

Global Partnership on Drug Policies and Development (GPDPD)



Context

Illicit drug crop cultivation, drug trafficking and drug use are global phenomena, but it is developing and emerging countries that are the worst affected by the damaging consequences of the drug problem. Many have so far been unable to cope with these massive challenges. Organized crime, armed conflict and corruption are closely related to the expansion of illicit drug economies and hinder sustainable development of affected regions. Additionally, families of small-scale farmers involved in drug crop cultivation tend to be disproportionately impacted by food insecurity and poverty. Moreover, developing countries are no longer confined to the production and trade of illicit drugs: drug use rates have significantly increased over the past decades compared to the global average.

Objective

To work with interested governments and international partner organizations to foster development, human rights and public health-oriented approaches in drug policies at the bilateral and UN level

Approaches

The project works to mainstream development, public health and human rights-centred standpoints on drug policy at the global level. The framework for these activities is provided by the 2016 Outcome Document of the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS 2016) as well as the annual resolutions of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND).

The GPDPD also advises interested governments on how to modify their national drug strategies. Along with implementation partners, drug policy approaches are elaborated, critically appraised, and

translated into practice. Furthermore, the GPDPD is advancing scientific research and innovation in global drug policy. Sound knowledge and evidence are needed to ensure that drug policy is based on proven findings. Finally, the GPDPD gives innovative and more sustainable approaches to drug policy an international profile and relevance by using social media and its homepage for publishing.

Results so far

- The GPDPD helped to prepare the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS) 2016 and successfully advocated a development-policy orientation for the final document.
- In 2019, the GPDPD accompanied on behalf of BMZ the negotiations on the Review of the Action to combat the world drug problem and, together with its partners, launched the International Guidelines on Human Rights and Drug Policy at the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) in Vienna. Jointly with its partners, several resolutions on Alternative Development have been tabled and successfully negotiated at the CND and the UN General Assembly.
- Through exchange and training activities, more than 80 government representatives of partner countries like Colombia, Nigeria, Myanmar and Peru have been trained on best practice approaches to Alternative Development in Thailand. In Myanmar and Thailand, more than 1,000 government and administrative officials have been trained in health-oriented approaches such as harm reduction.
- In Colombia, roughly 200 families with an estimated 1,000 persons have received support through pilot Alternative Development projects to improve their income. Through forest protection measures, an area of at least 1,600 ha of rainforest in the Amazon region has been protected.
- Jointly with its partners the Mae Fah Luang Foundation and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Colombian authorities have been advised on adapting national Alternative Development strategies alongside developmental and environmental approaches and best practices from Thailand.
- The project's research results were prominently placed in the UN World Drug Reports 2016, 2018 and 2020. The first global studies on harm reduction approaches to stimulant use and on the global number of smallholders who cultivate illicit drug crops were commissioned and received great interest from the professional public.
- In January 2020, together with the London School of Economics and the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GITOC), the GPDPD launched successfully an initiative to create new perspectives, ideas and networks for an integrated drug policy: the Drugs & Development Hub.

Commissioned by: The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Countries: Albania, Colombia, Myanmar, Peru and Thailand

Project partners: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC), Mae Fah Luang Foundation (MFLF) and Transnational Institute (TNI)

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More Information: www.thai-german-cooperation.info, www.gdpdp.org

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