Programme coordinators will develop detailed work-plans, identify funding targets, identify current and potential donors, define resource mobilisation approaches and set timelines to achieve targets.

- ROSA will make efforts to seek bilateral donors, both traditional supporters and new/emerging ones, including IFIs, private sector[38], and host governments. ROSA will further pursue more effective fund-raising actions and effective strategic positioning, based on the mapping of existing and evolving donors. ROSA will examine which funding pools would be available for programmatic activities in the areas of addressing the drug problem, TOC, preventing and countering economic crime and corruption, preventing and countering terrorism, crime prevention and criminal justice. ROSA will also look at joint programming and joint resource mobilization within the UN system. ROSA will expand its resource mobilization to include the private sector, foundations and also national donors that contribute to UNODC programmes in their own countries.

- In addition to being part of a UN joint programme, ROSA will also expand its engagement with UN multi-partner trust funds (MPTFs) to ensure that the Regional Programme can benefit from these joint funding mechanisms. Since the use of MPTFs will become important for the UN's Programme delivery at the country level, UNODC will expend significant efforts in engaging with these mechanisms, both at HQ and through the UN Resident Coordinators in each country[39].

- ROSA will align the Programme for South Asia with other UN programmes. It will assess and analyse all international aid assistance available within South Asia region. It will examine other country, regional and international organizations, look for common priorities and goals and assess where there are similarities, overlaps and potential economies of scale.

Resource mobilization is and will continue to be undertaken in close co-operation with partners and other relevant regional institutions, in order to ensure synergy and to avoid overlaps. The following principles will apply:

- In case of country-specific actions, UNODC will work closely with national governments. As much as possible, and with the objective of ensuring a greater ownership, South Asian Governments will be encouraged to co-finance some of the activities or contribute in kind to the implementation of activities developed under this programme.

- The Regional Programme for South Asia will operate under the premise of full cost recovery. All costs related to the implementation of this programme (e.g., staffing, equipment, evaluation and activity related expenditures) will be included in the sub-programme budgets.

- Funding partners will be encouraged to pledge resources for the implementation of the overall programme, or to soft-earmark resources for one of the sub-programmes, in keeping with internationally agreed principles of aid effectiveness.

- ROSA will seek multi-year commitments and support for the RP (at the outcome level) rather than at the individual activity level.

Sustainability strategy

The sustainability of the Regional Programme's work will be based on intersecting and mutually complementary efforts to support institutions and individuals:

- Through support for harmonization of Member States' legislation, which will facilitate ongoing operational coordination, ROSA will create a framework for current and future work.

- Through support for capacity-building and good practice exchange events, ROSA will support both the individual professional development of participants as well as the establishment and consolidation of personal professional contacts and networks that will enable future formal and ad hoc coordination.

- Through support for each Member States' participation in sub-regional, regional and global fora, the programme will support national counterparts in their efforts to engage in and contribute to high-level engagement in political and technical bodies.

- Through the introduction and integration of innovative tools and technologies, the programme will assist the participating countries in strengthening their institutional systems, which contributes to sustainability.

- Through providing support for best practice exchanges in terms of eLearning, computer-based training and tools, the Regional Programme aims to keep professional development curricula updated and to contribute to the availability of long-term professional development and educational opportunities for all.

Risk Management

The below risk management matrix summarizes key risks that could impact the Regional Programme, its components, and the inherent measures in place or in need of development, to mitigate potential risks that could impact the Programme's implementation.

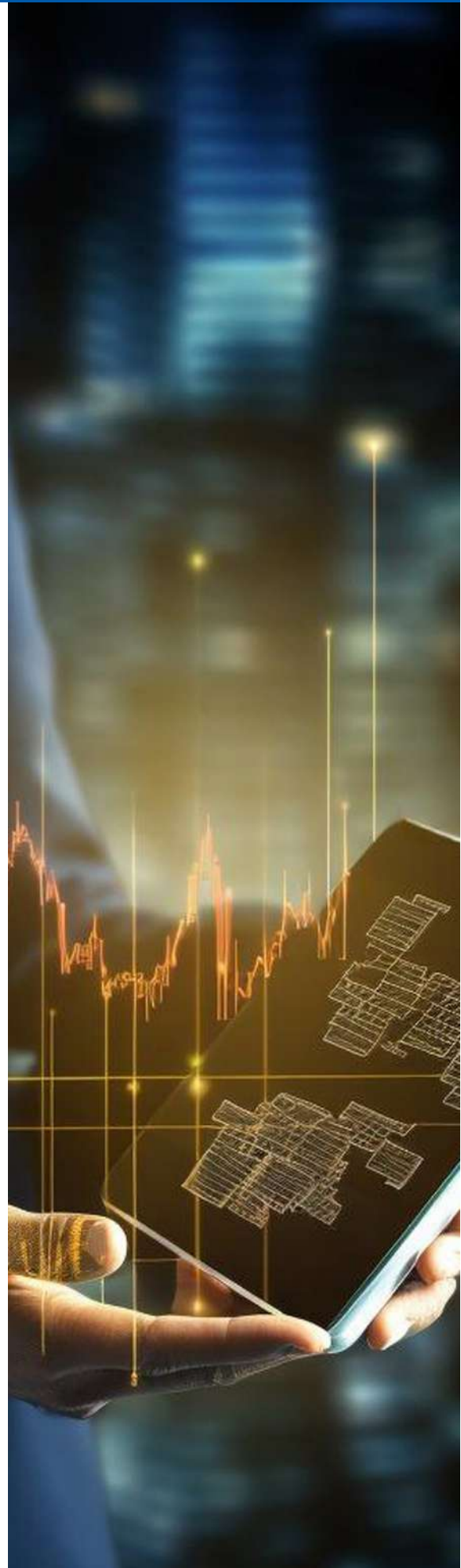| Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Adequate financing is not forthcoming from funding partners.	Medium	High	• Donor mapping to help plan fund-raising activities more effectively • Ongoing and active engagement with funding partners • Deliver relevant and effective services, to convince donors of UNODC's value as a strategic partner
Member States not amenable to UN involvement and support and not motivated to actively participate in UNODC activities/programmes; high rotation of government officials leading to delays in implementation.	Low	Medium	• Communicate effectively UNODC's role in assisting Member States and regional bodies • Align UNODC's efforts to Member States • Ensure involvement of Member States and regional bodies in devising UNODC's strategies • Regular briefing to government counterparts about UNODC's work
Pandemics or other unforeseen emergencies, like extreme climate conditions, will lead to delays and not allow to undertake in-person activities like trainings, workshops, consultations etc.	Medium	Medium	• Plan activities that can easily be converted into virtual or hybrid formats • Priorities placement of expertise as close as possible to the point of delivery to ensure on-ground presence, even during possible travel restrictions • Promote active contingency planning by staff and programme teams
Human Rights violation by the Members States resulting in UN- wide discontinuation on engagements with the Governments.	Low	High	• Ensure close coordination and alignment with broader UN positions, as led by UN RCs • Monitor human rights risks continuously and take them into consideration when planning activities
Security risk level of countries, due to outbreak of political instability, hampers the implementation of activities.	Low	Medium	• Monitor security situation closely • Follow UNDSS' advice and adjust programming • Actively engage in UNCTs and SMTs

■ Low   ■ Medium   ■ High

Monitoring Plan

Effective Results-Based Management (RBM) is a critical element of programme governance and management. It supports informed and timely decision-making by programme managers and other stakeholders through on-going learning, and accountability for achieving results. The RBM approach to programming will be further strengthened, so that ROSA can further improve adaptive management and enhance performance, ensuring that all elements of the programme clearly articulate, measure and report on how their results contribute to the achievement of the programme's objectives.[40]

ROSA's RBM will be guided by the following considerations:

1 **Ownership and alignment:** UNODC will support the efforts of the region to collect and analyse information, as well as assist in building its capacity to conduct its own research and monitoring, thereby supporting RBM efforts while also contributing to outcome achievements.

2 **Results-focus and attribution:** The Regional Programme strategy is focused on contributing to the achievement of mutually agreed-upon outcomes. Programme-level RBM will therefore focus on analysing achievements at the results level (namely outcomes and outputs).

3 **Practicality and cost-effectiveness:** If RBM is to be effectively carried out and the results used, it must be adequately simple and practical to implement. RBM activities must also be sufficiently resourced, including with respect to the development of RBM competencies among both UNODC staff and implementing partners.

4 **Quality of UNODC services:** UNODC is accountable for providing relevant and high-quality services. This means that the quality of UNODC-supported activities and outputs must be monitored in order to determine: (a) their relevance to "users/clients"; (b) the efficiency of delivery; and (c) the contribution made to outcomes.

The Regional Programme for South Asia will be subject to UNODC's internal reviews on a quarterly basis, which are being conducted as part of UNODC Vienna's monitoring and oversight functions. Within this internal monitoring mechanism, programme volume and content, financial delivery and submission number/standards of new programme components are measured and reported to UNODC senior management. The main formal documented reporting mechanisms will be as follows:

a. **The Programme's logical framework.** ROSA will ensure that the logical framework will be monitored and scrutinised during the course of its implementation. The assessment of the logical framework will be conducted in conjunction with the monitoring of the risk management matrix.

b. **The RP annual workplan.** The meetings of the RP Steering Committee will be held annually. These meetings will review the results achieved in the course of the year and approve the workplan for the following year, which will represent the main document guiding the work of UNODC in the region. Reporting on the progress made will be done on the basis of the annual workplan, as approved by the RPSC.

c. **Annual Programme Progress Reports.** A summary of the most important programmatic achievements, which includes the overview of progress made by the programme, its implementation status, overview of achievements and challenges, lessons learned, good practices, risks and challenges, suggested adaptations, as well as partnerships and resource mobilization. This report, which is for internal consumption. will be presented to partners: it contains information on the number and kind of all ongoing programme interventions, a financial summary overview on the status of programme funding, and the financial delivery against set targets, in addition to providing information on any problems encountered by the programme and on the remedial actions taken. Primary responsibility for fulfilling programme reporting requirements lies with the Regional Representative and the ROSA team.

d. **Donor reports.** In accordance with donors' requirements, specific grant-based reports on progress achieved and challenges faced are provided to them.

e. **Human interest stories.** This type of material will be used to demonstrate the UNODC's impact through specific stories of individuals, and how UNODC's support helped to bring about change.

f. **Impact-oriented success stories.** UNODC will continue to post success stories about its interventions in the subregion and inform stakeholders about the changes that are supported by UNODC.

g. **Documenting the cross-border cooperation achievements.** UNODC ROSA will continue to document its achievement in cross-border cooperation to ensure that the best practices from the sub-region are promoted and replicated.

h. **Documenting contribution to SDG results.** UNODC ROSA will document its work on what support is being provided to countries in achieving SDGs. This will help to better understand how UNODC's contribution is bringing change and identify the areas that needs further interventions.

i. **UN-INFO and SDG Portal.** UNODC will also report on progress of programme implementation through UN-INFO and SDG Portal. This will also help to document how UNODC is contributing to UNSDCFs at country level.

Reports will be in-line with existing UNODC standards, practices and formats.

Evaluation

UNODC remains committed to quality independent evaluations, to ensure a strong basis for future engagement and to create a learning organization, in line with the UNODC Strategy. The evaluation of this Regional Programme will be undertaken in line with the UNODC Evaluation Policy, with the aim of the evaluation itself being utilization-focused, timely and tailored to meet the needs of its intended users.

The tentative evaluation plan of this programme is indicated below. The Independent Evaluation Section (IES) will be consulted regarding the final evaluation options and timing before the start of any evaluation (8-10 months before the evaluation needs to be completed). Tentative evaluation plan:

Types of evaluation: an in-depth final independent evaluation is envisaged in 2027 (to be initiated by the third quarter/Q3), before the completion of the RP in 2028. If possible and subject to the availability of funds, a mid-term independent evaluation will be initiated, subject to the decision of the Regional Programme Steering Committee (timing to be confirmed).

Amount to be reserved for evaluation as calculated with the evaluation budget matrix: considering that a final independent evaluation would cover all five sub-programmes, the total cost (currently estimated at the level of USD 200,000) would be shared by all the RP sub-programmes. An additional amount of USD 200,000 would also be allocated for the tentative mid-term evaluation and will also be cost-shared by all sub-programmes.

Brief information on how the evaluation results will be used: the evaluation will seek to derive recommendations, lessons learned and best practices to inform future programming, policy-making, and organizational learning. The results of the final evaluation will be used to enhance the UNODC's programming in the region and, specifically, will inform the next cycle of the Regional Programme, in order to improve planning, assist decision-making, indicate the areas for improvement and actions that are needed, and ensure that UNODC's programming has an impact in the region. The final evaluation will be timed to ensure that its findings and recommendations are fed into all reporting and planning cycles, and to allow for sufficient time to take corrective action for all the RP's objectives to be achieved before the completion of the Regional Programme itself.

The tentative mid-term evaluation will aim at assessing the progress made within the programme implementation to inform decisions toward altering the RP activities, if necessary, to meet emerging needs of the Member States. The results of the mid-term evaluation would be used to ensure that the RP is moving in the right direction and to inform any changes required before the end of the Regional Programme itself. ROSA's senior management and IES will liaise closely on the evaluation plan, and in particular on the exact timing and modality of the final in-depth evaluation and the focused mid-term evaluation.

Prior evaluation/s which informed the design of the RP include: Support to Sri Lanka on Counter Terrorism (GLOR35 and GLOW63), carried out in 2022; Promoting the Use of Non-Custodial Measures in Sri Lanka (SLKAB8), carried out in 2021; Support to Maldives on Counter-Terrorism (GLOR35, GLOW63, MDVAB9), carried out in 2021; Enhance Government and Civil Society Responses to Counter Trafficking in Persons in Bhutan (BHU/Z13), carried out in 2019.

Information and Knowledge Management (dissemination of lessons learned)

Knowledge and information management is key in ensuring that strategic and operational decision-making is evidence-based and in enabling a streamlined approach to the issues that are being targeted. Lessons learned, information, and knowledge generated through the implementation of this Regional Programme will be stored and made available in forms appropriate for different purposes (e.g. informing strategic directions, planning future activities, etc).

The Regional Programme intends to capture/disseminate key information and knowledge through, *inter alia*, the following:

- Programme related documents (reports, workplans, meeting minutes and other records).

- Monitoring and evaluation records.

- Research study and reports, guidance notes, and thematic briefs.

- Meetings of the RPSC.

- A more formal dissemination of lessons learned will be conducted through planned independent evaluations and the presentation of their evaluations.

Partners

In the coming years, ROSA will seek to deepen existing partnerships with UN organizations, other international organizations, and various regional organizations working on UNODC's mandate areas. ROSA will continue to develop its partnership framework to expand its role as convener and facilitator in the areas of drugs, crime, corruption, and terrorism. Areas for greater partnership are:

a. Civil society partnerships, with a view to ensuring that the people who are at the centre of the intervention have a voice in the development of national strategies.

b. Youth, who will be invited to share their experiences, ideas and creativity, to enable them to contribute to the design of the substance use, crime and violence prevention and health promotion activities targeting them, and to promote inclusive and just societies as well as a culture of lawfulness and zero tolerance to corruption.

c. Academia, so that programmes and analyses related to crime prevention and criminal justice make use of the best research available on countering and preventing corruption and strengthening the rule of law.

d. Private sector, to enable UNODC to develop partnerships with organizations that use innovative methods and technologies.

e. UN and other international organizations, to encourage joint programming through different multi-partner trust funds.

How does the programme contribute to cross-cutting commitments?

The Regional Programme has been developed while considering the UN-wide commitments and principles, including human rights, gender equality, women's empowerment, disability inclusion, and empowerment of children and youth. Rather than assigning specific outputs/outcomes to these considerations, the Regional Programme mainstreams these considerations throughout its design.

There is an established recognition that the solutions for a more peaceful future are built on the meaningful engagement and empowerment of youth, tomorrow's leaders of the world. In July 2020, the Security Council adopted the action-oriented resolution 2535 on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS), the third YPS resolution following resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018). These resolutions encourage Member States to support and integrate youth into decision-making processes, recognizing their unique role in strengthening the national, local and community-based capacities to prepare for and respond to the numerous challenges that affect young people's life and their future. As agents of change, young people have a central role to play in peacebuilding, integrity, terrorism prevention

and the resolution of conflicts and violence.

While young people have been formally recognized as critical actors within intergovernmental frameworks on peace and security, their engagement is not always meaningful. Under this Regional Programme, wherever possible, efforts will be made to enable young people to be in the lead of the changes they seek, including by shaping the narratives that guide this change.

On disability inclusion, in line with the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (2019) and UNOV/UNODC Action Plan on Disability Inclusion, this Regional Programme strives to mainstream disability inclusion in all its operations, including planning and management, communication, delivery of technical assistance and capacity-building activities as well as monitoring and evaluation. This includes measures at both corporate management and operational levels, including, for instance, the use of inclusive and appropriate language, promoting a rights-based approach to disability, raising awareness and ensuring accessibility to RP activities.

Communication Strategy

In the implementation of this RP, ROSA will seek to build a compelling communications and fundraising narrative with the short-term aim of gaining visibility and strengthening stakeholder networks; and the long-term aim of enhancing the programmatic and brand influence of ROSA in the region. Strategic communication is about linking the right message with the right target audience in the right manner. Efforts will be made to build and communicate gender-focused knowledge of the mandates in South Asia. The Regional Programme for South Asia will adopt a gender-sensitive approach when publishing and will strive for a 50/50 gender balance in all materials, including visual and audio-visual materials. The communication action plan will include, as an integral component, internal and public information dissemination in relation to mandated areas, in order to further shape global, regional and country-level advocacy on gender.
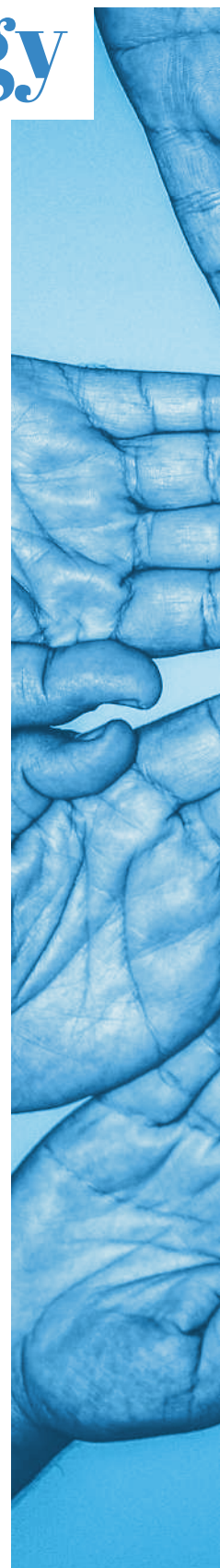
UNODC will undertake a gender analysis of communication approaches to enable use of media channels and outlets that are targeting women and girls. The guiding principle of the UNODC's Gender Strategy is that all UNODC initiatives have a positive effect on gender equality and empowerment of women and support equal representation and participation of women in all thematic areas. For this purpose, customized capacity-building assistance will be offered.

With regard to internal communication, the Regional Office will ensure that key information will flow to the Programme Offices and to HQ, while ensuring an attentive reception of information from other UNODC offices and branches. Moreover, the Regional Office will ensure that communication channels are open and active with other UN agencies, with a view to promoting cooperation and partnership.

ROSA will ensure that all communications efforts will be in line with the UNODC Communications Action Plan 2021-2023 and all its iterations. A strategic communications approach will be applied: ROSA will ensure that information flows seamlessly within the UN system via its network of programme offices; this presence will also be the main conduit with partners and beneficiaries of the programme. One of the main principles of ROSA's work will be to communicate and to advocate for policy change where needed, to ensure that the rights of the most vulnerable are duly addressed. ROSA will also explore new and creative forms of communication with stakeholders, so as to improve and increase the visibility of its initiatives.

ROSA will also develop an advocacy plan, to showcase the impact it has on people's lives, and mobilize as well as allocate adequate resources for communication activities, through the incorporation of a communication component into all existing initiatives and new proposals. ROSA will aim to maximize audience reach and greater impact through communicating with various target audiences, utilising the most appropriate tools. These include: an enhanced social media presence, in line with the Secretary General's "Digital First" approach; a revitalised website; appropriate outreach in the print and audio-visual media; as well as the organization of events and campaigns. This would be achieved, *inter alia*, through strengthening relations with media at all levels, not only to keep issues on the policy agenda, but also in order to rely on them as partners in fostering change. These efforts will also recognise the important role played by UNODC's funding partners. Through its communication work, ROSA will also widely document and share knowledge, and strategically disseminate UNODC's knowledge products. Besides, annual meetings will be carried out with Steering Committee members in each country, aimed at informing counterparts on RP's implementation and formulating workplans for the following year.

Periodic posts on social media: UNODC ROSA will continue to use its social media pages actively to inform stakeholders about programme implementation progress and other achievements. These pages will also be used to engage with stakeholders, youth, and other partners to get their feedback, comments, and inputs on different information.

Monthly newsletters: As described in the section on Communications above, UNODC will continue to produce the monthly newsletter (Odyssey) which will describe the most notable events undertaken by UNODC in the region in that quarter. The newsletter is published on the dedicated webpage and disseminated to the Regional Programme networks and partners.

Updates on the dedicated webpage on achievements and events in the sub-region (Programme specific reporting): UNODC will continue to provide regular updates on the dedicated webpage describing the most notable events undertaken by UNODC in the region. This is the most basic, yet tangible, user-friendly and contemporary form of reporting to

governments in the region, which also allows to keep all partners in the loop of UNODC work, supporting, *inter alia*, the coordination of action with other partners.

Daily reporting and monitoring: Ongoing informal communication and reporting on Regional Programme implementation issues will be undertaken through ad-hoc meetings of stakeholders, briefing notes, phone calls, email communication, etc. Moreover, UNODC ROSA pages on different social platforms will be used for daily reporting on different events and activities to keep stakeholders informed.

In line with the principles of promoting aid effectiveness, contributing donor partners will also be encouraged to align their reporting requirements with UNODC agreed-upon systems. Monitoring and transparency will aim at ensuring targets are met, results are achieved, and, over time, impact is reached.

UNODC ROSA will also make use of other guidelines, manuals, instructions, and tools issued by the UNODC Advocacy Section.

Logical Framework

	Indicators	Risks
Objective: Contribute towards safe and resilient societies in South Asia free from threats of organised crime, drugs, corruption, and terrorism in line with the 2030 Goals for Sustainable Development	**Indicator:** a) Number of newly established platforms/networks, strategies or action plans to enhance national and regional cooperation on drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism prevention issues **Interval:** Annual **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 2 national and regional policies and action plans/ strategies agreed and implemented, through regional platforms such as BIMSTEC **Means of Verification:** Open-source data, data provided by the Member States, UNODC global reports **Indicator:** b) Number of law enforcement, criminal justice and civil society partners are reached through key initiatives **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 10,000 **Means of Verification:** National reports; government records, project reports **Interval:**01/01/2025 - 31/12/2027	**(i) Risk:** Adverse political developments or security events in the region impact UNODC's ability to implement the Programme **Impact:** MEDIUM **Mitigation Plan:** Closely monitor the situation in the region so as to be able to respond to a possibility of such risk accordingly and in advance. Implement the Programme in the context of UN operations in all countries with the support UNRCOs. **(ii) Risk:** Funding is limited, uneven and/or only funds for other donor priorities. Insufficient resources to fund the entire Programme **Impact:** HIGH **Mitigation Plan:** One joint fundraising strategy and constant consultations with donors.

Sub-programme 1: Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem[41]

	Indicators	Risks
Outcome 1: South Asian governments and non-government actors respond to the issue of drug production, trafficking and use of drugs and their social and health consequences, based on evidence and in-line with international standards and norms	**Indicator:** a)Increase in coverage of gender inclusive drug prevention interventions. **Baseline:** limited coverage of drug prevention programmes **Target:** Lower drug use prevalence b) Increase in number of prosecutions of drug trafficking cases **Baseline:** Low prosecutions **Target:** higher prosecutions of drug trafficking cases **Means of Verification:** Data from Member States and WHO, UNODC data **Interval:** Annual	**Risk:** The drug issue deprioritized by the Member States and international community (likelihood: low, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Continued advocacy for the issues concerned
Output 1.1: Law enforcement institutions and frontline officers have the skills and knowledge to counter drug trafficking, address the diversion of precursor chemicals and dismantle drug trafficking groups	**Indicator:** a) Number of Law enforcement officers (M/F/O) with high Level of knowledge and methods in countering drugs and precursor trafficking **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 5000 **Means of Verification:** LEA reports, project reports, pre and post training assessments b) Number of gender sensitive national and regional cooperation initiatives on drug supply reduction **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 3 **Means of Verification:** Data and reports from Member States, UNODC project reports	**Risk:** Overly law enforcement heavy response to the drug issue hinges on human rights abuse, inviting backlash from international communities (likelihood: low, impact: low) **Mitigation Plan:** Promote focus on uncovering larger criminal groups rather than low-level drug offenders. Promote a balanced human rights-based approach to address the drug problem

Indicative Activities:

- Training on responses to drug and precursor trafficking, interdiction, investigations, and adjudication

- Awareness raising and capacity building to limit precursor chemicals trafficking

- Facilitating regional or bilateral cooperation to tackle manufacturing of synthetic drugs, including by addressing the trafficking of precursor chemicals

- Support identification and awareness of non-controlled chemicals

- Support for Regional Interventions to counter trafficking of drugs

- Organising gender sensitive activities to strengthen regional and international LE cooperation in South Asia

- Setting up/strengthening Regional Training Centre on counter narcotics

- Regional information sharing centre for preventing and countering drug trafficking

- Increasing awareness and capacity of front-line law enforcement officers (including customs and border officials) and officials working in the forensic laboratories of synthetic drugs, new psychoactive substances and precursors, their detection, identification, and safe handling

- Strengthen multidisciplinary, inter-institutional networks and early warning mechanisms to identify early on emerging drug-related threats

- Strengthen the scientific and forensic capacities of forensic service providers

- Provide scientific and forensic services to the relevant national institutions including manuals, training materials and guidelines, reference materials, drug testing kits and early warning information on NPS

- Enhance capacities to counter drug trafficking and organised crime due to challenges posed by new technologies

	Indicators	Risks
Output 1.2: People at risk of drug use, who use drugs and with drug use disorders have access to evidence based, gender-responsive, age sensitive prevention, treatment and care, recovery support.	**Indicator:** a) Number of established and/or initiatives strengthened on drug prevention, treatment, care, recovery and social reintegration **Baseline:** TBD **Target:** 5 programmes/services in the region 5 initiatives launched. **Means of Verification:** Data from Member States, UNODC project records **Interval:** Annual b) Number of 'at-risk' persons (M/F/O) accessing quality-drug related services **Means of verification:** UNODC reports **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 800	**Risk:** Member States and the public continue to perceive drug use through criminal justice lens rather than prioritizing health and evidence-based approach (likelihood: medium, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Continue to advocate for and promote evidence-based approach to drug use

Indicative Activities:

- Gender sensitive training on drug use prevention, treatment and care including for people who inject drugs / care and treatment

- Capacity building to support the implementation comprehensive and gender responsive interventions for the prevention of drug use and other risky behaviours, the treatment and care of drug use disorders (both according to the UNODC/WHO International Standards), as well as HIV services—including needle–syringe programmes, opioid substitution therapy, medication used to block the effects of opioids overdose, and interventions for noninjecting drug use, as well as prevention, diagnosis and treatment of TB and viral hepatitis, community-led outreach and psychosocial support

- Build the capacity to integrate community-led drug responses into national responses

- Provide technical support for the reform of the public health and law enforcement practices to ensure they support the drug response

- Training on drug treatment and care as alternatives to conviction and punishment

- Technical assistance through prevention programmes in communities including for families and in educational settings

- Support access to controlled drugs for medical use and prevention of non-medical use through awareness raising and strategic planning

- Support civil society organizations and drug user networks in service delivery and treatment

- Brokering multisectoral alliances between drug control, justice, law enforcement, health, civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs)

Indicators | Risks

Output 1.3: Comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment and care services are gender inclusive and delivered to people who use drugs, people in prisons and other closed settings	**Indicator:** Number of initiatives for prevention, treatment and care for HIV/AIDS, hepatitis and other communicable diseases **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 30 programmes/services in each country 5 initiatives launched **Means of Verification:** Data from Member States, UNODC project records **Interval: Annual** **Interim targets:** 5 in each country 2 initiatives launched	**Risk:** Member States and the public continue to perceive drug use through a criminal justice lens rather than prioritizing health and evidence-based approaches (likelihood: medium, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Continue to advocate for and promote evidence-based and health focused approaches to drug use

Indicative Activities:

- Capacity building to support the implementation of comprehensive interventions for HIV services—including needle–syringe programmes, opioid substitution therapy, and interventions for non-injecting drug use, as well as prevention, diagnosis and treatment of TB and viral hepatitis, community-led and gender sensitive outreach and psychosocial support

- Capacity building to support the implementation of comprehensive HIV prevention in prisons and other closed settings including voluntary HIV testing and treatment, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of TB and viral hepatitis, and related health services, as well as mental health services, including services for drug use disorders

- Supporting reform, development and implementation of effective legislation and policies to facilitate access to evidence-informed HIV services

- Support civil society organizations in their efforts to help people who are living with HIV and AIDS, transgenders etc

- Provide technical support for the reform of the public health and law enforcement practices to ensure they support HIV response, including for marginalised groups and communities

- Supporting the development and implementation of comprehensive evidence-informed gender- and age-responsive strategies and programmes

- Technical assistance through prevention programmes in communities including, for families and in educational settings

- Reducing stigma and discrimination and promoting human rights and evidence-based public health-centred approaches to drug use and HIV

- Brokering multisectoral alliances between drug control/HIV, justice, law enforcement, health, civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs)

	Indicators	**Risks**
Output 1.4: Information base on drug production, trafficking and use of drugs is strengthened through a regional and national drug information system (for example, like an observatory)	**Indicator:** Number of UNODC publications offered as evidence for informed policy making. **Baseline:** Existing UNODC reports- 4 (SMART reports, World Drug Report, UNODC data reported to INCB) **Target:** 1 publication/report per year Interim targets: TBD **Interval:** End of 2025 **Means of Verification:** Data from Member States **Interval:** Annual	**Risk:** Member States do not report sufficient data on drug use and supply (likelihood: high, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Increased advocacy on the importance of data availability Targeted interventions to enhance availability of data.

Indicative Activities:

- Drug use surveys, assessments, and research

- Illicit drug and precursor supply research

- Support to establish systems for data generation, analysis and dissemination

- Technical assistance for policy and regulatory development and implementation

- Advocacy for, and technical assistance to develop, balanced drug policy

- Capacity building to increase Member States' understanding of drugs and precursors and improve forensic capacities

Sub-programme 2: Preventing and Countering Organized Crime

Indicators | Risks

Outcome 2: South Asian governments develop and apply effective gender inclusive legal and policy frameworks, and respond effectively to TOC, utilizing detailed analyses of crime trends.

Indicator:
Number of regional initiatives undertaken to counter organized crime in line with international law and with full respect of human rights

Baseline:
TBD (Commitment for regional and international cooperation exists with limited level of cooperation. Policies and action plans exist but require continuous engagement and strengthening)

Target:
Increased regional and country-specific initiatives to counter organized crime (like the anti-TIP Platform)
Countries amenable to implementing actions shown in the UNTOC review observations

Means of Verification
Data from Member States, open-source data

Risk: Member States remain focused on low-level crimes rather than complex organized crime cases (likelihood: medium, impact: medium)

Mitigation Plan: High-level engagement on the issue that can bring about long-term changes

Indicators

Risks

Output 2.1: Member States adopt effective legal, strategic and policy frameworks to combat various forms of TOC following a human rights and gender equal approach/implementing UNTOC and observations emanating from its Review Mechanism.

Indicator

a) Number of assessments undertaken to analyse OC threats on the regional and national level, as well as normative policy and operational responses

Baseline: 0 (at the beginning of the programme)

Target: 4

b) Number of activities undertaken (workshops, consultations, policy dialogues and meetings) to support the development of legislative or strategic frameworks against organized crime

Baseline: 0

Target: 6

c) Number of comprehensive whole-of-society policies, strategies and plans of action to prevent and counter organized crime developed

Baseline: 0

Target: 4

d) Number of Member States supported in strengthening legislative responses to TOC in implementation of UNTOC and observations of its Review Mechanism

Baseline: 0

Target: 3

Means of Verification

- Assessment and mapping terms of references.

- Final and draft assessment and mapping reports.

Risk: Criminal justice stakeholders lack interest or will to pursue a systematic/strategic approach to capacity building.

Impact: MEDIUM

Mitigation Plan: The Programme will organise awareness raising and discussion sessions among the key stakeholders on the importance of systematic/strategic approach to capacity building.

Risk: Key criminal justice counterparts lack capacity to participate in needs assessments and strategy/plan development.

Impact: MEDIUM

Mitigation Plan: The Programme will organise capacity building sessions and develop tailored manuals on how to do needs assessment.

Risk: Access to conduct capacity building assessments is not granted by counterparts due to security/political concerns.

Impact: MEDIUM

Mitigation Plan: The Programme will advocate for capacity building assessment and organise dialogue sessions on the importance of capacity building assessment. As a strategy for security concerns, the programme will explore possibility of remote assessment.

Risk: High/frequent turnover of officials result in the failure of appropriately trained officials to participate in legislative development/amendment processes.

Impact: MEDIUM

	Indicators	Risks
	• Agenda and lists of participants for relevant workshops. • Mission Reports. • Electronic and in-person communication with key stakeholders. • Draft and final capacity building strategy and training plan documents. • UNODC tools and guidance material	**Mitigation Plan:** The Programme will pursue discussions with counterpart countries to focus on staff likely to be in position for a minimum 2 years; embedding training in local institutions to facilitate wider coverage; and integrating training into broader programmes, resulting in more officials with transferrable skills.

Indicative Activities:

- Engage in multi-disciplinary and high-level advocacy to align national legislative and policy frameworks with the UNTOC, and its Protocols, as well as other relevant international legal instruments

- Provide gender sensitive technical legal advisory assistance and organize legislative drafting workshops to support the development and adoption of draft legislation and/or amendment with a view to implement UNTOC and/or observations emanating from its Review Mechanism

- Undertake targeted and gender sensitive awareness and advocacy for Parliamentarians to support the adoption and implementation of relevant legislation and standards related to the Convention and its Protocols

- Hold regional workshops to identify common region-specific challenges and opportunities with relation to legislative and strategic responses to challenges presented by organized crime

- Conduct research on TOC threats, risk- and protective factors, including in partnership with the UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence on crime and criminal justice statistics, with a view to inform the development of comprehensive strategies against organized crime

- Support Member States in the development of comprehensive whole-of-society strategies, policies and actions plans to prevent and counter organized crime

- Develop and/or regionalize tools and publications on legislative, strategic and operational frameworks against organized crime

- Strengthen the gathering and dissemination of information on normative, policy and operational responses of Member States through the UNODC SHERLOC Portal

- Strengthen the mainstreaming of gender and human rights dimensions into normative and policy frameworks against organized crime

Indicators

Risks

Output 2.2: Strengthened capacity, including knowledge and skills, of criminal justice actors to investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate TIP and SOM cases following a rights-based and gender equal approach.

Indicator
a) Number of individuals trained, mentored or coached to investigate, prosecute, and/or adjudicate TIP and SOM cases (disaggregated by gender)

Baseline: 0 (at the beginning of the programme)

Target: 5,000 individuals in 5 years (at least 40% are women)

b) Percentage of training participants (M/F/O) who demonstrate improved knowledge, including of human rights, gender equality, and/or child protection in the context of TIP and SOM as a result of capacity building activities. (disaggregated by gender)

Baseline: 0

Target: 60%

Means of Verification:

• Agenda and lists of participants.

• End-of-workshop or training and follow-up Evaluation questionnaires.

• Training and workshop reports.

• Assessment Reports.

• Mission reports.

• Electronic and in-person communication with key stakeholders.

Risk:
(a)Inadequately qualified officials nominated to participate in training activities

(b) High rotation of officials leading to a gap in learning

Impact: MEDIUM

Mitigation Plan:
(a)The Programme will maintain regular communication to allow for the nomination of the most relevant and suitable officials.

(b)Ensure early and regular communication (prior to training) with Government counterparts to adopt a systems-building approach

Indicative Activities:

- Produce gap and needs analysis of institutional responses and counterparts' capacity to respond to TOC

- Produce assessments of TIP and SOM policy and legislation and provide recommendations for further alignment with international instruments and good practices

- Tailor TIP and SOM modules/curricula, in line with capacity building strategies, to national and regional contexts and support their integration into training programmes of law enforcement judicial training academies and other relevant institutions

- Establish partnerships or platforms with local, regional or international bodies (including training and research Institutes) to support the implementation of training on TIP and SOM

- Provide tailored rights-based, gender-responsive and victim-centred capacity building and mentoring related to investigation, prosecution and adjudication of TIP and SOM, with a specific focus on organized crime

- Develop and mainstream gender-related tools and training materials into capacity building activities, tailored to partner country contexts, including addressing the particular vulnerability of women and young girls to TIP

- Implement alternative participatory gender sensitive capacity building initiatives, such as mock and simulation exercises, consultative meetings, and on-the-job training, including mentoring / advisory services, to strengthen identification, investigation, prosecution and adjudication

- Deliver capacity building activities on international cooperation within the region, including through support to the central authorities, for intelligence sharing and exchange of good examples relating to investigation of TIP and SOM cases

- Support national initiatives to establish operational systems and infrastructure to identify, investigate and prosecute cases of TIP and SOM (e.g., standard operating procedures, case management systems, investigation units, etc.)

- Promote promising gender sensitive practices, lessons learnt and analysis of emerging TIP and SOM topics developed

- Organise targeted awareness and advocacy workshops for Parliamentarians to support adoption and implementation of relevant legislation and standards (through awareness raising initiatives; specialized workshops, compilation publications)

- Support rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors, including through involvement of civil society organizations in victim protection and survivor-led platforms

- Assist in efforts to promote the empowerment of women in criminal justice, including by addressing the underrepresentation of women in justice (e.g. law enforcement, investigative agencies, prosecutors, judges, defence lawyers, relevant ministries), empowering women in leadership positions and ensuring that women make up a significant percentage of participants in capacity building, training and other technical assistance activities and that benefit equally from the training delivered

	Indicators	Risks
Output 2.3: Law enforcement and criminal justice practitioners are trained on digital forensics and evidence, cryptocurrency procedures and best practices for handling cybercrime cases with due respect for human rights safeguards.	**Indicator:** a) Number of law enforcement officers, prosecutors, defense lawyers, judges and judicial staff (M/F/O) trained in handling electronic evidence including crime scene electronic evidence collection and digital forensics. **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 1000 **Means of Verification** UNODC Reports; pre and post training testing b) Number of instances of use of UNODC-supported cooperation mechanisms between national and international entities **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 5 **Means of Verification** UNODC and media reports	**Risk :** Sufficiency of criminal justice practitioners with necessary computer skills, sufficient numbers of female officers, basic availability of computer equipment and mobile devices, and identification of suitable premises for establishment of computer forensics lab. Assumptions also include existence of basic underlying police crime statistics system **Mitigation Plan:** Conduct timely needs assessment to tailor training material as per appropriate levels **Risk :** Lack of understanding of the potential cooperation in cybercrime, leads to less effective countering of cybercrime regionally (Likelihood: medium, Impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Engagements with counterparts at all levels to provide support and highlight existing and potential cooperation mechanisms both among countries and with the private sector.

Indicative Activities:

- Facilitation of inter-agency cooperation with international organizations (e.g. INTERPOL etc.)

- Training and mentoring on cybercrime, including request and handling of electronic evidence, cryptocurrencies, OSINT techniques, cybercrime legal framework, prosecution, forensic analysis, etc

- Training on prevention of cybercrime for children, youth, parents, small and medium sized enterprises, teachers, internet service providers, etc

- Technical assistance to cybercrime legal reforms, development of gender sensitive normative and operational documents, national cybercrime strategies and guidelines

- Law enforcement and other criminal justice actors and institutions are equipped to address cybercrime and cyber enabled trafficking

- Establish cybercrime reporting mechanisms, including to law enforcement and private sector service / NGO providers and, online child sexual exploitation reporting

- Awareness raising on safe online practices and prevention of cybercrime, including developing cybercrime prevention materials and guidelines

	Indicators	Risks
Output 2.4: Law enforcement and criminal justice institutions have the skills and knowledge to prevent and counter crimes that affect the environment (including wildlife, fish, plants and timber), waste crime and trafficking trends.	**Indicator:** Number of criminal justice practitioners demonstrate increased knowledge and awareness of CAE; An increase in post-seizure investigations **Interval:** Annual **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 650 **Means of Verification:** Training reports, pre-post evaluations	**Risk:** Insufficient legal frameworks, resulting in harmful environmental practices not defined as crimes (Likelihood: medium, Impact: high) **Mitigation Plan:** Awareness raising on the issues

Indicative Activities:

- Research and analysis on crimes that affect the environment

- Enhance institutional capacities of the judiciary, prosecutors' offices and law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute crimes that affect the environment

- Implement Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit recommendations

- Conduct legal and gap analysis with recommendations, as well as support development or strengthening of legislation on crimes that affect the environment

- Improving the understanding of the links between crimes that affect the environment and the broader issues of climate change and biodiversity loss

- Research, policy development, and capacity building related to crimes that affect the environment including the illegal harvest, trade and consumption of endangered wildlife, timber, fish, metals and minerals as well as the illegal trade and disposal of waste

- Develop e-learning, guides, training material, communication material and events related to crimes that affect the environment including the illegal harvest, trade and consumption of endangered wildlife, timber, fish, metals and minerals as well as the illegal trade and disposal of waste

- Providing platforms for relevant authorities to develop regional and inter-regional mechanisms of law enforcement cooperation and governance

- Organise joint initiatives on border management initiatives (land, sea and air) like joint trainings, integrating CAE into standardized LE curriculum, etc

	Indicators	Risks
Output 2.5: Comprehensive responses to illicit financial flows/money laundering developed and implemented	**Indicator** a)Degree of compliance with FATF recommendations **Means of Verification:** FATF **Interval:** Annual **Baseline:** TBD (Previous FATF and APGML rounds of mutual evaluations) **Target:** Increased levels of compliance with FATF recommendations and of effectiveness of AML regimes in the region b) Number of law enforcement officials (M/F/O) who exhibit increase of knowledge/skills **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 50 **Means of Verification:** pre and post event assessment of trainings	**Risk:** Improved practices and regulations not penetrating large segments (Likelihood: low, Impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Ensure working with a wide range of stakeholders

Indicative Activities:

- Deliver trainings on financial investigations, prosecution and asset recovery for FIU personnel, law enforcement, criminal justice officers and other competent authorities

- Provision of expert advice to countries with regard to FATF compliance and effectiveness

- Strengthening institutional framework and technical capacities of FIUs and investigative authorities, including through mentoring programmes

- Promoting alignment with international accreditation standards for AML professionals

- Support the development of AML strategies, action plans and other relevant documents

- Organise consultations and facilitate coordination meetings

- Promoting increased use of platforms for public-private partnerships

	Indicators	Risks
Output 2.6: Member States in South Asia effectively engage in cross-border cooperation to address illicit trafficking (through land, air and sea)	**Indicator:** a)Number of instances where cross-border cooperation takes place to prevent illicit trafficking [Regional border management policy in place] **Baseline:** Limited instances of cross-border cooperation (High level commitments exist for regional border management agenda) **Target:** Increased number of instances where cross-border law enforcement cooperation takes place Regional border management policy in place and implemented **Means of Verification:** Data from Member States, UNODC project records b) Number of detections made and goods confiscated. **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 6 **Means of Verification:** Data from Member States, UNODC project records/reports	**Risk:** Cross-border coordination at frontline level hindered by administrative/bureaucratic procedures (likelihood: medium, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Focus on approaching Member States at both decision-making and frontline levels **Risk:** Units and entities not maintaining a mechanism for data collection (likelihood: medium, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Continued engagement and monitoring of Units and entities responsible for data/information collection etc

Indicative Activities:

- Law enforcement institutions develop proactive strategies and acquire the skillsets needed to dismantle (transnational) organized crime groups, including their financial arrangements, and better protect victims

- Law enforcement, border officials and other criminal justice actors have the skills and knowledge to identify and interdict trafficking of illicit goods

- Training for frontline officers on interdiction of various forms of illicit trafficking

- Training on investigative techniques on trafficking cases

- Support for border control offices and check points/posts

- Support and train specialized units, including inter-agency units, that work at and along borders

- Provide policy support to advance regional cooperation on integrated border management

- Integrated approaches implemented to address trafficking in cultural property, maritime crime and organized crimes in trade supply chains

Sub-programme 3: Preventing and Countering Corruption and Economic Crime

	Indicators	Risks
Outcome 3: In-line with UNCAC, and UNTOC, South Asian governments implement a whole-of-society approach to counter corruption and economic crime	**Indicator** a)Number of anti-corruption gender inclusive legal and policy framework introduced and/or strengthened **Baseline:** (TBD) Various aspects of anti-corruption policies and legal frameworks need to be strengthened or put in place. Government and non-government stakeholders lack sufficient capacities to play meaningful roles in anti-corruption efforts **Target:** 6 instances where legal and/or policy frameworks were introduced and/or strengthened 10 instances of skills and knowledge application **Means of Verification** UNODC and Member States data	**Risk:** Lack of political will to address corruption (likelihood: medium, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Advocacy and high-level engagements to build broader support to prevent and counter corruption, including with the general public
Output 3.1 : Institutional, legal, policy and cooperation frameworks against corruption are strengthened	**Indicator** Number of National Anti-Corruption initiatives reflecting key priorities, including training, modernization, sensitization, and legislative reforms **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 2 AC Strategies in South Asia **Means of Verification** • Reports from relevant national agencies • Legal documents • AC Strategy documents	**Risk:** Lack of willingness to engage/ focus on anti-corruption at the institutional level (likelihood: low, impact: high) Limited coordination among partners **Mitigation Plan** Continued advocacy, and high-level engagements on the issue, including through using the UNCAC for engagement Ensure ownership and endorsement of activities by the national authorities by monitoring the situation through continued consultation with counterparts

Indicative Activities:

- Conduct risk assessments (where possible) for the development of National Anti-Corruption initiatives to identify needs and priorities

- Facilitate drafting workshops for the design and development of gender inclusive anticorruption strategy/ frameworks

- Facilitation of a validation workshop for the approval and buy-in of the anti-corruption strategies and initiatives/measures

Indicators   Risks

Output 3.2 : Government and non-government stakeholders have increased anti-corruption capacity and apply technical skills and evidence-based knowledge and tools to prevent and counter corruption

Indicator
Number of stakeholders reporting the use of skills acquired through UNODC training sessions

Baseline: As per UNCAC reviews

Target: 3

Means of Verification: Draft policies and bills, legislation enacted, UNODC data obtained from Member States, UNCAC reviews

Risk: Lack of willingness to engage/ focus on anti-corruption at the institutional level (likelihood: low, impact: high)
Institutions already overburdened and unable to accept technical assistance (likelihood: medium, impact: high)

Mitigation Plan
Continued advocacy, and high-level engagements on the issue, including through using the UNCAC for engagement .
Ensure ownership and endorsement of activities by the national authorities by monitoring the situation through continued consultation with counterparts

Indicative Activities:

- Support the development and/or amendment of national anti-corruption policies and strategies and assist countries to monitor the implementation and impact

- Legal, policy and programmatic support for the drafting and amendment of anti-corruption legislation, regulatory frameworks and codes of conduct

- Promote regional cooperation among anti-corruption agencies, FIUs, central authorities, and prosecutors on corruption investigations

- Support parallel operations and policy initiatives to combat illicit financial flows related to corruption

- Anti-corruption practitioners and other stakeholders have and apply the capacity to prevent and counter corruption

- Assessments of institutional and legal frameworks and capacity-building concerning the tracing, seizing, freezing, confiscating and returning of assets stolen by officials

Indicators

Risks

Output 3.3 : Private sector, civil society groups and academia supported to promote and implement anti-corruption strategies

Indicator
Number of instances relevant models/standards are reviewed

Baseline: 0

Target: 3

Means of Verification: UNODC reports

Risk: Lack of donor interest.

Impact: MEDIUM

Mitigation Plan: Targeted advocacy

Risk: Private sector has low level of interest in cooperation with government in meaningful efforts.

Impact: MEDIUM

Mitigation Plan: Trust building and sensitization

Indicative Activities:

- Research/analysis of the links between corruption and other UNODC mandate areas

- Joint training and workshops for the development of operational cooperation among law enforcement/ criminal justice agencies and anti-corruption authorities

- Conduct workshops and meetings to explore the close linkages existing between corruption and various specific areas, such as sports or wildlife and forest crime, with an aim to increase the understanding of the far-reaching impact of corruption and to support States in developing effective and targeted responses

- Support corruption risk management processes in agencies responsible for other UNODC mandate areas

- Meetings between institutions at the local, national and international levels to prevent and counter corruption, including through the GlobE and GRACE initiatives

- Support anti-corruption campaigns and initiatives with youth, civil society, sports institutions

- Develop educational materials and support their integration into curricula of schools, universities and other academic institutions, based on existing materials

Sub-programme 4: Preventing and Countering Terrorism		
	Indicators	**Risks**
Outcome 4 : Countries have enhanced capacity to prevent and counter terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism in line with international counter terrorism legal instruments, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and human rights Standards	**Indicator** Number of international instruments against terrorism ratified per country **Baseline:** TBD (UNODC TPB ratification table, FATF consolidated assessment ratings **Target:** Increased capacity of Member States to address acts of terrorism b)Increase in adherence to the universal legal instruments against terrorism; Increase in CFT compliance; Increase in human rights based and gender mainstreamed CT, CFT, PCVE laws, policies, and practices **Baseline:** Insufficient gender-sensitive and human rights compliant CT, CFT, PCVE laws, policies and practices **Target:** Existence of gender-sensitive and human rights compliant CT, CFT, PCVE laws, policies and practices **Means of Verification:** UNODC data, open sources indexes, and data from Member States	**Risk:** Member States do not prioritize CT, CFT and PCVE and do not see the need for human rights based and gender-sensitive approaches (Likelihood: low, Impact: medium) Insufficient resources **Mitigation Plan:** Advocacy/awareness-raising on the issue while highlighting the high-level commitments made on the issue of terrorism
Output 4.1 : Enhanced mechanisms to counter the financing of terrorism including through regional and global initiatives, are in place	**Indicator** a) Number of instances where governments have consulted UNODC on CT/CFT policy, legislative or related matters, including adoption of MoUs, agreements, information sharing mechanisms in a human rights-compliant, rule of law-based and gender-responsive manner. **Baseline:** TBD **Target:** 3	**Risk:** Member States have various offers for training and equipment from other partners, including on a bilateral level, which impacts ability of UNODC to agree on the implementation of a training programme, provision of equipment, and a sustained engagement, especially when implementing short-term projects (likelihood: medium, impact: medium)

Indicators

Risks

Means of Verification: UNODC data, Member States data, open-source data

b) Number of inter-agency collaborative platforms supported

Baseline: TBD

Target: 2

Means of Verification: UNODC data, Member States data, open-source data

Mitigation Plan: Consult with Member States at the earliest opportunity, try to convince them of the need for technical assistance, and continue to offer support

Indicative Activities:

- Support the enactment and effective implementation of domestic legislation in line with international legal requirements

- Policy and/or legal consultations, awareness-raising and technical assistance

- Development of capacities, policies, strategies etc

- Enhance international and regional cooperation via international or regional meetings and trainings

- Support adopting policy documents, MoUs and/or functional mechanisms for information- and/or intelligence-sharing and mutual legal assistance

- Trainings for government agencies, including train-the-trainer programmes on intelligence gathering and use of data, investigation, prosecution and adjudication

- Joint initiatives between government and non-profit or private sector stakeholders to counter terrorism or its financing

Indicators

Risks

Output 4.2 : Institutional, gender sensitive policy and cooperation frameworks and programmes to prevent and counter violent extremism and protect its victims, including through the consolidation of the Prevention of Violent Extremism Network for South Asia (SAN-PVE), are further strengthened.

Indicator
a) Number of multi-agency collaborative platforms (including non-governmental and private sector) receiving technical support

Baseline: 0

Targets: 1

b)Number of instances where governments have consulted UNODC on PCVE policy, legislative or related matters.

Baseline: 0

Risk: Enforcement/ intelligence focused approach to counterterrorism leads to grievances among at-risk communities, undermining effective prevention of violent extremism (likelihood: medium, impact medium)

Mitigation Plan: Promote comprehensive and strategic approach to address terrorism through multi-stakeholder coordination

Target: At least 2 instances where UNODC provided advice on PCVE related policy, law, regulation or strategies

Means of Verification: UNODC data and reports

Indicative Activities:

- Support governments and civil society to develop gender sensitive early warning, early response mechanisms or similar PVE risk assessment tools or mechanisms

- Support the establishment of a network of youth leaders, ensuring inclusion of grass-roots organizations

- Joint initiatives between government and non-government or private sector stakeholders to prevent violent extremism, including on strategic communications to prevent violent extremism (counter-narratives, alternative narratives etc.), and support governments and communities with effective community policing initiatives

- Supporting a regional network of experts on PCVE

- Develop and implement initiatives in support of victims of terrorism, including by providing children, youth, families and vulnerable and marginalised groups with tools for building resilience to radicalization to violence

- Organize awareness raising events, engaging athletes to address hate speech also in sports, and promote a culture of lawfulness, peace, tolerance, and respect

- Support intra- and inter-faith capacity building skills as part of education programmes in both formal and informal settings

- Develop and implement initiatives in support of survivors and victims of terrorism, supporting them to become credible voices and actor of change in preventing violent extremism

- Develop educational materials and support their integration into curricula of schools, universities and other academic institutions, based on existing materials

Sub-programme 5: Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

	Indicators	Risks
Outcome 5 : Fair, effective, accountable gender inclusive criminal justice systems accessible in South Asia	**Indicator** Number of legal, policy, regulatory or strategic frameworks revised that are in line with UN standards and norms on crime prevention and criminal justice **Baseline:** TBD **Target:** 6 legal, policy, regulatory or strategic frameworks reviewed based on UN standards and norms	**Risk:** Regime/institutional leadership changes in countries affecting higher-level approaches to handling criminal justice (likelihood: low, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Continuous engagements and advocacy with the Member States at all levels

	Indicators	Risks
	8 legal, policy, regulatory or strategic frameworks that address the needs of vulnerable groups **Means of Verification:** UNODC data and data from Member States **Interval:** Annual	
Output 5.1 : Crime prevention, including prevention of violence against women and children in South Asia is knowledge-based, community-based and inclusive.	**Indicator** a)Number of initiatives promoting the role of youth in community-based crime prevention **Baseline:** TBD **Target:** 5 b)Number of policies adopted with a strengthened emphasis on preventing gender-based violence and violence against women and/or children. **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 3 c)Number of policies adopted with a strengthened emphasis on preventing violence against children. **Baseline: TBD** **Target:** 2 d)Number of initiatives providing a foundation of knowledge about crime problems, their multiple causes and promising and proven practices to promote the rule of law and a culture of lawfulness for the prevention of crime. **Baseline:** TBD **Target:** 3 **Means of Verification:** UNODC reports, Member States crime prevention strategies/policy documents	**Risk:** Lack of political will to implement longer-term prevention (likelihood: low, impact: high) Lack of dedicated Member States institutions collecting data and developing knowledge-and community-based strategies (likelihood: high, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Continuous advocacy and regular dialogues at strategic level Awareness raising on the importance of evidence and data on strategy and policy making.

Indicative Activities:

- Trainings and technical assistance in implementing community-based crime prevention work with a focus on at-risk groups

- Strengthen capacity of youth to play a role in crime prevention in communities

- Develop educational materials and support their integration into curricula of schools, universities and other academic institutions, based on existing materials

- Support policy development and implementation on prevention of gender-based violence against women and violence against children, both with criminal justice institutions and non-government actors

- Support policy development and implementation on prevention of violence against children, both with criminal justice institutions and non-government actors

- Support States to strengthen criminal justice institutions to better address violence against women and increase access to gender-responsive justice for women and girls, in line with UN standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice

Indicators

Risks

Output 5.2 : Capacity of State and non-state actors to implement comprehensive and evidence-based crime prevention programmes and interventions is strengthened.

Indicator
a) Number of professionals (M/F/Others) apply knowledge acquired through capacity-building workshops.

Baseline: 0

Target: 300

Means of Verification
Training reports; strategy and policy documents; Pre and post questionnaires

b) Number of stakeholders reporting the use of skills acquired through UNODC training sessions

Baseline: 0

Target: 200

Means of Verification
Training reports; Pre and post questionnaires

Risk: Lack of political will of government interloctors to participate.

Relevant officers not being nominated for training.

Mitigation Plan: Ensure that crime prevention training is tailored to local needs and eco-system

Indicative Activities:

- Provide assistance to build the capacity, expertise and skills of crime prevention and criminal justice practitioners to design, implement and monitor evidence-based prevention programmes

- Develop and disseminate technical gender sensitive tools and share best practices on effective, evidence-based crime prevention

- Provide assistance to States to develop and implement social developmental programmes and approaches on crime prevention, including through sport, in line with UN standards and norms

- Capacity building of law enforcement institutions to provide effective, human rights-based, accountable, gender-responsive and inclusive policing

- Promote community policing strategies

	Indicators	**Risks**
Output 5.3 : Prison systems have the capacity to provide safe and humane custody of prisoners and to provide for effective rehabilitation and reintegration.	**Indicator** Number of gender sensitive policy frameworks strengthened for prison reform **Baseline:** TBD **Target:** Such policy and/or legal framework exist in 4 countries **Means of Verification:** UNODC monitoring reports, plus analysis of MS reports/records	**Risk:** Other areas of priorities linked to prison management (adjudication, legal frameworks, etc) negating the positive results gained by improved prison management (likelihood: high, impact: medium) **Mitigation Plan:** Ensure collective and streamlined approach to UNODC project development so that each project aims at higher impact

Indicative Activities:

- Research on legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks related to prison management, including on the prison conditions, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes

- Technical guidance to support the development of legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks

- Training/workshop for prison officials to enhance prison management compliant with human rights standards and international norms

- Provide standard equipment to increase the capacity of prisons and jails

	Indicators	**Risks**
Output 5.4: Capacity of criminal justice professionals to use non-custodial measures (NCM) in appropriate cases and ensure proportionate sentencing is strengthened, with a view to avoiding the overuse of imprisonment	**Indicator** a) Number of policy frameworks strengthened for application of NCM **Baseline:** TBD **Target:** Such framework exists in 2 countries	**Risk:** Low interest to participate in capacity building programmes. Relevant officials are not nominated for the trainings. **Mitigation:** Regular meetings with counterparts to apprise them of the nature of capacity building initiatives

Means of Verification: UNODC monitoring reports, plus analysis of MS reports/records

b) Number of stakeholders reporting the use of skills acquired through UNODC capacity building sessions

Baseline: 0

Target: 300

Means of Verification
Training reports; Pre and post questionnaires

Indicative Activities:

- Provide assistance to raise awareness and build capacity of criminal justice and other stakeholders on alternatives to imprisonment in line with the Tokyo Rules and the Bangkok Rules

- Organize exchange visits for South Asia member states to see good practices

- Support countries to strengthen the management of prisons and detention facilities in line with the Nelson Mandela Rules and the Bangkok Rules

- Develop and disseminate technical tools and share best practices

---

	Indicators	**Risks**
Output 5.5: Capacity of criminal justice professionals to prevent and respond to violence against women, including gender-related killings, is increased	**Indicator** a)Number of professionals (M/F/Other) trained **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 300 **Means of verification:** Training reports, programme reports; Training manuals/modules and Tools b) Criminal justice practitioners report more effective application of UNODC prevention tools/training to address GBV **Baseline:** 0 **Target:** 10 **Means of verification:** Follow-up reports	**Risk:** Insufficient resources Lack of willingness to participate in capacity building initiatives. **Mitigation:** Regular advocacy with member states on the importance of addressing GBV

Indicative Activities:

- Provide assistance to build the capacity, expertise and skills of criminal justice practitioners and other relevant stakeholders to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls

- Develop and disseminate technical tools and share best practices

Indicators

Risks

Output 5.6: Capacity of institutions and key actors of the justice, security, social welfare, education, health and child protection systems to prevent and respond to violence against children at the national level is increased and cross-sectoral collaboration between State and non-State actors is strengthened.

Indicator
a)Number of professionals (M/F/Other) reached through capacity-building workshops

Baseline: 0

Target: 400

Means of verification
Activity reports
Training reports
Pre and Post questionnaires

b) Number of cross-sectoral collaborations between state and non state actors

Baseline : 0

Target : 3

Means of verification
UNODC reports, MoUs etc

Risk: Insufficient resources
Lack of willingness to participate in capacity building initiatives
Relevant officials not being nominated for training programme

Mitigation: Regular advocacy with government counterparts

Indicative Activities:

- Capacity enhancement of practitioners, institutions and key actors of the justice, security, social welfare, education, health,and child protection systems to prevent and respond to violence against children, including by terrorist groups

- Provide assistance to children and their environment to resist violence (including recruitment and exploitation), and/or successfully reintegrate into society

- Develop child-friendly modules and IEC

Indicators

Risks

Output 5.7: Police and relevant community-based organizations have enhanced institutional capacity in the area of community policing, crime prevention and urban safety

Indicator
a)Number of trainers, policymakers and police officers (M/F/O) apply knowledge and skills in the area of human rights-based and gender inclusive policing and/or urban safety

Risk: Lack of political will to implement longer-term prevention (likelihood: low, impact: high)

Mitigation: Continuous advocacy and regular dialogues at strategic level

Baseline: 0

Target: 300

Means of verification:
Crime prevention programmes.
Community-based policing as part of the national crime prevention plan.
Project reports/meetings' records.
Training evaluation reports.
Academic and civil society reports indicating effectiveness of community oriented policing.
Improved perceptions of safety (crime victimization surveys)

b)Availability/number of community oriented policing tools promoting crime prevention developed and introduced

Baseline: 0

Target: 5

Means of Verification: Crime prevention initiatives.
Community-based policing as part of the national crime prevention plan.
Project reports/meetings' records.
Training evaluation reports.
Evidence based crime prevention action plans.
Academic and civil society reports indicating effectiveness of community oriented policing.

Indicative Activities:

- Needs assessments to identify gaps and challenges

- Training delivered to police officers on community policing strategies

- Training delivered to police officers on urban safety

- Communication and gender responsive strategies developed on community policing

Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget for the Regional Programme for South Asia for the period 2024-2028

Sub Programmes	Thematic Areas	Amount in USD					Grand total ($)
		2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	
Sub Programme /Outcome 1	Addressing and Countering the Drug Problem	1,086,156	1,146,498	1,206,840	1,327,524	1,448,208	6,215,226
Sub Programme /Outcome 2	Preventing and Countering Organized Crime	1,206,840	1,327,524	1,378,590	1,448,208	1,568,892	6,930,054
Sub Programme /Outcome 3	Preventing and Countering Corruption and Economic Crime	301,710	301,710	301,710	301,710	301,710	1,508,550
Sub Programme /Outcome 4	Preventing and Countering Terrorism	301,710	301,710	301,710	301,710	301,710	1,508,550
Sub Programme /Outcome 5	Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	1,086,156	1,206,840	1,327,524	1,448,208	1,568,892	6,637,620
TOTAL		3,982,572	4,284,282	4,516,374	4,827,360	5,189,412	22,800,000

Endnotes

1 The UNODC Regional Office for South Asia covers Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

2 The Regional Office for South Asia covers Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka

3 Ela Akter: Issues and Concerns of Crime in Cox's Bazar: A Secondary Analysis on Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Commonwealth Law Review Journal, Annual Volume 6, 2020.

4 UNODC, World Drug Report 2022.

5 UNODC calculations based on UNODC, responses to the annual report questionnaire.

6 UNODC: Synthetic Drugs in East and Southeast Asia, 2022.

7 Understanding illegal Methamphetamine Manufacture in Afghanistan, UNODC (Research Brief), 2023

8 Narcotics Control Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, India. Daily Seizure Reports, 2023.

9 To support the global response to the situation in Afghanistan, to stop terrorism and drug-related threats from spilling over in Central Asia, the Middle East, and beyond, UNODC developed the Strategic Stability Grid, a focused framework for its interventions in and around Afghanistan.

10 'Coronavirus: With South Asia in lockdown, poachers are brazenly killing endangered animals and birds', Scroll.in, 5 June 2020 (Accessed at: https://scroll.in/article/963797/coronavirus-with-south-asia-in-lockdown-poachers-are-brazenly-killing-endangered-animals-and-birds).

11 'Scale of the issue: Mapping the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on pangolin trade across India', by Vikram Aditya, Rajkamal Goswami, Aristo Mendis and Ramya Roopa, in Elsevier Public Health Emergency Collection, Published online 2021 Apr 28 (Accessible at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8459300/#).

12 Human beings under the age of 18 years, in accordance with article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

13 UNODC Global TIP Report, 2022

14 UNODC Global TIP Report, 2022

15 UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner Report, 2023 on: "ONLINE SCAM OPERATIONS AND TRAFFICKING INTO FORCED CRIMINALITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A HUMAN RIGHTS RESPONSE."

16 Ibid

17 UNODC First National Study on Trafficking in Persons in Bangladesh, 2022.

18 https://www.traffic.org/publications/reports/high-flying-insight-into-wildlife-trafficking-through-indias-airports/

19 CITES Enforcement Alert No. 51, June 2019.

20 Paudel et al. (2020). Conservation enforcement : Insights from people incarcerate for wildlife crimes in Nepal. Conservation Science & Practice, 2(2), e137.

21 World Economic Forum: Digital Safety Risk Assessment in Action: A Framework and Bank of Case Studies; Insight Report, May 2023

22 UNODC and WEF global survey, 2015, The impacts of corruption: Perspectives from millennial voices

23 UNODC, UNCTAD and ESCAP implemented a pilot project on "Statistics and data for measuring Illicit Financial Flows in the Asia-Pacific Region" in 2020-2021. This project was implemented in Bangladesh, Maldives and Nepal.

24 UNOCT Action Research, UN Counter-Terrorism Centre: "Examining the Intersection between Gaming and Violent Extremism". 2023

25 Alexandra T Evans & Heather J Williams: "How extremism operates online", RAND Corporation, April 2022

26 United Nations System Common Position on Incarceration, UN, April 2021.

27 World Economic Forum, 2021, Global Gender Gap Report

28 The scope of study was limited to the collection of data from the seizure stage to the prosecution stage including the integration with the flow of data from the forensic laboratories.

29 The Regional Programme Steering Committee was established in December 2022. It consists of two senior level Government officials from each of the six South Asian countries. The first RP SC meeting was organised virtually on 1 February 2023, followed by an in-person meeting on 17 May 2023. The suggestions from the RP SC members received during this meeting have been incorporated into this document.

30 The Government Ministries and Departments also include autonomous bodies and Commissions like the Human Rights Commissions, law agencies, Attorney General's Offices, Prosecutors' Office, Women and Children Commissions etc.

31 The signing of a UNODC – BIMSTEC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is envisaged.

32 For instance, UNODC is pursuing a cooperation framework (the "Dhaka Roadmap") with the Government of Bangladesh and held its first national consultation on 30 August 2023 in partnership with the Government of Bangladesh.

33 Consultations took the form of workshops, training programmes etc., that were conducted by UNODC through country-specific, regional and global initiatives.

34 Feedback and suggestions from the RP Steering Committee members have been incorporated into the new RP.

35 Recommendations from a regional expert group meeting on Drugs held in September 2022 in New Delhi have been duly reflected under various outputs of the RP logframe.

36 UNODC ROSA has engaged with other UN agencies to implement 2 MPTF projects in Sri Lanka [Peace building (2022-23) and SDG Fund (2023)]. It has also engaged with UN agencies in India, Nepal and Bangladesh to develop MPTF proposals on Migration (linking to TIP/SOM).

37 In the logical framework, each Sub-programme is reflected as an Outcome. For example, Sub-programme 1 is Outcome 1.

38 With regard to Agreements of a financial nature with private sector corporations, foundations and NGOs UNODC ensures performance of vetting and due diligence, which is coordinated by the Co-Partnership Section of UNODC, prior to seeking requisite clearance.

39 During 2021-2023, UNODC ROSA was part of joint UN funding in Sri Lanka (Peace Building Fund and SDG Fund).

40 In March 2023, a comprehensive RBM Training was provided to ROSA by UNODC Headquarters. The logical framework is reviewed by the UNODC Strategic Planning team.

41 Under the Regional Programme, each Sub-programme (thematic area) constitutes an Outcome.

REGIONAL PROGRAMME
For South Asia 2024-2028