

O D C C P

Eastern Horizons

News on the fight against drugs and crime
in East Asia and the Pacific

No. 11
September 2002



“We must act now!”

No drugs on tracks

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*Off for Punishment: Children Demonstrating the Fate of Drug Traffickers.
People Power against Drugs – Demonstration in Klong Toey, Bangkok
Photo: Courtesy of The Nation*



“We must **ACT** now!”

Questions & Answers with Dr Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director

In many parts of the world, injecting drug use is believed to be the major mode of HIV transmission. What is the trend of the HIV epidemic in Asia, particularly in the South East Asia region?

We are witnessing rapidly expanding twin epidemics of injecting drug use (IDU) and HIV in the region. While heterosexual transmission continues to be the major mode of HIV transmission in Asia, the role of drug use, particularly IDU is also increasingly apparent, especially in the Golden Triangle. There has been a notable increase in the prevalence of IDU in the last decade. There has also been a parallel increase in the use of pharmaceutical and amphetamine type substances. The sharing of injecting equipment and sexual risk behaviour among injectors, who are often poor and marginalised, make them particularly vulnerable to HIV infection. One distinguishing feature of IDU-related epidemics is the astounding speed with which they develop.

Time after time we have seen that prevalence can go from just over zero to more than 50 percent in the space of a few months. IDU accounts for a major part of HIV infections in Malaysia, China, Viet Nam, North East India and a significant part of infections in Myanmar and Thailand. Parts of India, Cambodia, Thailand and possibly Myanmar are already experiencing generalised epidemics.

Even in countries like Indonesia, where until recently HIV prevalence was quite low, we are beginning to see a very sharp increase. There is no room for complacency. Low HIV prevalence today does not guarantee low prevalence in the future – this we have learnt from the experience of Nepal and Indonesia. It is vital that we intervene now. Sexual transmission from injecting drug users to their sex partners is also occurring in many parts of Asia.

“Sexual transmission from injecting drug users to their sex partners is also occurring in many parts of Asia.”

Given that HIV infection is, possibly, one of the most serious consequences of intravenous drug use, what approaches should be taken to reduce the harm inflicted upon individuals and communities? How can these approaches best be carried out?

The health consequences of injecting drug use are many. The most serious among these are HIV infection, as well as other blood borne viruses such as Hepatitis B and C. Any responses designed to deal with them should be pragmatic, comprehensive, and evidence-based. Strategies should aim to reduce the demand for drugs as well as limit or prevent the harmful consequences resulting from drug use. These include information education and communication (IEC); peer education; outreach activities; drug treatment services including substitution and maintenance programmes; voluntary counselling and testing; condom provision and promotion; prevention and treatment of STDs; and needle exchange programmes.

Programmes tend to be most effective when they are taken up early, have a large outreach component and have a wide coverage. Best results are achieved when governments dem-

onstrate political commitment to implementing HIV prevention programmes and

tackling stigma and discrimination against those living with HIV/AIDS. It is also crucial to work in partnership with NGOs, communities and other stakeholders, in particular people living with HIV/AIDS and drug users in developing and implementing intervention programmes.

Some countries are finding it hard to accept measures such as providing sterile equipment for injections to intravenous drug users and making condoms available to the general

population. Furthermore, young people are often denied access to education about HIV and safe sexual behaviour, as well as unable to buy condoms or to attend STD clinics. Such restrictions might in fact encourage people to increase their risk behaviour. What is your opinion on this and what would you recommend in order to handle this situation?

There has been concern and discomfort in many countries related to the distribution of sterile equipment and condoms, particularly to young people, in the belief that this may encourage risk behaviours among them. However, there is now considerable evidence to the contrary. The provision of these services actually allows individuals to behave more responsibly and safely. In fact, outreach and needle exchange programmes can bring people into the fold of drug treatment and rehabilitation services.

There is a recognition that countries must find appropriate ways of delivering prevention services to young people. There has already been some good work done in the area of developing and implementing both out-

reach and clinic-based services that reach marginalised youth. But these are not sufficient at the moment and

need to be scaled up. At the same time there is a need to engage in advocacy work with governments, communities and parents to create a better environment for the delivery of services to youth.

Furthermore, in most Asian communities sex is still viewed as taboo. Consequently, carrying out sexual education programmes is still rather tough. What are the possible ways to face these problems?

Sexual behaviour and norms no doubt vary considerably depending on the cultural context. Attitudes and behaviours vary considerably within Asia itself. However, it must be recognised that the bonds of social control are weakening rapidly due to many factors. Young people are now sexually active earlier than before while the age at marriage is getting higher. Thus sex education is vital. However, it can be delivered in a culturally sensitive manner and can be tailored to the needs of different age groups. Also, we know that prevention of sexual transmission is most effective when a combination of approaches is used, known as “ABC – Abstinence, Be faithful, Condoms.”

As a global issue, the impact of HIV/AIDS is a threat to human security. Could you explain more about the relationship between HIV/AIDS and human security in this region, from both a social and economic point of view?

AIDS is indeed a developmental catastrophe wiping out hard earned economic and social progress in many countries, particularly as it affects the young and productive age group. While its disastrous impact on society, communities and economies has been particularly noticeable in Africa, we are beginning to see and hear more and more about the impact and costs of the disease in other regions. Apart from the sheer human cost, increasing dependency ratios, devastated agricultural, educational and economic sectors strip

countries of their ability to develop. In Asia, where the epidemic is still relatively young, we are likely to see the full impact in the near future. Many countries in the region are poor, or in the grip of economic recession. This means that the ability of governments and societies to deal with the challenges imposed by the epidemic is likely to be severely compromised.

What are the responses from countries within the region towards the UNAIDS strategies? Have all strategies been viewed as successful so far? What lessons can be learned and what can be done?

One of the key roles of UNAIDS is to support governments in developing and implementing effective national responses to tackle HIV/AIDS. Strategies have been developed by national governments with support from UNAIDS. There is quite a lot of variability in the nature and magnitude of the epidemic, making it impossible to draw comparisons. There are

also large differences in the responses to the epidemic at the country and local level. Some can be upheld as models of best

practice, while others need more support in facing the challenges posed by the epidemic. In the last five years, many valuable lessons have been learnt and these are documented in the UNAIDS series of best practice publications. Broadly speaking, governments who have acknowledged the epidemic and intervened in a timely and adequate manner, implementing care and prevention programmes and tackling stigma, have been better placed to effectively deal with the epidemic.

With regard to HIV/AIDS in the Asia-Pacific region, what are the future challenges that the region will have to face?

As I mentioned earlier, the epidemic in Asia is still relatively young. Given the large populations in the region, we are likely to see a very high number of infected individuals. The major challenge in the region is to scale up both HIV prevention and care programmes. But this is not going to be an easy task as countries in the region are struggling with poverty or civil strife. Governments must work closely with NGOs, communities and the private sector in order to have a realistic chance at curbing the epidemic in the region.

What is the future trend of HIV prevalence in the region? Any recommendations?

The epidemic is spreading rapidly in this region, even in areas that previously were considered untouched. So there is little doubt that we will see more HIV infections in the region. What is important now is to contain the speed with which the epidemic is spreading. And this can only be achieved through concerted action by all those concerned – governments, communities, international agencies, and businesses. We must act now.

– *Patricia M. Budiyo, UNDCP, Bangkok*

ASEM Anti-Money Laundering Project



UN/ODCCP Regional Centre selected as the implementing agency

In May 2001, the Department of International Development (DFID) in the United Kingdom sent out an invitation to submit proposals to provide consultancy services for an ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) Anti-money Laundering Project.

It was the first time the UN/ODCCP Regional Centre in Bangkok participated in such a process and this can be viewed as a new UN/ODCCP way of building partnerships. UN/ODCCP and DFID signed a Memorandum of Understanding in July 2002 in which it was agreed that UN/ODCCP Regional Centre would be the Implementing Agency and, thus, execute the project. The Thai Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO) will provide office space for the Implementing Agency at its headquarters in Bangkok.

The project, which commenced on August 1st this year will run for three years. It is funded by the United Kingdom and the European Commission and has a total

budget of £806 000 (US\$ 1,2 million). It aims to develop closer and deeper cooperation between Europe and Asia as part of international efforts to implement: i) a global anti-money laundering network, ii) to strengthen existing institutional capacity at the regional level, and iii) to develop new, or enhance existing institutional capacity at the national level. The partnership with DFID and ASEM countries in the campaign against money laundering will, hopefully, facilitate a concerted approach among ASEM countries to establish national and subregional mechanisms to deal with this threat.

ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) is a forum for countries in the two regions to increase and ameliorate cooperation in the economic, political and cultural fields. The forum, which evolved from an idea by Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore, aims to balance the existing links between the two regions. The countries involved in the project are the ASEM membership countries.

The European Commission is a full member of ASEM, the other members are

the EU Member States and China, Korea, Japan, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia. It was during the second ASEM meeting, held in London in 1998, that member states and institutions demonstrated their willingness to strengthen cooperation against money laundering.

The scheduled ASEM summit to be held in Copenhagen on September 23-24, 2002, will focus particularly on New Security Issues in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of the 11th of September, 2001. Related topics will, however, include money laundering and drug trafficking and other forms of cross-border crime.

The first activity of the project, a comprehensive needs assessment establishing training needs in the Asian member countries, will commence in September 2002.

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Dangerous liaisons exhibition

In promoting human security, the 'Dangerous Liaisons' exhibition was set up two times: first at ESCAP's 58th Commission Session (16-22 May 2002) and second in connection with the Charity Concert to Promote Human Security in Asia-Pacific (27-28 June 2002). The exhibition was organized by ESCAP in cooperation with UNAIDS, ODCCP and ILO and produced by the ESCAP HRD section.

The concept of this creative presentation was designed to call attention to the hard facts about HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and human trafficking as a 'wake up call', show the vulnerability and connectivity of everyone towards problems in a globalizing world, and provide a light of hope of what can be done to solve the problem.

The exhibition consisted of eight panels with 30 'people' (representing 30 facts on HIV/AIDS, drugs and human trafficking) standing in a circle. The eight panels represented pledge, commitment, and action plans of the government, ESCAP and other UN agencies responding to the facts of the dangerous liaisons.

—Patricia M. Budiyanto, UNDCP, Bangkok

UN/ODCCP Regional Centre Counters Human Trafficking

The ODCCP Regional Centre (RC) has entered the fight against international human trafficking with the appointment of a Regional Legal Policy Adviser (RLPA). Responding to an increasing global interest in addressing the modern-day slave trade from a legal and law enforcement perspective, the Regional Centre is seeking to ensure that law enforcement responses in the region are comprehensive, collaborative, and cooperative. A central tenet of this latest development within the Centre is to ensure that the international community gives regional governments as much support as possible to stem the traffic.

The role of the RLPA, while also addressing the broader range of human trafficking issues as they occur in the Asia-Pacific, specifically focuses on the task of strengthening legal and enforcement responses to human trafficking in the Mekong sub-region (Thailand, China, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam). In the Mekong sub-region, the United Nations Inter-Agency Project (UNIAP) on Trafficking in Women and Children stands as a pivotal coordination body. UNIAP

identified a range of needs for countries in the region to more effectively counter human trafficking.

A particularly critical need identified is for improved and more coordinated information collection and analysis. Much is known about discrete parts of the problem of human trafficking, a great deal of knowledge on aspects of the problem being held by various agencies. However, this knowledge is disaggregated. It is the intention of the RC to work towards helping regional parties to better collect, collate, analyse and disseminate information on the subject.

The RLPA will seek to provide strategic guidance for legal and law enforcement interventions in this region, with a view to providing the platform for future anti-trafficking work. The RLPA's objectives include to:

1. Provide a regional focal point for legal initiatives on trafficking in persons;
2. Develop and maintain an overview of existing and planned initiatives in the area of legal remedies/criminal justice with regard to trafficking in persons in the Mekong sub-Region;

3. Undertake an analysis of what is achievable in the area of legal remedies and human rights on a country-by-country basis, including an assessment of constraints and outline priority steps,

4. Strengthen co-ordination between national, regional and international agencies involved in supporting legal measures against trafficking in persons, and to advocate for the allocation of resources into priority areas. This will include particular, but not exclusive, reference to the recommendations set by the Trafficking Protocol as well as the International Labour Organisation's Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour);

5. Provide substantive input into the development of follow-up projects in the area of legal remedies; and

6. Work with other key agencies in the sub-region to strengthen systems to monitor and follow up on individual cases.

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The world council of religious leaders

The launch of the Council, according to Dr. Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary of UN ESCAP for Asia and the Pacific, was timely at a moment when problems and tension are often seen as connected with religious, ethnic and cultural misunderstanding and intolerance. Particularly the Asian and the Pacific region, which has been enriched by its diversity in culture, ethnicity, religion and traditions, has equally been challenged by tensions and conflicts in its various parts.

Therefore, the Council seeks to inspire people of all faiths in the pursuit of peace and mutual understanding. It will also assist the United Nations and its agencies by providing the spiritual resources of the world's religious

traditions in the prevention, resolution and healing of conflicts as well as in addressing global social and environmental problems with cultural and religious sensitivity.

The launching of the Council took place in Bangkok, Thailand on June 12th – 14th, 2002 at Buddhamonthon (a Buddhist shrine) for the opening ceremony and at UN ESCAP Conference Center. This event was co-hosted by Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University with fifty to seventy preeminent religious leaders attending from abroad together with additional 50 to 100 regional leaders. The senior leaders of the world's religions gathered in this event to work towards world

peace through addressing problems of conflict, poverty and the natural environment as well as issues of human security, including, for example, war, poverty, crime and drug abuse.

"Religions may manifest themselves in widely different practices and belief systems, but at heart we are dealing in universal values: To be kind, to be merciful, to be tolerant, to love our neighbors. No single religion can claim a monopoly on such teachings."

-Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations-

-Patricia M. Budiyanto, UNDCP, Bangkok

How can **the concept of human security** bring new insights to the study of **human insecurity and deprivation** in East and Southeast Asia?



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

The United Nations University Peace and Governance Programme, and the UN/ODCCP Regional Centre have entered into a partnership under a joint research project on “The Dark Side of Globalisation: ‘Uncivil Society’ in an Era of Interdependence”.

The project will explore and deepen understanding of the human and non-traditional security challenges of globalization’s dark side, with a particular focus upon East and South-east Asia. It will examine the dynamics and causes of (and possible interconnections among) these security challenges based upon expert empirical analysis and apply this knowledge to further the security discourse, identify capacity and knowledge gaps and generate policy recommendations.

The utility of traditional – and unilateral – ‘power political’ tools in ensuring the security of citizens and communities is increasingly in question in the face of challenges that are not always state-centric nor military. Traditional security does for example not include health, welfare and/or development challenges. But these issues become security concerns when they reach crisis point, when they undermine and diminish the survival chances of significant proportions of the citizens of society, and when they threaten the stability and integrity of society

...A (re)orientation of security toward human needs can be more effective, more cost efficient and more stable...

and the rights of its members. “Human security” will serve as one of the conceptual mainstays for the study as a different yet unifying conceptual framework to demonstrate the meaningfulness and policy relevance of approaching diverse issues through this new policy prism. The basic objective will be to demonstrate that a (re)orientation of security toward human needs can be more effective, more cost efficient, more stable in systemic terms, and ethically sounder than a conception of security resting solely upon military defence of a territory.

Through the engagement and contributions of academic researchers, national government representatives, UN officials and representatives of regional organizations, the project will

examine the relationship between different threats to human security, and demonstrate how this knowledge can be applied to problem solving policy-making. It will also consider the link between human security and other concepts (such as human development, national security, sustainable development, human rights, ‘good’ governance) in order to develop a model of human security that has general explanatory relevance and scope.

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Indonesia **moves** to a

The country takes a run at tackling IDU Trends

UNDCP has launched a country response to increasing trends toward injecting drug use in Indonesia by introducing a regional project for tackling IDU in East Asia.

The one-year project was initiated with the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) on 27 June in conjunction with International Day Against Illicit Drug Abuse and Trafficking, and the theme of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS.

During the opening of the Indonesian public awareness campaign on 26 June, the importance of collaborative national and international responses was empha-

sized by President Megawati Soekarno Putri who also called for more direct action to alleviate the growing drug problems in the country.

Indonesia, Myanmar and Vietnam share the concern about increasing injecting drug use trends in recent years. The trends are directly related to the abuse of heroin.

Indonesia has estimated that more than 80 percent of known drug users are using the injecting method; with the majority also sharing contaminated injecting equipment. This high-risk behavior, combined

with a wide circle of sexual contacts is creating significant public health risk of infection with HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B and C.

In its first steps toward risk prevention, Nurfaizi, Executive Director of BNN, will directly lead the project at the national level with guidance and technical support from the UNDCP Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific. An organizational assessment of BNN will be conducted to support immediate plans to build organizational capacity through training and development of personnel involved with drug abuse and HIV/AIDS. This will lead to the

Laundering Rupiahs

Indonesia moves to get in line with international standards regarding anti-money laundering measures

In July 2001, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a global task force that was set up in 1989 under the auspices of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), added Indonesia to their annual list of countries deemed “uncooperative” in combating money laundering. Being blacklisted may have serious effects as the global task force can take various steps against these countries such as warning multinational corporations against business ventures with these and making it more difficult for the countries’ banks to operate abroad.

In view of such developments and under the AusAID TAMF project, Indonesia’s Ministry of Finance was assisted in developing and implementing a new money laundering law in order to satisfy international standards. On the 25th of March 2002, the House of Representatives passed a bill on Money Laundering and, thereby, signalled a will to fight the illegal flow of money into legitimate channels. On the 17th of April 2002, the bill was signed by President Megawati Sukarnoputri and, subsequently, became law.

The new law, containing 10 chapters,

outlines measures to hinder criminal offences of money laundering. The penalty for those having been found guilty of laundering money will be imprisonment between five years and fifteen years plus between Rp 5 billion (570 000 US\$) and Rp 15 billion (1,7 million US\$) in fines. The law also affirms that financial institutions, such as banks, are obliged to report to the authorities suspicious transactions involving at least Rp 500 million.

Furthermore, Indonesian citizens are, hereafter, compelled to report to the customs office if they plan to bring in or take out a sum of Rp 100 million (11 300 US\$), or more, in cash. The law also provides for the establishment of the Financial Transaction and Report Analysis Centre (PPATK). This unit will be responsible for the analysis and investigation of reported suspicious transactions, as well as financial institutions and individuals who failed to report suspicious transactions.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the new law is Article 33 concerning bank secrecy. This article is of fundamental importance as one of the factors leading to the prospering of money laundering in some countries is due to strict banking secrecy laws. An end to money laundering can not come about without a revision of bank secrecy enabling the law enforcement to obtain the information needed to pinpoint the offenders. Article 33 authorises the investigator, the public prosecutor and judges to request information from the financial service providers regarding a client’s property. This fundamentally facilitates any investigation of an offence related to money laundering.

However, despite the enactment of this new law and the apparent good-will of the Indonesian government and parliament to combat money laundering, Indonesia still has a long way to go. Since the enactment of the law criticism has come from various directions.

Despite all the good intentions and recent efforts made by Indonesia to shed its image as a money laundering haven, they have proven to be insufficient to remove the country from the FATF black-

list of “uncooperative” nations. During the FATF meeting held in June this year Indonesia failed to be eliminated from this list mainly due to two reasons, namely, the law fails to criminalise unauthorised reporting and the threshold of Rp 500 million (some US\$ 56,600) for reporting suspicious transactions was deemed too high. Another reason was the fact that the task force has not yet seen any real action from the Indonesian government to deal with the problem. To counteract this inactivity, the Indonesian government now plans to step up the establishment of the PPATK. This unit will be set up already in August, a lot quicker than previously anticipated.

Indonesia has stated that they will continue to work on improving their country’s image regarding money laundering and revise the new law, but they have also stated that such a revision will take time. The UNDCP is, at present, participating in the ASEM Anti-Money Laundering Project, which is aimed at developing sustainable institutional capacity in the Asia region to address money laundering concerns at national, regional and international levels. The project will involve technical assistance in establishing and/or improving an anti-money laundering regime, annual anti-money laundering method workshops and training and technical assistance programmes and seminars to ASEM Asian Jurisdictions.

The central focus will be on the regulators, law enforcement officers and administrators working in key units, judicial cooperation, exchange of intelligence and processing of suspicious transactions related to money laundering. Indonesia is one out of ten Asian government counterparts involved in this new project and, hopefully, with support and some assistance Indonesia will be able to take the action needed to be removed from the FATF blacklist in the near future and, thereby, be in line with the international standards regarding anti-money laundering measures.

—Claire Smellie, UNDCP, Bangkok

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further development of a national working group to develop and advocate strategic integrated plans of action on drug use and HIV/AIDS.

In separate discussions with other national and regional partners, UNDCP has linked the tentative training regime with the resources of USAID, Family Health International, and the Asian Harm Reduction Network who also recognize the need for more effective interventions in the country.

BNN and UNDCP are also looking toward the outcomes of the assessment to guide the development of a partnership programme over the medium term of three years.

—Wayne Bazant, UNDCP, Bangkok

Action plan to counter ATS agreed in

Chinese authorities have, during the last 2-3 years, reported a dramatic increase in seizures of crystallized methamphetamine (“ice”). Record high seizures were reported in 1999 and in 2001 in China.

The records were in both cases founded on a few very large seizures, which placed China on top of the list of global ATS seizures. A large number of laboratories was also reported to have been detected in South China, mainly in Fujian and Guangdong provinces. In addition, reports from Japan and the Philippines stated that a large portion of the ATS seizures in their countries originated in South China. China reported a significant increase in seizures of MDMA (ecstasy) and authorities in Fujian province detected a large MDMA laboratory in 2000. Furthermore, in 2002, Indonesia reported the detection of a MDMA laboratory in Jakarta, a discovery that entailed a large investigation.

The UNDCP Regional Centre and the



National Narcotic Control Commission (NNCC) in China agreed in May 2002 that there was a need to explore further the situation and agree upon an action plan to counter ATS production and trafficking in the subregion. It was decided that a Workshop on Regional Cooperation to Counter ATS should be arranged by NNCC and UNDCP. The Australian Federal Police (AFP)

agreed to partly fund the workshop. Delegates from Australia, China (including Hong Kong SAR, Fujian, Guangdong and Yunnan provinces), Japan, Korea, Myanmar, Philippines and Thailand met in Zhongshan City, Guangdong, China on 14-15 August 2002.

The workshop found that China and the other countries had made strong efforts to suppress the production. However, the

China National Narcotics Control Commission invests in long term public preventive Education

A world-class Chinese facility for public education on drug control has welcomed more than 100,000 visitors since its opening last year in Guizhou Province at Guiyang City.

The National Drug Control Education Base covers all aspects of the drug control situation. Excellent historical and current information is depicted through multimedia for wide public and professional appeal. A complete range of subjects are covered; high level political advocacy, tragedies of drug abuse in specific personal cases, other stories concerning children of drug dependent parents, historical information on infamous “opium traffickers” in the former East India Company, two dimensional and relief maps of the Golden Triangle



and surrounding areas, related presentations on illicit drug production and trafficking, theatric displays of drug abuse

treatment, as well as pictorial depictions of important prevention and control targets.

The facility was constructed as an inde-

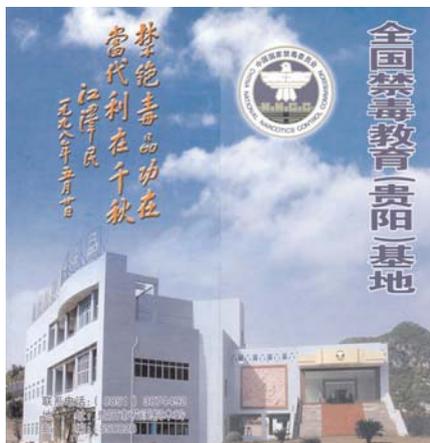
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delegates agreed that ATS is a major threat to the region and that no definite mechanisms exist for law enforcement cooperation. The workshop also found that production and trafficking of MDMA (ecstasy) is an emerging threat and that there is a need to improve identification and profiling of ATS seizures.

The outcome of the workshop was an operational action plan for cooperation and the participating countries agreed to establish channels of communication. The participating countries agreed, inter alia, to share information and intelligence in a timely manner, to conduct joint investigations including controlled deliveries and to explore the possibility of using scientific tools such as profiling of drugs for the analysis of drug law enforcement information.

The action plan will be an important tool for the countries in the region in the field of drug law enforcement and will promote close and extensive exchange of information.

—Yngve Danling, UNDCP, Bangkok



pendent structure with extensive galleries and education facilities on two floors. Cost of the development was approximately 11 million Yuan (USD 1.4 million). The facility is managed by the National Narcotics Control Commission through its Guizhou counterpart.

Professional guides provide tours, but some translation assistance will be needed for English language. This is a “must see” facility for anyone interested in China and its drug control efforts.

—Story and photos, Wayne Bazant, UNDCP, Bangkok

No drugs on tracks

Guiyang railway develops a good practice for prevention of drug abuse in the workplace

A railroad vehicle maintenance agency with years of recognized good performance is suddenly confronted by decreasing work performance and a huge increase in property thief.

These were serious issues demanding attention from the Guiyang Railway Local Agency in 1997. Property crimes had accounted for losses of almost \$ 70,000 that year alone in a work environment that was difficult to keep secure. The agency included approximately 3000 employees, organized into nineteen different work groups, operating at 135 work sites.

With the assistance of the Guizhou Narcotics Control Committee, Agency management started to look beyond the problem of inventory security toward the wider emerging dilemma about risks to human security the form of expanding drug abuse in the province. Links between drug abuse and work security issues were suspected because of the relatively young age of the work force. The management also suspected that the theft might have a direct relationship to increasing financial problems of their drug dependent employees.

Through a series of consultations, agency management first initiated a regulatory policy against drug abuse in the work place. The policy also provide for compulsory workers health assessments, including drug testing, an extensive propaganda campaign about the dangerous of drugs and suggested responses of workers and their families, a regularized system of worker education through group leaders, and a strong expectation for group leader compliance in reporting suspected cases of drug abuse. Compulsory rehabilitation (with agency subsidized financing) formed a third pillar of the policy, using local rehabilitation services. Personalized supervision of the drug dependent person on the worksite and at their home made up the forth monitoring and evaluation

monitoring and evaluation component.

Upon initiating the programme, 72 employees were initially identified as having drug problems. Through further assessment, the number was reduced to 32. Each person was referred to the Guiyang Compulsory Rehabilitation Centre for detoxification, and participation in the education and disciplined health recovery programme.

Workgroup members regularly visited their mates in rehabilitation in order to provide emotional support and encouragement. Emotional and financial support was also extended to family members of those being treated.

After returning from the rehabilitation centre, each of the employees was assigned a personal supervisor to monitor their work activities. Family members were also encouraged to be part of the monitoring process.

In August 2002, the successful results of the programme were highly evident to the Multi-sectional Task Force on Drug Use and HIV/AIDS in briefings at Guiyang City by the railway agency and party officials, by the high quality media presentation about the programme evolution, and especially by two of the agency employees who had been directly effected by the problems of opiate abuse and the programme of education and intervention. Each person provided testimonials to collectively show: the absence of relapse by all of the identified group of drug users, greatly improved quality of life for family members affected by drug abuse, and improved work performance of the recovered workers, including job promotions.

Agency management benefits were also clear through improved hiring practices with health screening, overall improvement in workforce production and a dramatic decline of property thief.

—Wayne Bazant, UNDCP, Bangkok

Putting **youth** first is the best practice in **substance abuse prevention**

Representatives of 13 Philippine community based organisations, met in Manila from June 10-13 to discuss and share experiences in initiating community based substance abuse prevention projects, specifically focussing on 'Assessing and Planning for Prevention of Substance Abuse Among Youth'.

The meeting, called by the United Nations Drug Control Program and the World Health Organisation, was the first Experience sharing meeting of the UNDCP/WHO Global Initiative on Primary Prevention of Substance Abuse (Global Initiative). The project is being implemented in eight countries in three regions: the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam (in this region), Belarus and Russia (in Central and Eastern Europe), and South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia (in South Africa). The aim of the project is to prevent substance abuse of licit and illicit drugs among young people through action at the community level. Moreover, the project also wants to document these experiences to be able to disseminate at the global level what works and what doesn't work in preventing substance abuse by young people.

Local partner experience sharing was facilitated at the four-day meeting through a range of interactive activities including story telling and role-plays. Topics of investigation included: collecting new and existing information; involving youth in collecting information; using the local situation assessment to mobilise the community; involving youth in planning; and involving the community in planning.

Philippine partners made a significant contribution to the collection of best practices in the Manila meeting. Local organizations asserted the need for youth to



Ribbon cutting to officially open youth Art Exhibition and Chess Competition supported by the Global Initiative in Pasay City, Manila



Local partner representatives and other participants at the Global Initiative First Experience Sharing Meeting in the Philippines.

be at the center of all community assessment, project planning and implementation, as well as active support from all sectors of the community. Building trust and rapport with youth and within the broader community was also considered essential to all aspects of project implementation.

This is the first of three series of Global Initiative Experience Sharing Meetings being held in all three regions over

the next year. National meetings for this first series will take place in Vietnam and Thailand over August and September 2002. Best practice statements from this first series will be collected globally, summarized and published in a booklet at the end of 2002.

For more information about the Global Initiative please visit the website at: http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/undcp_who_initiative/partners.shtml

–Katie Walker, SE Asia Regional Field Coordinator, Global Initiative Project on Substance Abuse Prevention, UNDCP, Vietnam

Drug Rehabilitation Bill To Become Law

In many societies the existence of substance abusers is often seen as shameful and they are often subjected to punishment. This attitude has resulted in the isolation and exclusion of addicts from the communities. Therefore, Thailand has now enacted the drug reha-

ilitation bill to protect and to safeguard the substance abusers from criminalization. This bill seeks to keep the public well aware of the possibility to play an active role in ensuring that addicts get the right treatment and support in order to free themselves from substance abuse. Moreover,

in providing support and care for young addicts, a "Dharma Army", has been set up with 3,000 voluntary monks to work together with communities and schools.

–Patricia M. Budiayanto, UNDCP, Bangkok

President **Megawati** Switches **“Lights on”** Awareness **Campaign** targeting drug abuse and HIV/AIDS

“Let us do it together and let us start now” was the rallying call for cooperation by President Megawati Sukarnoputri at the inauguration of the “lights on” movement to raise public awareness about the need for prevention of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS.

Ambassadors, senior government officials, and key non government organizations, including YCAB, joined the President in the palace ceremony to celebrate the beginning of International Day Against Illicit Drug Abuse and Trafficking on 26 June 2002.

In drawing attention to the need for international cooperation to counter the vast global network of illicit drug trafficking and organized crime, the President emphasized national responsibilities to face the problem. She also called upon the National Narcotics Board to further increase its technical capacity, facilities, systems and operational procedures as a means of confronting the general threat of drug abuse and the specific problem of drugs and HIV/AIDS.

The ceremony also included the recognition of numerous organizations and indi-



Film and TV personality, Ari, and other YCAB volunteers celebrating a successful “lights on” campaign for the prevention of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS

viduals for their contribution toward the development of public awareness and social responses to the dangers of drug abuse.

The ceremony was followed by a street campaign organized by YCAB to reinforce media messages calling for drivers to turn their lights during the 11:00am to 2:00pm period. With the support of national celebrities in national film, music, radio, and sports, the result was an outstanding success evidenced by the thousands of automobile lights that shone.

—Wayne Bazant, UNDCP, Bangkok

It is necessary to work together...

“Within the last decade, we have realized how fast the problem [drug abuse] has spread throughout the world. We are not alone, but whatever happens our national existence is clearly our own responsibility. Now, due to the broader network of illicit drug abuse and the increasing number of illegal activities supported by criminal organizations, there is the need to build better international cooperation to fight them.

Thus, this huge effort can only be materialized if we all cooperate in all our actions and movements...
 ...At the national level, it is necessary for us to work together to fight against drug abuse and HIV/AIDS.”

—Mrs. Megawati Sukarnoputri, President of the Republic of Indonesia, on the International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking – 26th June 2002

Charity concert promotes human security in Asia – Pacific

A charity concert to promote Human Security in Asia – Pacific was held in connection with the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. The concert was held in two venues, one on 27th of June at the United Nations Conference Centre and the other one on the 28th of June at the Siam City Hotel.

The first performance at the United Nations Conference Centre was gracefully presided over by Her Royal Highness Princess Chulabhorn. The orchestra was composed of 30 children trained in the Suzuki method of talent development at the Suzuki Music Academy in Turin, Italy. The programme consisted of music with messages in support of the United Nations goals for human security and included a multi-



media presentation on child labour, drug abuse, drug trafficking, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS and other human security issues. The concerts attracted a wide audience including members of the diplomatic community, senior government officials, representative governmental and non-gov-

ernmental organizations, school children, as well as representatives from the private sector. The events were covered widely by a variety of mass media including TV and radio stations.

Both venues turned out to be very successful. The combination of music and multimedia presentation made a strong impression on the audience. The concert was arranged in cooperation with UN/ESCAP, ILO/IPEC, UNAIDS, the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) and UNICEF with support from the EU, the Japan Foundation and the Italian Embassy as well as a number of private sponsors.

—Peter Lunding, UNDCP, Bangkok



Klong Toey's Forum and Street Parades: “People Power Against Drugs”

Klong Toey is one of the most congested areas in Bangkok comprising 43 small communities with an estimated population of 140,000 people in 17,500 households. Drug abuse has become a problem in Klong Toey and has been of great concern of relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as activity groups.

The United Nations' theme on “Substance abuse and HIV/AIDS” for International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking for 2002 was introduced to Klong Toey during 22-23 June 2002 in cooperation with a Thai NGO “Duang Prateep Foundation” in initiating two events “People Forum” on drug prevention and a street march by residents of Klong Toey.

The People Forum titled “Model for Solving Klong Toey's Illicit Drug Problems” was organized on 22 June at Chumchon Muban Pattana School, a government school in Klong Toey. Participants included community leaders and residents of Klong Toey who took the opportunity to discuss and to express their views on drugs.

Representatives from the Office of the Narcotics Control Board, the Narcotics Suppression Bureau of the Royal Thai



Police, the Labour Union of the Port Authority of Thailand, the Human Development Centre, the Volunteer Working Group, the District Office of Klong Toey, the Department of Mental Health, the Ministry of Public Health and a local police station all attended the forum.

Topics discussed covered the development in Klong Toey and how to solve the drug problems in a sustainable way, progress of the on-going anti-drug proj-

ects; law enforcement, rehabilitation; and strengthening the capacity of communities in drug control. Drug exhibitions from various organizations including UNDCP were displayed at the forum.

On 23 June 2002, adults and children of all communities in Klong Toey formed street parades conveying messages to highlight the UN's theme and raising awareness of the dangers of drugs and HIV/AIDS. Many people from the area had dressed

“Sanuk” without risk!

Substance abuse and HIV/AIDS

The complex relationship between drug abuse and HIV/AIDS is increasingly recognized as a priority for intervention to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South East Asia.

In Thailand the main public health concern is with the growing trend of stimulant abuse. There are an estimated 2 to 3 million drug users in the country and the main drug of abuse is methamphetamine produced in the Golden Triangle. A recent study among students in northern Thailand concluded that approximately 40% of the boys and 20% of the girls have already used yaba (the local street name for methamphetamine) at least once before.

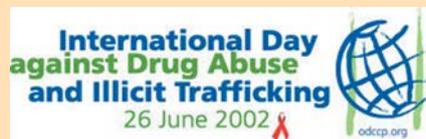
Among those who did use yaba before, 63 % have used 10 pills or less in the past 3 months (once every week end or less), and the main reasons given for using yaba include: “to have fun” (57%); “to feel good” (42%) and “greater endurance at parties” (33.6%).

The study confirms the relation between substance abuse and other risk behaviours. It recognizes the need for scaling up primary prevention of drug abuse, treatment and recovery programmes as well as more specific prevention messages for those who engage in risky behaviours in recreational contexts.

These needs were largely confirmed by a market research conducted in preparation for the 26 June celebration. The research concluded that the youth is highly exposed to drug abuse prevention messages and know that drugs are

dangerous, but this does not change their behaviours when it comes to recreational use of drugs among friends in order to have a good time (“Sanuk” in Thai language).

Building on these conclusions, the Regional Center convened a special evening on drug abuse prevention and HIV awareness at Ministry of Sound, one of Bangkok’s most fashionable night clubs. The renowned NGO “Population and Community Development Association” of Thailand organized the event with the help of 10 volunteers from Srinakharinwirot University. The celebration of International Day featured 2 VJs from Channel V and performances by popular guest stars (Groove Rider and DJ Andreas Schinke). On that occasion, UNDCP and PDA jointly developed a very attractive prevention kit on



dangerous drugs with warning messages on main immediate risks associated with substance abuse, including higher vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and other health hazards. The theme of the event was captured in the slogan “Have a good time, without risk”.

In spite of 26 June being a rainy Wednesday night in Bangkok and in spite of the conflicting semi final of the world cup, 1000 prevention kits were distributed between 9 p.m. and 2 a.m. on that night. Everybody had a good time, without risk!

—Guillaume Le Hegarat, UNDCP, Bangkok



up in fancy styles to capture the attention of the general public. The launching ceremony initiating the parades was chaired by H.E. Mr. Korn Dabbaransi, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Narcotics Control Board of Thailand with attendance of representatives of relevant agencies. In the evening, there were music played by the Royal Air Force and performances by children from various communities and schools.

In his statement during the parade

launching ceremony, Sandro Calvani, Representative of UN/ODCCP Regional Centre said “People power against drugs is defined as a drug control policy that entails organization of activities and mobilization of drug-related communities, mainly by the people themselves. The bold surfacing of new people-power in drug control encourages officials to refocus and include all segments of society in the implementation of drug control policies.

“People power against drugs”, namely

drug control policies that entail organizations of activities and mobilization of drug-affected communities mainly by the people themselves, represent the future...” The two events have embraced more than 3,000 people and more than 20 agencies concerned. The events are believed to have mobilized the people power in Klong Toey to take part in tackling the drug problem in their own community.

—Jamnan Panpatama, UNDCP, Bangkok

International Day Against Drugs in Lao PDR

Highlights Prevention

Every year, the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking gives the Lao authorities the opportunity to manifest their determination in acting against narcotic drugs.

The International Day 2002 was celebrated by many events throughout the country. The provinces of Huaphanh, Sayaburi, Bolikhamsay and Bokeo - among others - sent confiscated drugs up in flames. In Vientiane, a ceremony was held at That Luang Square attended by the Prime Minister, the Chairman of the Lao Commission for Drug Control and Supervision, ministers, members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of international organizations.

The morning event was highlighted by the burning of seized drugs, including 14.8 kg of heroin, 10.49 kg of opium, 647 790 amphetamine tablets and over 1,200 kg of

marijuana. Dr Halvor J. Kolshus, the UNDCP Representative in Lao PDR, expressed his satisfaction for all what has been achieved in the fight against illicit drugs in the country. But he focused on the problems that are still ahead, especially the threat of ATS among vulnerable youth and the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Indeed, surveys conducted by UNDCP found out that synthetic drug abuse is increasing in schools across Lao PDR. The importance of prevention was emphasized "so the youth is not caught in the evil web of drugs" and the necessity of a supportive environment underlined.

Laos is aware that the future of the young generation is at stake. Therefore, sports and cultural activities were organized in many provinces to warn the youth about the negative impacts and dangers of drug abuse. On Sunday June 23rd about a thousand participants, juniors as well

as seniors, ran a mini-marathon in early morning in the streets of the capital city. On Friday June 28th, over 3,000 people filled the National Cultural Hall for a pop concert in Vientiane. During six hours Lao pop stars and amateurs raised their voices against drugs and gave everybody a positive drug free experience.

The 2002 International Day against Drugs was a real celebration and the Government with the assistance of UNDCP reaffirmed its will to build a drug free country, while acknowledging the need for support from the international community. There is still plenty to do and one immediate challenge is to prevent new drugs, especially methamphetamine, to spread through Laos and to protect the youth against them.

—Hélène Thion, Intern, UNDCP, Vientiane

Community action the Queensland way



Each year in Mackay, Queensland, Australia, the United Nations International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is celebrated. The Annual Walk, which crosses a bridge, on this day has become a firm date in the community's calendar of events. This year Mackay's Paralympic Soccer Player Mr Beau Menzies led the walk.

The UN declared day coincides with the State's celebrations which marked a 'Drug Action Week.' This year the Mackay City Council erected banners in the main street encouraging the residents to make a difference.

Local media representatives went on a tour of drug education, prevention and treatment services in Mackay.

A circus workshop was held at a local Neighbourhood Centre to engage young people in the week's activities.

A four-page lift-out in a local newspaper was delivered to every urban and



rural household in Mackay. The lift-out was aimed to increase the community's understanding of what services were available for those whose lives were affected by alcohol

and illicit drugs.

The Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Australian South Sea Islander Health Service held a day of information, food

'Campaign to Join Forces to Combat Drugs' Increases Awareness of the Dangers of Drugs

Throughout Cambodia, people of all ages and backgrounds came together to campaign against illicit drugs as part of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking.

In the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, a march led by Teng Savong, head of the National Authority for Combating Drugs, and Bengt Juhlin, head of the UN/ODCCP Liaison Office, wound its way through the streets of the city to the central market. Banners and placards were held aloft by young and old alike, including over 50 cyclo drivers.

Cambodian Prime Minister, Hun Sen, made a nationwide address on television in which he urged his fellow countrymen and women to avoid illicit drugs. "I would like to appeal to all compatriots to be

and entertainment. They also launched their pamphlet highlighting the problem of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome.

The organisers of the celebrations were members of the Mackay Alcohol and Other Drugs Community Partnership. The partnership was formed in August 2000 and is a dynamic committed alliance of members from 9 community and non-government organisations together with 8 representatives from various state government departments.

Due to the efforts of the Partnership, the Queensland State Government has agreed to fund a ten-bed residential detoxification and community support service in Mackay. Queensland Health has involved the Partnership in the design of a residential service that would best serve the local community. This is a fine example of public participation in decision making and is due in part to the community's involvement in drug control highlighted by the annual celebration of the United Nations International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

— **Cr Deirdre Comerford**
Deputy Mayor of Mackay City Council and Chairperson of the Mackay Alcohol and Other Drugs Community Partnership
(E-mail) d.comerford@mackay.qld.gov.au



Marchers in Phnom Penh wave placards to raise awareness of the dangers of drug abuse (Photo: UN/ODCCP Liaison Office, Cambodia)



L-CDI students talk with market vendors on the banks of the River Mekong in Kompong Cham town. (Photo: UN/ODCCP Liaison Office, Cambodia)

aware that all illegal drugs destroy our brains and bodies, make us lose good friends. Drugs destroy our families and society and cause great risk of HIV/AIDS infection," Hun Sen said.

Throughout the country, government officials, NGO workers and everyday people joined together in marches and public discussions on the dangerous consequences of drug abuse. More than 500 students from the local NGO, Leadership-Character Development Institute (L-CDI), with the support of the UN/ODCCP Liaison Office, went out to meet members of the public in 12 provinces to engage them in discussions on the dangerous consequences of drug abuse.

The L-CDI students gave out Khmer language information leaflets which included details on how HIV/AIDS can be transmitted through intravenous drug use and especially by unsafe sexual practices whilst under the influence of narcotics. They also filled in data collection sheets

based on the information and experiences of the people they met in markets, shops and along the street throughout the country.

Feedback from the L-CDI students reconfirmed that many people in Cambodia have no knowledge about the dangers of illicit drugs and even those who knew about drugs such as methamphetamine thought they were simply "strong vitamins"!

UN/ODCCP is trying to raise funds to undertake a comprehensive drug awareness project focusing upon young people, working people and decision-makers. From the feedback received during the June 26 awareness event throughout Cambodia, it is clear that work to rapidly increase knowledge and understanding of drug abuse, together with the dangers of HIV/AIDS transmission through abusing drugs, is urgently required.

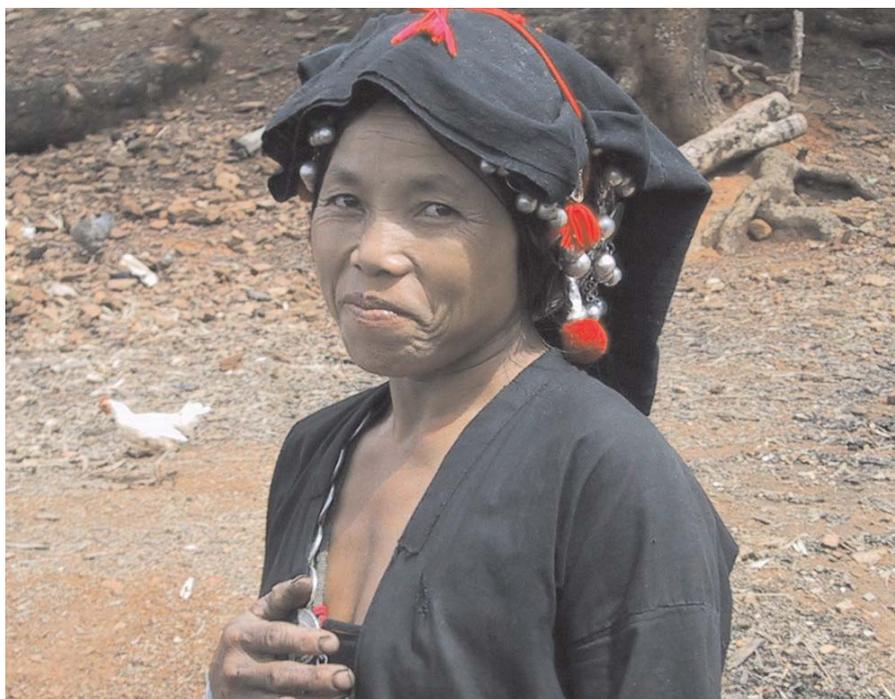
— **Graham Shaw, UN/ODCCP, Cambodia**

Opium cultivation on the decline in Lao PDR

On 18 June, at a press conference in Vientiane, Soubanh Srithirath, Chairman of the Lao National Commission for Drug Control and Supervision (LCDC), announced the results of the Opium Poppy Survey for 2002.

The survey estimated that there were 14,052 hectares of opium poppy under cultivation in the 2001-2002 season. This represented a reduction in total opium poppy area of 18.6% compared with the 2001 estimate of 17,255 hectares. The total potential production was estimated at about 112.1 tons of raw dry opium, representing a 16% decrease compared to 2001 and the national average yield was estimated at 8 kg/ha (potential yield).

These figures confirm the downward trend of opium poppy cultivation observed in Laos. Since 1998, the opium



Amazing life without drugs

A year ago, concerned citizens recognized the need to better address the problem of drug abuse in Myanmar. Ever since, two groupings have been proactive in supporting a series of youth-oriented initiatives.

First, some popular stars teamed up to create “Stars against Drugs”. Secondly, eight non-governmental organizations active in the field of drug control converged into “Rainbow”. Today, these two entities are the pillars of Myanmar’s initiative in the fight against drugs.

Recognizing that drug abuse, synthetic drug abuse in particular, is slowly but steadily spreading among teenagers residing in the urban areas, the UNDCP-supported civil society movement, decided to undertake a series of preventive measures. One of them is a comprehensive awareness-raising campaign known as “Amazing Life Without Drugs.”

The first tangible outcome of this all-round commitment occurred on June 21

when the first ever anti-drug music event took place in the Union of Myanmar. The “Stars against Drugs” group, including some of the country’s most celebrated stars, lent its popularity and joined forces to speak out against drugs. In the presence of national and international media representatives, the historical Strand Hotel in Yangon represented the ideal venue for a concert attended by over 1,200 youngsters.

Document and pamphlet distribution desks had been prepared for the occasion. Thanks to the cooperation of other UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations, the audience was hence provided with information on the devastating connections between substance abuse and HIV/AIDS.

In the wake of this successful night, on June 23, the second edition of the “Amazing Life Without Drugs Marathon” took place in the streets of Yangon. Over 300 people, including celebrities and professional athletes, took the street projecting another clear anti-drug message.

The above would not have been possible without the generous contribution of the local private sector, another crucial civil society constituent. The Tuesday Club and several private companies sponsored the events whereas the Strand Hotel provided the venue free-of-charge.

The music and sport events are only two of a series of steps designed to implement an effective and long-lasting campaign. Building around the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, information on drugs and their consequences were published by the major national journals and magazines. Additionally, an anti-drug public service announcement was aired on TV in July.

As for the long-term ramifications of the campaign, wall-posters, tinplates and street billboards – with some local celebrities acting as testimonials – are being produced and the whole packet is expected to be kicked off in the near future.

–Giovanni Gallo, UNDCP, Myanmar

cultivation area has steadily decreased by more than 50%. This is the result of the joint efforts between UNDCP and the Lao Government toward the elimination of opium production. The 2002 opium survey received support of the Lao Prime Minister's Office and benefitted from the full collaboration of the National Statistics Centre and the Provincial authorities. UNDCP provided financial and technical support to LCDC, with additional financing from USA.

Like the previous ones, the survey covering the 2001-2002 opium season was based on a sampling methodology. A sample of 421 villages from the 11 provinces constituting Northern Laos was surveyed. At the village level, the surveyors interviewed the village headman and opium poppy farmers and they physically measured a sample of opium poppy fields. Even if the sampling methodology gives potential and not exact figures, it is still the best instrument to draw a general trend.

Indeed, the information provided by the survey is of prime importance in elimination strategy planning, in decision making and in resource allocation. Besides, the survey confirmed that opium poppy cultivation mainly takes place in 6 of the 11 provinces targeted by the Opium Elimination Program launched in 1998 (88 % of the total area under cultivation).

The Chairman of the LCDC considered the results as "excellent". But still a lot has to be done. Indeed, the need for opium is linked to the number of addicts. As long as there is a demand, there will be a supply and the total number of opium addicts is currently estimated to be 52,613 persons compared to 58,175 persons in 2001 (9.6% decrease).

A large decrease in the area under poppy cultivation has been noticed in provinces where there are dynamic alternative development projects, and supply and demand reduction programs in operation. Thus, fulfilling the objective set by the Five-Year Action Plan, that is to say the complete elimination of opium cultivation in Lao PDR by 2005, requires successful alternative development projects combined with a community-based drug demand reduction component. Therefore, funds are needed for such projects in order to ensure sustainable development in Lao PDR.

—*Hélène Thion, Intern, UNDCP, Vientiane*



Strengthening of **JUDICIAL** and **PROSECUTORIAL** drug control capacity in East Asia

The 3rd Annual Meeting of the MLAAC Beijing, 7-9 August 2002

The Mutual Legal Assistance Advisory Committee (MLAAC) was formed in the framework of the project "Strengthening of Judicial and Prosecutorial Drug Control Capacity in East Asia" and convened for the first time in Bangkok on 13-17 November 2000. The formation of such a Committee is foreseen in the project document. The objective of the MLAAC is to suggest a workable system of mutual legal assistance in the MOU sub-region.

MLAAC has had three annual meetings since its inception; the first took place in Bangkok (13-17 November 2000), the second in Hanoi (4-7 June 2001) and the third in Beijing (7-9 August 2002), which is the last one.

MLAAC adopted a text of recommendations on mutual legal assistance for the first time in Bangkok. These recommendations were subsequently reviewed and amended in Hanoi and, most recently, in Beijing. In their finalized version the recommendations do suggest a workable system of mutual legal assistance, which has been the objective all along.

Apart from being a useful guideline for setting up such a system in the sub-



region, the recommendations also serve as a model and a check list for bilateral or multilateral treaties and national legislation. The recommendations are based on Article 7 of the 1988 Vienna Convention, which they carry further by means of adapting its provisions to the specific needs of the MOU-countries.

The signatories to the project document undertake to follow the recommendations issued by MLAAC. We do hope that this will be the case in the near future even after the termination of the project "Strengthening of Judicial and Prosecutorial Drug Control Capacity in East Asia," which is due to happen in the next few months.

—*Gerassimos Furlanos, UNDCP, Bangkok*

Drug tourism in Lao PDR: the flip side of the coin

Since Lao PDR opened its doors to foreign visitors, it has been one of the fastest growing tourist destinations in South East Asia.

The tourism industry is still small compared to neighbors such as Thailand but has become an important revenue-earner. It plays a vital role in the economy contributing to both the GDP growth and the balance of payment. Even though if tourism seems to be good for the national economy, it also has its hidden face: drug tourism. Low budget tourists (backpackers) are increasingly discovering Laos, including the hill tribes and the opium fields in the north.

More and more backpackers are coming to Laos merely in search of an opium experience. Most of them come from Western Europe, North America and Australia and expect Laos to be the old cliché inherited from the colonial time. Some have been travelling around before—for example in Thailand—where smoking opium was sometimes offered to tourists as part of organized tours.

Laos has been long preserved from tourism and its dark sides but now it appears that some have decided to take advantage of the drug tourism trend and supply the tourists. For instance, the small city of Vang

Vieng (Vientiane province) welcomes thousands of backpackers all year long and many of them decide to prolong their stay. Indeed they feel good in a place where it has been reported that some of the restaurants offered “happy” meals to their customers, i.e. meals prepared with marijuana, and where tuktuks can take them to remote villages where they can smoke opium. In Vientiane it also has been reported that tuktuk drivers offer different kinds of drugs to the tourists they drive around.



What backpackers do not know is that their behavior has a strong impact on the local population. Although the use of opium has been traditionally confined to old and sick people, Lao youth look at foreigners as role models and may want to imitate them. Moreover, drug tourism tends to jeopardize the efforts of the government, the UNDCP and the NGOs, which are spending time and money in looking for and providing alternatives to the poor opium farmers.

The Lao Government tries to prevent drug tourism by launching campaigns to promote an ethical and sustainable tourism. In places often visited by tourists, such as restaurants and pubs, warning posters spreading the message that drug tourism do damage can be seen. They try to explain that the country needs to get rid of the drug-based economy and that drug tourism will push Laos' economic development back.

Drug tourism is a real plague for Lao people as well as for tourists who usually are not aware of the dangers connected with opium abuse. No study has yet compiled data on the topic but it is known that every year there are tourists who die from drug a overdose.

—Hélène Thion, Intern, UNDCP, Vientiane

ASPARAGUS: A New Business Opportunity for Former Opium Farmers

Among the crops providing viable alternatives to opium cultivation in the highlands, one is taking off with increasing economic success. Asparagus has been promoted with success especially in the Xieng Khuang province where the UNDCP has an alternative development project in Nonghet District.

Successful experiments have been carried out in many of the district's villages. In Keopatou, a remote village, 50 households out of 74 grow asparagus. Mr Sai Kue Lor was the first one to venture into asparagus cultivation and says his income has increased since he has switched from

opium to asparagus.

The vegetable requires relatively little labor and can be grown in gardens, which is much easier for farmers than walking far in the hills to grow illicit crops. Moreover it is nutritious and has a relatively good price on the market. The Keopatou inhabitants said they could easily sell asparagus on the Nonghet market and they even sometimes went to Phonsavanh to sell their products. The access to the market is still uncertain because of the bad conditions of the roads and farmers usually do not have any means of transportation so they have to walk on a muddy path for several kilometers to reach

Nonghet municipality. However, roads have been improved considerably during recent years and further improvements are in the pipeline.

Asparagus has also made its way further down the mountains and demand is now growing in Vientiane. A few restaurants are supplied with asparagus from villages targeted by the UNDCP Nonghet alternative development project, and the market is expected to widen as project staff regularly take asparagus to the city to advertise it to potential purchasers.

Hélène Thion, Intern, UNDCP, Vientiane

Cambodia Begins **New Era** in **Law Enforcement** Training

Have you ever sat through hour after hour of lectures and powerpoint presentations, or focus group discussions, as part of a training course? Ever wished you could learn at your own pace anywhere and receive one-on-one tuition? In addition, is it the same senior and mid-ranking officers who always attend workshops, but the frontline officers who come into daily contact with the problems, for example potential traffickers of illicit drugs and contraband, never receive



Interest has been expressed within Cambodia as to the potential for expanding the computer based training modules beyond illicit drugs to include other aspects such as human trafficking. The UN/ODCCP Liaison Office in Cambodia is discussing such ideas with donors and national agencies that have an interest in such an approach developing in the future.

—Graham Shaw, UN/ODCCP, Cambodia



The International Border Police office in Sihanoukville, refurbished to house the computer-based training centre (Photo: UN/ODCCP)

technical training to improve their interdiction skills at land, sea and air borders?

These are just some of the sentiments expressed by Cambodian participants of a wide range of workshops and seminars intended to develop the capacity of the law enforcement community's human resources.

All of this is about to change in Cambodia. Computer based training centres have been established in the capital, Phnom Penh, and at the deep-sea port of Sihanoukville on the Gulf of Thailand.

Four officers from the National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD) have been given training instruction by UNDCP in the roles, responsibilities and technical skills to be Training Managers. The first training of Cambodian law enforcement officers began in June.

New UN/ODCCP Cambodia Website

The UN/ODCCP Liaison Office in Cambodia recently brought online its website at: www.unodccp.org.kh

One of the key features of the site is the ability to view regularly updated news items related to illicit drugs, human trafficking, transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism in Cambodia.

In addition, translations of local media news items from the Khmer language into English are also available as well as documents for download related to Cambodia and the region.

Suggestions on how the new website can be improved will always be most welcome and should be addressed to Graham Shaw at: unodccp@unodccp.org.kh

—Graham Shaw, UN/ODCCP, Cambodia



Summer **rice** in the Wa

Now in its fourth year, UNDCP Myanmar's Wa Alternative Development Project covers a wide range of development activities. Driving through the project area, which covers 2,000 km² and is home to some 45,000 people, the first-time visitor might feel overwhelmed by the range of activities, from hospitals and schools to irrigation and electrification projects. I was such a visitor, trying to take in the scale and scope of the project during a recent visit to the Wa project.

The landscape of the Wa region, along Myanmar's eastern border with China, is idyllic: rolling hills, high mountains, small rivers. And wherever the eye looks, fields: be it rice or poppy, fields dot the mountains, cover the valleys, and line the rivers. Visiting in early June, just before the onset of the rainy season, most of the fields were in the early stages of rice cultivation or lying fallow. But turning a corner on the rutty road revealed a surprising sight: a large field full of high stalks of rice, ready for harvest.

This is the summer rice initiative in the township of Mong Kar, an effort by the Wa project to address the food shortages faced by farmers by introducing new crops. 75% of the population in the project area face rice shortages during six months of the year. Over 95% of poppy farmers cite rice shortages as the main reason for



cultivating poppy, which can be sold for rice and other necessities.

Summer rice addresses these shortages by providing farmers with a second harvest at a time when their fields would otherwise lie fallow. It is a hybrid seed that requires less water and can thus grow during the months of the dry season. If that last sentence made sense to you, try putting yourself in the slippers of an illiterate farmer in the Wa hills. The fact is, most farmers were skeptical of the idea.

Rather than convince farmers of agricultural advances in the five local languages

– Shan, Lahu, Akha, Wa and Burmese – the Wa project set up a pilot field in cooperation with local authorities and farmers. Together, project staff and farmers prepared the field, cultivated the rice, and inspected its progress. And the day that our car turned the corner, it was almost harvest time.

On the first harvest day, key farmers from townships throughout the project area were invited by the Wa project to witness the summer rice harvest – seeing, after all, is believing. With transportation and meals provided by the project, farmers from villages over four hours away made the trip – and saw that summer rice might well be a sensible idea. Not only that, but in the pictures taken during the preparation of the field, at planting and at several points thereafter, they saw that this rice cultivation was really not so different from what they did during the regular monsoon season.

Next year, the Wa project is hopeful to expand summer rice beyond the pilot fields. To make this possible, the Wa project is building a canal to irrigate fields in the Mong Kar region. Together, these two measures could go a long way in making this part of the project area poppy-free while bettering the lives of farmers.

–Nikolas Win Myint, UNDCP, Myanmar



Health Care Pays

On August 14, 2002 Mr. Bjørn Melgaard, WHO Representative for Thailand, presented the findings of the Jeffrey Sachs' Commission on Macroeconomics and Health at the United Nations Conference Center in Bangkok.

The Commission on Macroeconomics and Health, chaired by Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs and consisting of 18 leading macroeconomists and health and development experts, was established in January 2000 to assess the place of health in global economic development. The report concluded the followings:

- health is a priority goal in its own right and a central input into economic development and poverty reduction;
- a few health conditions are responsible for a high proportion of the health deficit of the poor;
- increased investment in health would translate into hundreds of billions of dollars per year of increased income in the low-income countries;
- the level of health spending in low-income countries is inadequate to address the health challenges;
- investments in reproductive health, including family planning, are crucial

accompaniments of investments in disease control (esp. HIV/AIDS);

- increased health coverage requires greater financial investments and removing the non-financial constraints to health services;
- increased investment in health could save 8 million lives a year and generate \$360 billion annually within 15 years.

The Commission's report emphasizes the need to invest in health as an engine boosting economic and social growth, reducing poverty and contributing to the development of the society. The report argues that a limited number of cost-effective interventions could save the lives of a considerable number of people and generate incomes for the low- and middle-income countries, reason why they should be dramatically scaled up.

Further on, the efforts of all countries to allocate a larger budget from their respective domestic resources should be complemented by a significantly increased aid to health coming from donor countries. However, the accomplishment of these aims should be speeded up by the endeavors of the low and middle-income countries to establish clear strategies for Macrohealth.

Among the topics touched by the report, of particular interest to the UND-

CP's scope of activities is the HIV/AIDS problem, ranked by the report among the main causes of avoidable deaths in the low-income countries. The Commission strongly endorsed the establishment of a Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (GFATM) intended to support a bold and aggressive program focusing on prevention of new infections together with treatment for those already infected. In the scope of the report's recommendations, stipulated as well are prevention programs for highly vulnerable groups like injection drug users and commercial sex workers.

In most countries of the Southeast Asia region, the rapid spread of HIV infections is associated with risky drug using behaviors aggravated by the recent trends of drug trafficking and consumption. Especially now, when many affected countries still face the so-called concentrated epidemic phase, the HIV/AIDS issue should be accorded the maximum priority it deserves. By intervening at this point on a scale that is likely to make a difference, the steepness of the HIV/AIDS slope can be abated, impeding it from following the typical exponential growth curve and from entering a generalized epidemic phase in the coming years.

—Oana Luca, UNDCP, Bangkok

Personalia



Ms. Claire Smellie (United Kingdom) has recently rejoined the Regional Centre as a Project Coordinator for the new ASEM Anti-Money Laundering Project. The project aims to develop a sustainable institutional capacity in the Asia region to address money laundering concerns at a

national, regional and international level. She will be based at the project office at the Thai Anti-Money Laundering Office. Miss Claire Smellie worked for us for a period of time last year and was, thereafter, proposed to be our focal point for this new project.

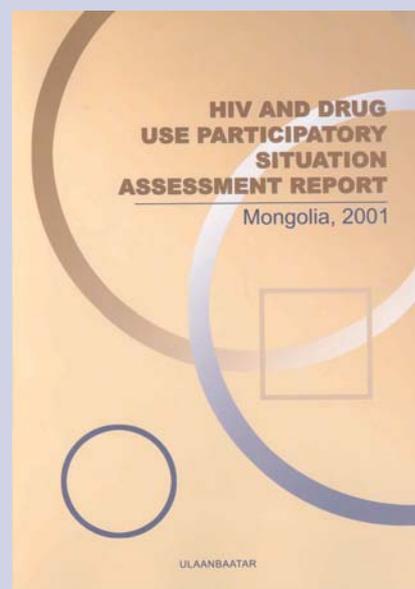


Ms. Oana-Elena Luca (Romania) has joined the Regional Center as an Intern. Oana completed her post graduate studies in Geopolitics and Economic Geostrategy at the Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania. By joining the six-month internship at the UNDCP Regional Center, she fulfills a compulsory part of the Master program that she is attending in Germany. Oana will carry out a study on the recent trends in the evolution of illicit drug markets in Southeast Asia. She will also assist in the implementation of the ACCORD process and in collating data for the situation analysis in the region.

HIV and Drug Use Participatory Situation Assessment Report: Mongolia 2001, Ulaanbaatar: NAF, UNDCP & Alliance, 2002. The unique status of Mongolia in terms of a very low HIV prevalence is very likely to be changed unless proper prevention steps, particularly directed at the most vulnerable communities, are taken quickly. The Russian HIV epidemic associated with IDU has reached Erkutsk, which is just north of the Mongolian border.

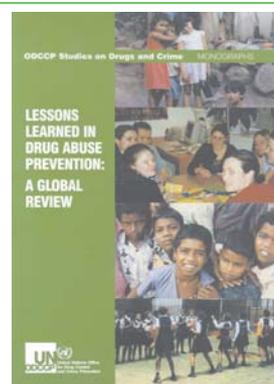
This suggests that the epidemic is most likely to have already reached Mongolia. In response to urgent needs to assess the current situation of HIV and drug use, the Mongolian NGO National AIDS Foundation (NAF) carried out a Participatory Situation Assessment (PSA) of drug use and HIV in selected sites across Mongolia in 2001. The

International HIV/AIDS Alliance provided technical support in the preparation and the implementation of this PSA. The assessment was funded by the UNDCP. The outcome of this cooperative endeavor is a very well written report based on comprehensive high quality research. The report concludes that the absolute number of IDUs is currently very small and heroin injection has not yet crossed the border on a large scale. However, morphine use is on the rise in Mongolia and the drug has become easily accessible on the open market. There are also signs of a linkage between drug use and commercial sex work. The report is available from NAF, 9A Peace Avenue, Sukhbaatar district, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Phone: (+976-11) 318 016, Fax: (+976-11) 321 659, E-mail: monaids@magicnet.mn, Website: [Http://www.naf.org.mn](http://www.naf.org.mn)



Lessons Learned in Drug Abuse Prevention: A Global Review, Vienna: UN/ODCCP, 2002. The comprehensive report prepared by the Demand Reduction Section at the UNDCP Headquarters contains a number of interesting chapters including a description of the problem of drug abuse, a description of the available demand reduction strategies and an overview of drug abuse prevention on a global level. Additionally, the report contains 15 different case studies including case studies from Indonesia, Australia and India.

The case study from Indonesia describes a project, which mobilizes families and communities for drug abuse prevention at grassroots level implemented by RECON-INDO. The publication is available from the UNDCP Demand Reduction Section, Vienna International Centre, P.O. Box 500, A-10400, Vienna, Austria, Phone: (+43-1) 26060-0, Fax: (+43-1) 26060 5866, E-mail: undcp_hq@undcp.un.or.at, Website: [Http://www.undcp.org](http://www.undcp.org)



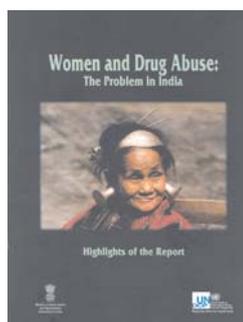
Indonesia Country Profile, Bangkok: UNDCP, 2002. It is well known that Indonesia has experienced a rapid increase in drug abuse in recent years. The 30-page Indonesia Country Profile is the first comprehensive report on the drug control and crime prevention situation in this country. Published by the Regional Centre, the report is based on available but fragmented information that has been put together in one systematic analysis

to provide a comprehensive yet quickly accessible overview of the current challenges and activities in Indonesia. The Profile describes contextual factors such as social, economic and political conditions, but focuses on presenting the available data reflecting trends in drug production, trafficking and abuse. A comprehensive table based on several sources shows the trend in seizures of six categories of drugs over a five-year period. With regards to crime issues, topics such as money laundering, corruption, human trafficking and smuggling of migrants are covered.

The Country Profile also provides a close look at the drug control management in Indonesia, and identifies other public and private agencies that are involved in the fight against drugs and crime. With a summary of current international assistance, the analysis of the drugs and crime situation in Indonesia is concluded by suggestions for future priority areas. The Indonesia Country Profile is available at the UNDCP Regional Centre and on the Regional Centre's website, <http://www.undcp.un.or.th>



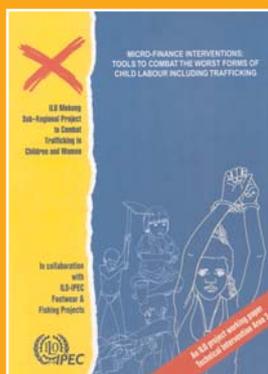
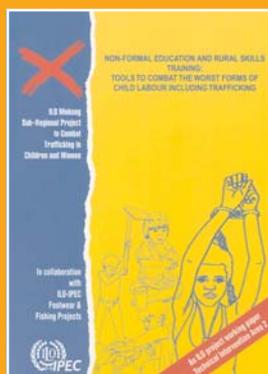
Women and Drug Abuse - The Problem in India: Highlights of the Reports, Delhi: UNDCP-ROSA and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, 2002. The publication summarizes the outcome of three research studies and the following reports investigating drug abuse among women.



The three studies have the following titles: "Burden on Women due to Drug Abuse by Family Members", "Study on Substance Abuse among Women" and "Rapid Assessment Study". Some of the interesting statistics in the report reveal that most of the surveyed female drug users abuse heroin or brown sugar (lower grade heroin) (90.6%). Other common or concomitant drugs of abuse include propoxyphene (35%), alcohol (33%), minor tranquilisers (23%), cough syrups (15%) and cannabis (11%). Intravenous drug abuse was reported in 41% of the responses. The publication as well as the reports behind it are available from UNDCP-ROSA, EP 16/17, Chandragupt Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 110 021, India, Phone (+91-11) 410 4970, Fax, (+91-11) 410 4962, E-mail: undcp@undcp.ernet.in

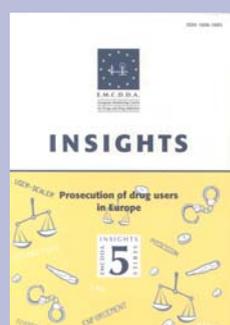
Combating Trafficking in Children and Women

The ILO Mekong Sub-Regional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women has produced two new publications supporting these efforts. They debate how non-formal education and rural skills training can be applied as tools to combat the worst forms of child labour including trafficking and how micro finance interventions (micro finance projects) can be applied as tools for similar purposes. Both books are available from the ILO Mekong Subregional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women, 2nd Floor, United Nations Service Building, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand, Phone: (+66-2) 288 2218, Fax (+66-2) 288 3063, Web site: <http://www.ilo.org/asia/child/trafficking>



Prosecution of drug users in Europe, Lisboa: EMCDDA, 2002.

This more than 350-page long book offers an overview on what happens in practice to drug users, in terms of prosecution and other forms of intervention under national law. The objective is to present a quantitative and qualitative understanding of interventions by the police, prosecutors and courts, including an understanding of the whole process of intervention and discontinuance. The book is available from the EMCDDA, Rue Cruz de Santa Apolonia, No 23/25, 1149-045 Lisboa, Portugal, Phone: (+351) 21 811 30 00, Fax: (+351) 21 813 17 11, Web site: <http://www.emcdda.org>



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List of documents recently distributed by UNDCP Regional Centre (Bangkok)

- 1/2002 Projects B65 & C46 - Terminal Report
- 2/2002 Regional Drug Control Profile for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, 1 February 2002
- 3/2002 The Private Sector is a Protagonist of the Community Response to the Drug Scourge in the East Asia and Pacific Region
- 4/2002 Law Enforcement Programme Evaluation Report
- 5/2002 Eastern Horizons No.9, March 2002
- 6/2002 Joint Action Plan Meeting Report
- 7/2002 Progress Report on Subregional Action Plan on Drug Control (Report No. 6; June 2001 - May 2002)
- 8/2002 Thinking Out of the Box, UNDCP Activities Report in East Asia and the Pacific 2000-2001
- 9/2002 Evaluation Report for Computer Based Training in East Asia (AD/RAS/97/C51)
- 10/2002 Thai School Free of Drugs, Model Approaches
- 11/2002 Eastern Horizons No.10, June 2002
- 12/2002 Surveying Myanmar Schools, Building Confidence, Obtaining Results
- 13/2002 Drug Abuse among Youth in Vientiane, School Survey
- 14/2002 Drug Abuse Risk in Vietnam, School children, Unemployed and Under-employed Youth
- 15/2002 Indonesia Country Profile, May 2002
- 16/2002 Subregional Development of Institutional Capacity for Demand Reduction Among High Risk Group (AD/RAS/98/C75)
- 17/2002 Border Liaison Offices (BLOs): In Operation (AD/RAS/99/D91)

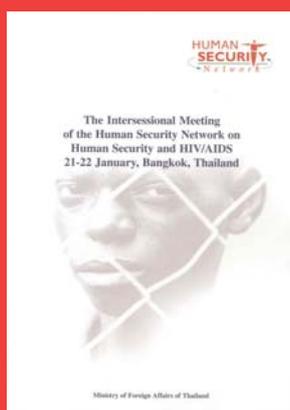
The above documents can be obtained through the website of UNDCP Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific (<http://www.undcp.un.or.th>)

Future Events



The Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering – APG convenes a workshop on Money Laundering Trends & Typologies. The workshop will be held in Vancouver, Canada on 29 and 30 October 2002 and is hosted by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The venue for the workshop will be the Radisson President Hotel & Suites Vancouver Airport.

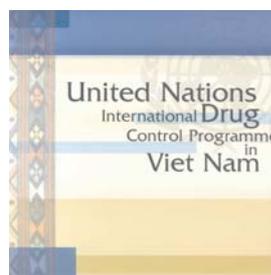
For further information, please contact APG, E-mail: mail@apgml.org



The Intersessional Meeting on the Human Security Network on Human Security and HIV/AIDS 21-22 January, Bangkok, Thailand, Bangkok: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, 2002. The report covers the entire meeting and all presentations made at this event are available in the publication. The report is available from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, Sri Ayudhaya Rd., Bangkok 10400 Thailand, E-mail: div0804@mfa.go.th

United Nations International Drug Control Programme in Viet Nam, Hanoi: UNDCP, 2002.

The book tells the story about UNDCP's work in Viet Nam, what has happened, what is happening and what the major challenges for the future are. There is also a full list of UNDCP projects in Viet Nam outlining the overall development goals and activities. The book is available from UNDCP Viet Nam, 25-29 Phan Boi Chau, Hanoi, Viet Nam, Phone: (+84-4) 942-1495, Fax: (+84-4) 822-0854, E-mail: undcpvietnam@un.org.vn



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*Campaign poster produced in cooperation between
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