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MULTILATERAL EVALUATION MECHANISM (MEM)

*Evaluation Report on Drug Policies:
Institutional Strengthening; Research,
Information, Monitoring, and Evaluation;
and International Cooperation*

Ecuador

Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)
Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS)

2023



MULTILATERAL EVALUATION MECHANISM (MEM)

ECUADOR

Evaluation Report on Drug Policies:

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EIGHTH EVALUATION ROUND

2023

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PREFACE

The Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM), established by a mandate from the Second Summit of the Americas (Santiago, Chile - 1998), is a unique multilateral evaluation tool designed to measure the progress made and challenges faced by the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS) in implementing the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs of the OAS Hemispheric Drug Strategy, currently in force.

The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS) is the OAS specialized agency in charge of implementing this Mechanism.

The current MEM round is based on the objectives of the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs 2021-2025 of the Hemispheric Drug Strategy 2020 and their respective priority actions. These documents take into account the recommendations of the outcome document of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS 2016) and the United Nations 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, as well as cross-cutting issues, such as the gender perspective and human rights, cultural context, and social inclusion approaches, among others.

Seven evaluation rounds have been completed from 1998 to 2019 and, during 2020, the MEM Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG), composed of member state delegates, agreed on a new methodology for the eighth round, consisting of annual thematic evaluations with the support of independent technical consultants, as follows: 2021 – Measures for Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support; 2022 – Measures to Control and Counter the Illicit Cultivation, Production, Trafficking, and Distribution of Drugs, and to Address their Causes and Consequences; 2023 – Institutional Strengthening; Research, Information, Monitoring, and Evaluation; International Cooperation; and 2024 – Comprehensive Evaluation based on updated information from all thematic areas.

MEM evaluations are carried out based on information provided by the member states' National Coordinating Entities (NCEs), which is analyzed by the MEM Governmental Expert Group (GEG), composed of experts designated by the countries, who do not participate in their own country's evaluation, thus ensuring the transparency and impartiality of the process. The GEG is always supported by the group of independent technical consultants and the MEM Unit. The eighth round represents a more rigorous evaluation process, in which countries are requested to provide valid means of verification to support the information submitted and ensure compliance of each priority action.

Specifically, the GEG's work for the thematic assessment for the areas of "Institutional Strengthening; Research, Information, Monitoring, and Evaluation; and International Cooperation" was conducted during 2023, and covers the 2019 to 2023 period (unless otherwise

specified). This work was adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic with the use of technology and virtual tools, as well as taking it into consideration in the evaluation assessments.

Finally, it should be noted that one of the main purposes of MEM evaluation reports is to serve as a useful diagnostic tool to identify opportunities for improvement in drug policies and strategies, both at the national and regional levels.

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

OBJECTIVE

1

ESTABLISH AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL DRUG AUTHORITIES, PLACING THEM AT A HIGH POLITICAL LEVEL AND PROVIDING THEM WITH THE NECESSARY CAPABILITIES, RESOURCES, AND COMPETENCIES TO COORDINATE FORMULATION, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION OF NATIONAL DRUG POLICIES.

Priority Action 1.1: Place national drug authorities at a high political level.

Ecuador has the Interagency Committee for the Comprehensive Prevention of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs and for the Regulation and Control of the Use of Scheduled Substances subject to Inspection (Interagency Drugs Committee - CID) as the national drug authority, which was established in 2018 and both the Chair and the Secretariat of the CID are positioned, within the administrative structure of the State, under the Ministry of Public Health.

Priority Action 1.2: Grant national drug policy entities the authority to guide and coordinate the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of national drug policies.

Ecuador's national drug authority has a legal basis in the Organic Law for the Integral Prevention of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs and the Regulation and Control of the Use of Substances Subject to Inspection.

Priority Action 1.3: Allocate the necessary resources (material, financial, and human) for the effective functioning of the national drug authorities.

In Ecuador, there is no annual budget for the national drug authority. The necessary human and material resources to implement national drug policies are financed by the member institutions of the CID, with the budgets of each institution, from which they allocate resources for the execution of drug-related activities, based on their attributions and competencies, which contribute to the fulfillment of the public drug policy. It is worth mentioning that the institutions do not have a budget earmarked specifically for activities related to the socioeconomic phenomenon of drugs.

Priority Action 1.4: Design or optimize mechanisms to facilitate effective coordination and collaboration among government institutions for the formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and updating of evidence-based national drug policies and/or strategies.

Ecuador has an ongoing coordination and collaboration mechanism among agencies and other levels of government (national and subnational) to formulate, implement, monitor, evaluate, and update national drug policies and/or strategies. The coordination mechanism among the members of the CID for formulating, implementing, and updating public policy is the meetings of

this Committee CID authorities, who, through Committee Resolutions, establish the corresponding policies and evaluate the national plans.

To monitor the policy issued through the National Plan for the Integral Prevention and Control of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs, there is a methodology for monitoring the implementation of public policies, plans, programs, projects, and actions, through which we visualize progress and compliance with the implementation of indicators of the national plan that provide feedback on the execution of public policies, which will be used in the national plan for the following period 2023-2025, which is in the process of being updated.

Ecuador's national drug authority coordinates the areas of demand reduction, supply reduction, preventive alternative development programs, control measures, international cooperation, and program evaluation.

**OBJECTIVE
2**

FORMULATE, IMPLEMENT, EVALUATE, AND UPDATE COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL DRUG POLICIES AND/OR STRATEGIES THAT PROMOTE BALANCED, MULTIDISCIPLINARY, AND EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES, WHILE FULLY RESPECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, UNDER THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMON AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, CONSISTENT WITH OBLIGATIONS OF PARTIES UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW, AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT GENDER, AGE, COMMUNITY, CULTURAL CONTEXT, AND SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT.

Priority Action 2.1: Collect and use evidence as a basis for the formulation and updating of national drug policies and/or strategies.

Ecuador does not collect and use evidence as a basis for formulating and updating of national drug policies and strategies.

Priority Action 2.2: Promote and establish collaborative relationships with the scientific community, public policy experts, community and/or civil society actors, and other relevant stakeholders, to contribute to the evidence-based development, implementation, evaluation, and updating of national drug policies.

In Ecuador, the following relevant actors from priority areas are involved in the development, implementation, evaluation, and updating of national drug policies and/or strategies:

Key Actors	Development	Implementation	Evaluation	Updating
Health Ministry	X	X	X	X
Interior Ministry	X	X	X	X
Education Ministry	X	X	X	X
Regional and/or local governments		X		
Scientific community/academia	X	X		
Civil Society	X			
Private sector		X		
Agency for Quality Assurance of Health Services and Prepaid Medicine (ACCESS)		X	X	X
National Agency for Regulation, Control and Sanitary Surveillance (ARCSA), attached to the Ministry of Public Health	X	X		X
Ministry of Women and Human Rights	X	X		X
Ministry of Sports	X	X		X
Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES)	X	X	X	X

Secretariat for Human Rights (SDH)	X	X		X
National Service for Comprehensive Care for Adults Deprived of Liberty and Adolescent Offenders (SNAI)	X	X		X
Ministry of Culture and Heritage (MCYP)	X	X		X
Ministry of Defense	X		X	X
Ministry of Labor		X		X
Secretariat of Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation		X		
Council on Higher Education (CES)		X		X
Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock				X

Priority Action 2.3: Promote sub-national/local management of drug policies and/or strategies through greater coordination and/or delegation of responsibilities, as appropriate, between sub-national/local and national agencies, taking into account the socio-cultural, demographic and other differences of each region.

Ecuador has fully delegated drug-related responsibilities to subnational/local governments to implement concrete actions related to drug policies and strategies, in coordination with the national drug authority. The responsibility delegated to local governments to implement concrete drug-related actions is embodied in the following regulations:

- Organic Law for the Integral Prevention of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs and Regulation and Control of the Use of Scheduled Substances subject to Inspection
- The Organic Law Amending the Comprehensive Organic Penal Code (LORCOIP)
- The Organic Law against Drug Consumption and Micro-trafficking (LOCCMD)

The Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador has, in its organizational structure, nine decentralized offices that cover all 24 provinces nationwide, called zonal coordinating offices, which perform the functions of coordinating, training, and providing technical support on drug issues to local governments that are members of the CID.

Ecuador's national drug authority has coordinators, offices, or representatives in the subnational/local territories, as part of a decentralized operational and coordination at the local level, to respond to the drug problem. In this regard, the decentralized structures of the Ministry of Public Health in the nine Zonal Coordinating Offices at the national level employ a person who is professionally trained in the prevention of the socioeconomic phenomenon of drugs, who provides technical advice for the development of prevention projects, and who coordinates interagency or intersectoral activities with, inter alia, the peer institutions that are members of

the Interagency Drugs Committee (CID), and others.

The country does not have a specific and ongoing mechanism or program for the transfer funds or finance drug initiatives or projects implemented by sub-national/local governments.

Priority Action 2.4: Engage private sector entities to develop innovative approaches to implementation of drug policy, including the exchange of information on emerging substances and new drug trafficking modalities that may affect the private sector, and best practices for denying criminals access to the private sector platforms and technologies that facilitate international trade.

Ecuador does not engage private sector entities to develop innovative approaches in the implementation of drug policies and exchange of information and best practices.

Priority Action 2.5: Formulate or update national drug policies and/or strategies in line with the 2020 OAS Hemispheric Strategy on Drugs and this accompanying Plan of Action, taking into account the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Ecuador takes into account the 2020 OAS Hemispheric Strategy on Drugs and its corresponding Plan of Action to formulate or update national drug policies and strategies. The strategies are considered during the updating of the National Plan for the Integral Prevention and Control of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs, in the areas of demand reduction and supply reduction.

The country's national drug policies and strategies take into account the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this sense, the Ministry of Public Health's National Directorate of Prevention and Control Strategies for Communicable Diseases, Mental Health and the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs, manages goal 3.5: "Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse." Ecuador is working to strengthen the technical response capacity of health professionals to care for people with problematic drug use in coordination with the Colombo Plan, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Cooperation Program between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union on Drug Policies (COPOLAD), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO). Moreover, through the Colombo Plan, Ecuador is working on the implementation of continuous quality improvement processes in care services for people with problematic drug use.

The National Directorate of Health Promotion of the Ministry of Public Health has included in the 2021-2025 National Development Plan "Creating Opportunities," a specific indicator described as follows: "Reduce the percentage of adolescents aged 13-15 using tobacco from 0.52% to 0.34%" in connection with objective 3a of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ecuador's drug policies are also aligned with goal 16 of the SDGs: “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, facilitate access to justice for all, and create effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

Priority Action 2.6: Integrate a human rights, gender, and social inclusion approach, particularly with respect to at-risk populations, in the process of formulating, implementing, and updating national drug policies and/or strategies.

Ecuador's national drug policies and strategies take the human rights approach into account. The Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador; the Organic Law for the Integral Prevention of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs and Regulation and Control of the Use of Scheduled Substances subject to Inspection; and the Organic Law against Drug Consumption and Micro-trafficking establish the human rights approach observed in public drug policy and mainstreamed across all State policies.

The Ministry of Women and Human Rights is the governing body for human rights public policies in the country, in charge of promoting equality by democratizing access to State services to reduce inequality gaps in society and thus avoid the exclusion of people involved in drug use and consumption.

Therefore, as one of the members of the CID, it is responsible for promoting the mainstreaming and inclusion of human rights, gender, and gender diversity approaches in public policy to address the socio-economic phenomenon of drugs.

The Ministry of Public Health, within the framework of the implementation of the Comprehensive Health Care Model (MAIS) recognizes that people are holders of fundamental, universal, inalienable, interdependent, and indivisible rights that generate obligations for the State to guarantee them and create the conditions needed for the exercise of those rights. This approach proposes a change in the way citizens are regarded as a subject of participation, and in the way public policies are conceived as tools for the construction of the dynamics and interrelation between different actors and as ways to enhance the exercise of rights and their enforceability.

As regards treatment, care has been taken to update the regulations governing the operations of care services for people with problematic drug use, as well as the interagency instructions for intervention in alleged cases of human rights violations in services attending to people with problematic drug use.

Ecuador's national drug policies and strategies take into account the gender perspective, which is included in national drug legislation, as provided for in the Organic Law for the Integral Prevention of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs and the Regulation and Control of the Use of Scheduled Substances Subject to Inspection, which includes all plans, projects, programs, and activities related to the socioeconomic phenomenon of drugs at the national level.

Additionally, the Ministry of Women and Human Rights is part of the CID.

On the other hand, within the framework of implementation of the MAIS, whose main objective is to work with communities, develop new ways of relating to them, and place the user at the center of care, best practices are established, and interventions geared towards social impact results are developed, based on the conviction that the biopsychosocial, gender, multidisciplinary, and intercultural approaches is the best alternatives to respond more effectively to the needs of individuals, families, and communities, thereby helping to enhance their quality of life. The actions are geared towards the health personnel of the Public Health Network (RPIS) and the Complementary Network, which have guidelines and tools for the implementation of the Comprehensive Health Care Model at all levels of care. These documents facilitate the inclusion of the gender approach in the formulation of public policies and enables the achievement of a better grasp of reality, experiences, and diverse needs, by identifying inequality as a key problem in power relations between men and women, its causes, and effects on social life.

Ecuador's national drug authority requires technical support for developing and implementing programs with a gender perspective. In this regard, support has been provided to COPOLAD for the development of specific regulations on services for people with problematic drug use from a gender perspective.

There is also a need to strengthen the capacity of public and private institutions on comprehensive drug prevention with a gender perspective, so that it is included in their intervention strategies related to the socioeconomic phenomenon of drugs.

Ecuador's national drug policies and strategies take into account the social inclusion approach. The Organic Law for the Integral Prevention of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs and the Regulation and Control of the Use of Scheduled Substances subject to Inspection defines the principle of inclusion, which provides that the State will generate actions and opportunities for social and economic inclusion targeting people at risk due to the socioeconomic phenomenon of drugs.

Similarly, in the area of comprehensive health prevention, the law indicates that all persons at risk of drug use and consumption have the right to social inclusion, respecting human rights.

Social inclusion is an obligation of the State, which implements economic and social inclusion programs aimed at preserving or recovering the exercise of rights and obligations of persons who are undergoing or have completed treatment and rehabilitation processes.

The Ministry of Public Health indicates that Renewed Primary Health Care (R-PHC) is a strategy that guides the development of health systems. Its implementation is carried out considering the following objectives:

- Facilitating social inclusion and health equity
- Promoting primary health care-based health systems
- Enhancing health promotion and promoting comprehensive and integrated care
- Promoting intersectoral work and work on root causes
- Focusing on quality of care and patient safety
- Strengthening human resources for health.

The National Plan for the Integral Prevention and Control of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs 2017 - 2021, includes elements of social inclusion, through the activities of the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, which is part of the CID.

Priority Action 2.7: Provide adequate financial and other necessary resources for the implementation of drug policies and programs.

Ecuador does not have the necessary resources to implement drug policies and programs. Since the suppression of the Technical Secretariat for Comprehensive Drug Prevention (SETED), the institutional framework for drug issues has been lost and there is no institution in charge in the State apparatus, so there is no budget allocation. For that reason, the State has not allocated resources to implement drug policies and programs for the past five years.

OBJECTIVE
3**DESIGN AND COORDINATE NATIONAL DRUG POLICIES, THAT CAN BE HARMONIZED ACROSS RELATED GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND/OR STRATEGIES, THAT ADDRESS THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE DRUG PROBLEM.**

Priority Action 3.1: Establish and/or strengthen interagency and multisectoral policy and technical coordination mechanisms, to achieve a comprehensive, balanced, and multi-disciplinary approach to the drug problem, including its causes and consequences.

Ecuador has interagency and multisectoral policy and technical coordination mechanisms to address the drug problem through a comprehensive, balanced, and multidisciplinary approach, including its causes and consequences. The most outstanding interagency and intersectoral mechanisms for political and technical coordination to address the drug problem include:

- Interagency and multisectoral political mechanism
The Secretariat of the Interagency Committee on Drugs (CID), carries out interagency and multisectoral cooperation and coordination on public drug policy with the members of the CID, which are the highest national authorities in the areas of Health, Security, Education, Economic and Social Inclusion, Culture, Sports, Justice, and Human Rights, has three representatives appointed by entities associated with the decentralized autonomous governments at the provincial, municipal, and rural parish levels, respectively. The Secretariat also provides technical advice, follow-up, and evaluation of the execution of the policy established by the Interagency Committee on Drugs, in the national and international context.
- Technical interagency mechanisms
 - The National Plan for the Integral Prevention and Control of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs
 - Manuals, instructions, regulations, and guidelines for intervention in the socioeconomic phenomenon of drugs
 - The Preventive Alternative Development (DAP) Policy is a strategy pursued by public institutions that, through the development of productive projects, carry out prevention of illicit activities related to drugs, targeting vulnerable populations in rural areas.
 - Preventive and Sustainable Alternative Development (DAIS) is a strategy pursued by the public institutions involved in the prevention of consumption and micro-trafficking, aimed at people who are undergoing therapeutic rehabilitation processes in treatment centers, through training, seed capital, and support in the implementation of productive enterprises, in order to achieve the reintegration of people into society.
 - In the area of comprehensive health prevention, the Vice-Ministry of Comprehensive Care of the Ministry of Public Health (MSP) is responsible for the provision of mental health services in which, based on the demand for services and epidemiological profiles, it oversees implementation and provides the installed capacity needed for the creation and strengthening of services in line with health care strategies.
- Within the framework of the implementation of the Community Mental Health Care Model as part of the Comprehensive Health Model, the Ministry of Public Health has made several efforts to move from a biological model to a biopsychosocial model in which services are

structured in such a way as to prioritize the appropriate relationship between the individual and his or her environment. As part of the activation of the mental health services network, services have been implemented based on levels of care, so that the following services are now available:

Levels	Service
1st Level	Outpatient
	Outpatient Intensive
2nd Level	Hospital Mental Health Units (USMH)
3rd Level	Specialized Centers for the Treatment of Persons with Problematic Use of Alcohol and Other Drugs (CETAD)
	Specialized Mental Health Care Centers

In this sense, it is considered that the mental health care service, through line 171 option 6, is indispensable because it provides care to all persons who ask to use the virtual mental health care service at the national level, in accordance with the requirements and demand for mental health care.

Following confirmation of the importance of dealing promptly with the need to prevent mental health care risks and problems in the community, the virtual mental health care system continued to be used throughout 2022 to attend to 42,141 patients nationwide with a satisfaction rate of 98.9%.

Priority Action 3.2: Design, implement, and evaluate multisectoral plans and programs based on the principles of human rights, public health, and development, to address and counter the socioeconomic causes and the consequences of the drug problem.

Ecuador has concrete multisectoral plans and programs to address the socioeconomic causes and consequences of the drug problem, which are based on the principles of human rights, public health, and development. The country has a National Plan for the Integral Prevention and Control of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs, a multisectoral plan in force for the period 2017-2021. This plan is in the process of being updated for the next period. However, it has been suspended due to the lack of updated national data on the socioeconomic phenomenon of drugs. The available data are seven years old, which makes it difficult for the authorities to set goals and indicators for the new plan as well as make decisions regarding the focus of the corresponding policies.

In the course of two years, the socioeconomic phenomenon of drugs in the country has changed completely due to the presence of organized crime. Therefore, information gathering is essential for proper planning of activities, so as to detect vulnerable areas and prioritize the populations to be addressed and the strategies to be used, with a view to achieving effectiveness and efficiency in the approach to the phenomenon.

The Plan is structured in such a way as to address demand reduction, supply reduction, and cross-cutting components of the policy. It is worth noting that the Plan was originally developed with the participation of the Interagency Drugs Committee (CID) member institutions, local governments, academia, and civil society, community, and sports organizations, which made the decision to maintain its structure and update the projects and activities in accordance with national circumstances.

Priority Action 3.3: Participate in international cooperation programs at the bilateral and multilateral levels to strengthen policies, programs, institutions, and their internal processes.

Ecuador participates in international cooperation programs at the bilateral and multilateral levels to strengthen policies, programs, institutions, and their internal processes. In this sense, the Ministry of Public Health (MSP) works with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), for technical assistance and support in strengthening comprehensive strategies and actions in tobacco control, especially with respect to the tracking, location, and financial tracing of tobacco products in Ecuador.

Moreover, the National Directorate of Strategies for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, Mental Health Care and the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs of the MSP reports that it receives support to boost the response capacity of professionals to care for people with problematic drug use from the Colombo Plan, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), and the Cooperation Program between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union on Drug Policies (COPOLAD).

In addition, through the Colombo Plan, the country implements quality standards in care services for people with problematic drug use.

For its part, the Ministry of Education reports that it coordinates technical assistance with the international cooperation platforms of UNODC, CICAD, COPOLAD, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), and the Colombo Plan.

Lastly, the Undersecretary of Administration and Control of Scheduled Substances Subject to Control of the Ministry of the Interior participates in the following international cooperation activities:

- Ecuador-Colombia Joint Commission on Drugs
- Ecuador-Peru Joint Commission on Drugs
- Regional Program for the Safe Management and Elimination of Seized Drugs and Chemical Precursors (STAND), UNODC
- COPOLAD
- CICAD meetings

Priority Action 3.4: Promote comprehensive and cross-cutting public policies to reduce and prevent crime, violence, social exclusion, and corruption.

Ecuador promotes comprehensive and cross-cutting public policies to reduce and prevent crime, violence, social exclusion, and corruption. In this regard, the Secretariat of the Interagency Drugs Committee (SCID) of the MSP is in the process of developing the basis for Ecuador's National Strategy against Organized Crime, within the framework of the guidelines of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and with the technical support of UNODC, following the best international practices and the "Practical Guide to Develop High Impact Strategies against Organized Crime." Thirteen national public institutions are participating in the process. The strategy's goals and sub-goals are pursued in accordance with the strategic principles of preventing, pursuing, protecting, and promoting.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) implements the Public Policy for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy (PIPENA) and the public policy for social rehabilitation.

In addition, the Ministry of the Interior, through Ministerial Agreement No. 060 of July 18, 2023, approved the following policies:

- National Citizen Security Plan 2023-2030
- Citizen and Public Security Policy
- Emerging Strategy to Prevent and Contain Criminal Violence 2023 2024
- Specific Strategy against International Trafficking in Scheduled Substances Subject to Control 2023 2030
- National Strategy against Organized Crime 2023-2030
- National Strategy for the Prevention of Crime and Violence

It is important to mention that 22 State institutions participated in the development of the National Strategy against Organized Crime, and it had the support and technical assistance of the UNODC, among other cooperators.

Priority Action 3.5: Implement measures that promote equal access to justice and due process, taking into account gender, age, community, and cultural context.

Ecuador implements measures that promote equal access to justice and due process, taking into account gender, age, community, and cultural context. In that sense, the country makes effective the constitutional guarantee embodied in Article 364 of the non-criminalization of the consumer and as a technical tool for the justice system. The country also applies the principle of proportionality of the penalty, to differentiate between a consumer and a trafficker, with

thresholds that establish the maximum admissible quantities of possession for personal consumption.

Regarding measures adopted in favor of adolescents in conflict with the law, the country has socio-educational measures that aim to protect and develop adolescent offenders, guarantee their education, family integration and constructive inclusion in society, which are reflected in Article 378 of the Comprehensive Organic Penal Code (COIP).

Finally, Ecuador has a Public Defender's Office with 200 service points in the 24 provinces of the country and free legal clinics that are part of the complementary network of the Public Defense. Likewise, the Organic Law of the Public Defender's Office is governed by principles of guarantee of rights, interculturality and non-revictimization (Art. 5 of the Organic Law of the Public Defender's Office).

Priority Action 3.6: Implement measures that foster citizen participation in crime prevention, build community cohesion, increase public safety, and emphasize social inclusion.

Ecuador implements measures that foster citizen participation in crime prevention, build community cohesion, increase public safety, and emphasize social inclusion.

In this sense, the country uses a decentralized Community Police management model, which seeks to ensure that police officers assigned to a territory become familiar with its particularities and that they integrate and lead processes to strengthen community relations. The Community Police Units (UPC) or Community Surveillance Units (UVC) are assigned according to the population density of the territory, which is divided into zones, circuit districts and subcircuits.

The Ministry of the Interior, since January 2023, has coordinated the implementation of strategic actions with the purpose of reducing violence and improving the security conditions of the population through the implementation of the following programs:

National Safe Schools Plan

A total of 220 educational units have been prioritized in 10 different provinces. For the process of consolidation and institutionalization of the program, a toolbox has been developed for support and implementation in educational centers, which has the support of the National Police.

Provincial Citizen Security Committees

In the first half of 2023, actions were developed for the creation and coordination of Provincial Citizen Security Councils, in prioritized territories with the aim of preventing crime and violence. Six Security Committees were held in the provinces of: Bolívar, Galápagos, Morona Santiago, Santa Elena, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, and Zamora Chinchipe.

“I Live Without Drugs” Campaign

Its objective is to socialize, raise awareness and make the Ecuadorian population aware of the bio-psycho-social damage generated by the consumption of psychotropic and narcotic substances. This campaign includes the following components:

- I live my neighborhood without drugs
- Training
- Link with the community
- My Tik-tok without drugs
- “I live without drugs, you decide” athletic festival: it is a free inclusive category event with a five-kilometer route that is carried out simultaneously in the 24 provincial capitals of Ecuador and has the participation of various Latin American countries.

OBJECTIVE

4

DESIGN, ADOPT, AND IMPLEMENT ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION FOR MINOR OR NON-VIOLENT DRUG OR DRUG-RELATED OFFENSES, WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT NATIONAL, CONSTITUTIONAL, LEGAL, AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS.

Priority Action 4.1: Adopt alternative measures to incarceration for minor or non-violent drug-related offenses, where appropriate, while safeguarding the sovereignty of states, and ensuring individual accountability, respecting human rights and the gender perspective.

Ecuador's laws provide for alternative measures to incarceration for minor non-violent drug-related offenses. Thus, the National Service for the Comprehensive Care of Adults Deprived of Liberty and Adolescent Offenders (SNAI) initiated the Hawaii Opportunity Probation and Parole (HOPE) program in 2004 to reduce recidivism and parole violations. The program is based on the idea of speed and certainty of responses to non-compliance with specific conditions set by the court. Participants are informed of the rules, and those who violate the conditions of probation are immediately arrested and incarcerated for short periods of time.

Participants must submit to random toxicology tests and are penalized if they test positive or fail to take the tests.

If persons on parole continue to test positive for drug use, or request treatment at any time, they will be referred to treatment for drug use.

Additionally, in Ecuador, Article 630 of the Comprehensive Organic Penal Code (COIP) enables persons committing crimes for which the penalty does not exceed five years in prison to opt for measures other than imprisonment. This therefore applies to minor drug-related crimes, especially those of minimum and medium scale.

These measures respect human rights and take into account the gender perspective in accordance with relevant international instruments. Accordingly, pardon is used as an option. In 2008, the Government of Ecuador pardoned more than 2,000 people accused of drug trafficking. To benefit from this policy, individuals had to meet three conditions: (1) have been convicted, (2) the amount of drugs trafficked must not have exceeded two kilograms, and (3) the person must have served 10% of the sentence with a minimum of one year of imprisonment. Once the competent authorities received the request for pardon, they had to respond to the request within 30 days. It is important to note that 30% of the beneficiaries of this policy were women and that 95% of those eligible for pardon were released.

The application of conditional suspension of the sentence as a mechanism to obtain an alternative measure is in accordance with the principles of human rights according to which deprivation of liberty is not the general rule but an exception and is directly related to the right to freedom, the right to life, the right to free development of personality, the right to freedom of movement, and the right to carry out economic, social, artistic, and family activities; and with

Article 7 of the American Convention on Human Rights, which establishes the right to personal liberty.

Priority Action 4.2: Develop mechanisms to monitor and evaluate alternative measures to incarceration for minor or non-violent drug-related offenses, in collaboration with academic and research institutions, as well as civil society.

Ecuador develops mechanisms to monitor and evaluate alternative measures to incarceration for minor or non-violent drug-related offenses, which involve academic and research institutions and civil society. The National Service for the Comprehensive Care of Adults Deprived of their Liberty and Adolescent Offenders has established internal controls, as well as mechanisms for the timely reporting of unusual or suspicious activities, through cooperation agreements and the participation of all academic institutions.

Priority Action 4.3: Promote common understanding of national legal norms, regulations, and internal procedures for the implementation of alternatives to incarceration.

Ecuador promotes common understanding of national legal norms, regulations, and internal procedures for the implementation of alternatives to incarceration. Accordingly, the country rationalizes the use of pretrial detention for minor drug-related offenses, through alternative measures to imprisonment, and if necessary, the provision of health care when the offender is identified as having a history of drug use or consumption. In addition, scaling is used as a tool to ensure proportional application of penalties.

OBJECTIVE
5**PROMOTE AND IMPLEMENT, AS APPROPRIATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICIES, LAWS, AND NEEDS OF EACH COUNTRY, COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION, ESPECIALLY TO THOSE AT-RISK POPULATIONS.**

Priority Action 5.1: Design and implement, in accordance with the characteristics, interests, and needs of each country, inter-agency and multisectoral programs that promote the social inclusion of individuals, families, and communities affected by the drug problem, taking into account the specific needs of at-risk populations.

Ecuador has interagency and multisectoral programs that promote the social inclusion of individuals, families, and communities affected by the drug problem, taking into account the specific needs of at-risk populations. Thus, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) carries out economic and social inclusion activities within the framework of the provisions of its Organic Statute of Organizational Management by Processes, issued by Ministerial Agreement 30. Official Gazette Special Edition 1099 of September 30, 2020.

Priority Action 5.2: Disseminate best practices and lessons learned to improve institutional responses to the needs of at-risk populations.

Ecuador does not disseminate best practices or lessons learned to improve institutional responses to the needs of at-risk populations, such as mechanisms, programs, and interventions, through publications, meetings, workshops, among others.

OBJECTIVE

6

PROMOTE PROPORTIONATE SENTENCING FOR DRUG-RELATED CRIMES THAT PROVIDES FOR PENALTIES COMMENSURATE WITH THE RELATIVE SERIOUSNESS OF OFFENSES, IN LINE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONVENTIONS AND RESPECTING THE PRINCIPLES OF DUE PROCESS, WITH GENDER PERSPECTIVE, AGE, COMMUNITY, AND A HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH.

Priority Action 6.1: Promote proportionate legal sentencing for minor drug-related offenses in accordance with domestic law.

Ecuador promotes proportionate legal sentencing for minor drug-related offenses in accordance with domestic law.

Article 630 of the Comprehensive Organic Penal Code (COIP) allows that, for crimes that do not exceed five years of imprisonment, people can benefit from other measures, making it feasible to conditionally suspend the sentence for minor crimes related to drugs especially on a minimum scale and medium scale.

These measures respect human rights and take into account the gender perspective in accordance with relevant international instruments. In this sense, pardon is used as an option. In 2008, the Government of Ecuador pardoned more than 2,000 people accused of drug trafficking.

Furthermore, the second chapter of the COIP covers the rights and guarantees of persons deprived of liberty, which in its section 16 contemplates the following:

“Proportionality in the determination of disciplinary sanctions”: The disciplinary sanctions imposed on the person deprived of liberty must be proportional to the offenses committed. Undetermined sanctioning measures may not be imposed or those that contravene human rights. These rights will be respected, as appropriate, during the fulfillment of the precautionary measure of preventive detention, the fulfillment of the sentence, in transfers, searches, searches or any other activity.

Ecuador does not have special courts or tribunals for minor drug-related offenses.

Priority Action 6.2: Promote legal reforms as needed, to promote proportional sentencing for minor drug-related offenses.

Ecuador promotes legal reforms regarding proportional sentencing for minor drug-related offenses.

Starting in 2008, with the promulgation of the Constitution of the Republic, a process of reforms began at the legislative and institutional level with a marked trend towards the decriminalization of users and the proportionality of penalties for drug crimes, which is reflected in Article 364 of the Constitution of the Republic. In this sense, as a technical tool for the justice system to

differentiate between a consumer and a trafficker, the country has thresholds that establish the maximum admissible quantities of possession for personal consumption.

Additionally, following the principle of proportionality of the penalty, the country has a table of quantities of scheduled substances subject to control on the minimum, medium, high and large scales, which aims to sanction illicit trafficking from zero, these being:

- Minimum scale, from one to three years
- Medium scale, three to five years
- High scale, five to seven years
- Large scale, ten to thirteen years

Lastly, regarding measures adopted in favor of adolescents in conflict with the law, the country has socio-educational measures that aim to protect and develop adolescent offenders, guarantee their education, family integration, and constructive inclusion.

RESEARCH, INFORMATION, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION

OBJECTIVE

1

ESTABLISH OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL OBSERVATORIES ON DRUGS, OR SIMILAR TECHNICAL OFFICES, STRENGTHENING NATIONAL DRUG INFORMATION SYSTEMS, AND FOSTER SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO GENERATE, COLLECT, ORGANIZE, ANALYZE, AND DISSEMINATE INFORMATION TO INFORM THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED DRUG POLICIES AND STRATEGIES.

Priority Action 1.1: Develop and strengthen national drug observatories (NDO) or similar technical offices ensuring they have adequate human and financial resources.

Ecuador does not have a national drug observatory (NDO) or similar technical entity.

Priority Action 1.2: Strengthen ties to academic and research institutions, as well as specialized non-governmental organizations, to foster scientific research and studies on the various aspects of the drug phenomenon.

Ecuador has established and maintained working relationships with academic and research institutions. Thus, the Secretariat of the Interagency Committee on Drugs of the Ministry of Public Health and the National Directorate of Prevention and Control Strategies for Non-Communicable Diseases, Mental Health, and the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs:

- Work with the Research Group of the Faculty of Psychological Sciences of the Central University of Ecuador in the investigation of consumption patterns
- Work with the University of San Francisco in research on the adaptation and validation of instruments for the early detection of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use
- Work with the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja in:
 - Research on the "Transdiagnostic model of alcohol consumption and mental health in Ecuador." This recent scientific research has led to the presentation of evidence associating the variables sex, loneliness, impulsivity, perceived stress, psychological inflexibility, and depression with the consumption of alcohol and other substances. This investigation has concluded
 - Also underway is an investigation aimed at moderating and systematizing the findings of the interagency and intersectoral workshops of the "Prospective Study of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs through to 2040." This investigation is still in progress

The country developed, in cooperation with the Private Technical University of Loja, the project report on the drug problem entitled: "Transdiagnostic Model of Alcohol Consumption and Mental Health in Ecuador."

Priority Action 1.3: Develop and adopt quantitative and qualitative methodologies and information-gathering mechanisms that allow for the comparison of data among countries.

Ecuador has not developed and adopted quantitative and qualitative methodologies and information-gathering mechanisms that allow for the comparison of data among countries. The country has not conducted studies drug use applying the Inter-American Uniform Drug Use Data System (SIDUC) methodology or a national methodology that is harmonized with SIDUC.

Moreover, the country has not used CICAD's standardized indicators for drug information networks for the collection, analysis, and reporting of national drug-related information.

Ecuador has not carried out studies using methods that are non-representative of the population or qualitative methodologies to obtain information on drugs that can be shared with other countries that have conducted studies with similar methodologies.

Priority Action 1.4: Establish and strengthen national drug information networks (DINs) to carry out long-term monitoring and early warning systems (EWS), including the use of a broad range of research methods and information sources, to develop rapid responses to emerging threats.

Priority Action 1.5: Contribute to the Early Warning System of the Americas (Spanish acronym SATA) to gather the available national alerts and disseminate them to member states, so that member states can respond in the shortest possible time to new threats.

Priority Action 1.6: Publish updates annually, when possible, on drug supply and drug demand utilizing the information provided on the national drug situation by using information from the national DINs.

Ecuador does not have a National Drug Observatory, so it does not have a national drug information network (DIN).

The country does not have early warning systems (EWS) or similar mechanism to identify new psychoactive substances (NPS) or other emerging drug-related threats.

Priority Action 1.7: Build capacity among relevant stakeholders to enhance the collection, management, and dissemination of drug related information.

Not applicable.

Priority Action 1.8: Establish or strengthen forums at which drug researchers can present their findings to policymakers and encourage their participation in CICAD experts groups.

Ecuador has not established forums that allow drug researchers to present their findings to policymakers.

Priority Action 1.9: Foster and disseminate best practices and the exchange of successful experiences in research among member states.

Ecuador does not promote or disseminate best practices and the exchange of successful research experiences among member states through its technical entities.

OBJECTIVE
2

EXPAND ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON DRUG USE AND RELATED ISSUES THROUGH THE USE OF SOUND, SYSTEMATIC DATA COLLECTION PRACTICES, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, AND STANDARDIZED METHODOLOGIES, ENSURING THAT COUNTRIES HAVE THE INFORMATION NECESSARY TO DEVELOP SOUND DEMAND REDUCTION PROGRAMS AND POLICIES.

Priority Action 2.1: Generate information on the incidence, prevalence, and modes of drug use and health impacts of drug use (e.g. non-fatal overdose, fatal overdose, infectious disease transmission), as well as drug use and health impact trends over time using sound, systematic data collection practices, scientific research, and standardized methodologies to monitor use across the general public and in key populations, whenever possible utilizing the Inter-American Drug Use Data System (SIDUC) as the standard methodology for epidemiological surveillance.

Ecuador has not carried out the demand reduction studies in the evaluation period (2019-2023).

Priority Action 2.2: Develop drug treatment information systems that record the number of patients treated, diagnoses, clinical history, and available information on treatment outcomes.

Ecuador has a national system for the collection of data on the number of patients treated, diagnoses, clinical history, and available information on treatment outcomes.

The national system on treatment data includes the following modalities and interventions:

Modalities and interventions	Yes	No
Community-based services	X	
Screening, brief interventions and referral to treatment	X	
Medication-assisted treatment	X	
Short-term outpatient or residential treatment	X	
Outpatient treatment	X	
Long-term outpatient or residential treatment	X	
Recovery management		X

Information on patients treated is collected from the following institutions:

Institution	Yes	No
Public health system	X	
Private institutions		X
Nongovernmental organizations		X
Religious institutions		X
Others:		

Comprehensive Health Network (Ecuadorian Social Security Institute - IESS)	X	
Social Security Institute of the National Police (ISSPOL)	X	
Social Security Institute of the Armed Forces (ISSFA)	X	

Priority Action 2.3: Evaluate and monitor the impact and the results of treatment and prevention programs using scientific methodologies and make recommendations to update programs based on findings.

Ecuador has not carried out studies to evaluate the supervision of prevention or treatment programs and/or interventions.

The country has not carried out process or intermediate outcome evaluations of prevention or treatment programs.

Ecuador has not conducted impact evaluations of its prevention or treatment programs.

The country has mechanisms to continually monitor and evaluate the results of the following programs and services in the public health and/or social protection network:

Programs/Services	Mechanisms in place to continuously monitor and evaluate results		Name of the mechanisms
	Yes	No	
Care	X		Operational guidelines for Care in Mental Health Units within Hospitals
Treatment		X	
Rehabilitation		X	
Recovery and social integration		X	

OBJECTIVE
3

EXPAND AND ENHANCE THE COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON ILLICIT DRUG PRODUCTION, TRAFFICKING, AND RELATED ISSUES, THROUGH THE USE OF SOUND, SYSTEMATIC DATA COLLECTION PRACTICES, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, AND STANDARDIZED METHODOLOGIES.

Priority Action 3.1: Generate information on illicit drug production, trafficking, drug markets, and related issues, using systematic data collection practices, scientific research, and wherever possible applying comparable methodologies.

Ecuador has mechanisms to collect and analyze information related to the illicit supply of drugs. The following institutions participate in these mechanisms:

- Ministry of the Interior (MDI)
- Undersecretariat for Combating Crime
- National Police. National Intelligence Directorate
- Strategic Intelligence Center

The country has the following information related to supply reduction, trafficking, and related crimes:

Supply reduction, trafficking, and related crimes			
Information	Available information		Year of most recent information
	Yes	No	
Quantification of illicit crop cultivation including crops grown indoors	X		2023
Number of seizures of illicit drugs and raw materials for their production	X		2023
Quantities of illicit drugs and raw materials for their production seized	X		2023
Number of seizures of controlled chemical substances (precursors)	X		2023
Quantities of seized controlled chemical substances (precursors)	X		2023
Number of seizures of pharmaceutical products		X	
Quantities of seized pharmaceutical products		X	
Number of persons formally charged with drug use, possession, and trafficking	X		2023
Number of persons convicted of drug use, possession, and trafficking	X		2023
Number of laboratories producing illicit plant-based drugs detected and dismantled	X		2023
Number of laboratories producing illicit drugs of synthetic origin detected and dismantled	X		2023
Chemical composition of seized drugs		X	
Sale price of drugs (for consumers)		X	
Number of persons formally charged with money laundering		X	
Number of persons convicted of money laundering		X	
Number of persons formally charged with trafficking in firearms,		X	

Supply reduction, trafficking, and related crimes			
Information	Available information		Year of most recent information
	Yes	No	
explosives, ammunition, and related materials			
Number of persons convicted of trafficking in firearms, explosives, ammunition, and related materials		X	
Number of persons formally charged with diversion of chemical substances	X		2023
Number of persons convicted of diversion of chemical substances	X		2023

Ecuador does not carry out periodic studies and research on the drug market for illicit drugs.

The country does not carry out studies on the medical and scientific uses and other legal use of narcotics or psychotropic substances subject to international control systems.

Priority Action 3.2: Conduct studies on the price, purity or concentration, and chemical profile of drugs.

Ecuador does not collect information drug prices, purity or concentration, or chemical profile of drugs.

The country does not conduct chemical characterization or tests of purity for substances that may or may not be subject to international control.

Priority Action 3.3: Establish and strengthen the relationship between the NDOs, or similar technical offices, and national, and when applicable, local, or sub-national forensic laboratories to bolster the collection of data on the chemical composition of substances and precursors seized.

In Ecuador, the National Service of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences is responsible for the chemical analysis of chemical substances, precursors, and pharmaceutical products, including new psychoactive substances.

The country does not implement or participate in periodic training programs for personnel involved in the chemical analysis of chemical substances, precursors, and pharmaceutical products, including new psychoactive substances.

Priority Action 3.4: Strengthen drug information networks in member states by improving the mechanisms used to gather and analyze data to inform the development of public policies that control the illicit supply of drugs.

Not applicable.

OBJECTIVE

4

PARTICIPATE IN AND STRENGTHEN THE MULTILATERAL EVALUATION MECHANISM (MEM) PROCESS, CONSIDERING ITS RECOMMENDATIONS.

Priority Action 4.1: Regularly collect information and data to evaluate implementation of the Hemispheric Plan of Action.

For the eighth MEM evaluation round, Ecuador compiled information on the implementation of the 2021-2025 Hemispheric Drug Action Plan and submitted it in a timely manner for evaluation by the Governmental Expert Group (GEG) in the following thematic areas:

- Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support Measures (2021)
- Measures to Control and Counter the Illicit Cultivation, Production, Trafficking, and Distribution of Drugs, and to Address their Causes and Consequences (2022)
- Institutional Strengthening; Research, Information, Monitoring, and Evaluation; and International Cooperation (2023)

Priority Action 4.2: Support and facilitate active and timely participation in each of the MEM activities agreed to by member states.

For the eighth MEM evaluation round, Ecuador designated delegates for the following MEM groups, actively participating in and contributing to the evaluation process:

Thematic Evaluation	National Coordinating Entities (NCEs)	Governmental Experts Group (GEG)
Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support Measures (2021)	Yes	Yes
Measures to Control and Counter the Illicit Cultivation, Production, Trafficking, and Distribution of Drugs and to Address their Causes and Consequences (2022)	Yes	Yes
Institutional Strengthening; Research, Information, Monitoring and Evaluation; and International Cooperation (2023)	Yes	Yes

Priority Action 4.3: Disseminate MEM evaluation reports by member states among national stakeholders, other pertinent organizations, and the general public.

Ecuador does not carry out periodic activities to promote and raise awareness of the MEM Evaluation Reports on Drugs Policies aimed at national institutions.

Priority Action 4.4: Promote use of the MEM’s findings to identify technical assistance needs.

Ecuador has not promoted the analysis of the findings of the MEM Evaluation Reports on Drug Policies for national institutions to identify areas where technical assistance is needed to improve national drug policies and programs.

Priority Action 4.5: Increase hemispheric cooperation and partnerships among member states and sharing of best practices and lessons learned.

Ecuador has not reviewed the MEM Evaluation Reports on Drug Policies, nor has it identified opportunities to increase cooperation and partnerships with other member states or share best practices and lessons learned (horizontal cooperation).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

OBJECTIVE

1

PROMOTE AND STRENGTHEN COOPERATION AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS TO FOSTER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, IMPROVE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCES, AND SHARE BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED ON DRUG POLICIES.

Priority Action 1.1: Develop and implement a plan for promoting and strengthening technical assistance and horizontal cooperation among member states and with states outside of the Western Hemisphere, and with relevant international and regional organizations, and related initiatives and programs.

Ecuador develops and implements a plan for the promotion and strengthening of technical assistance and horizontal cooperation among member states and with states outside the Western Hemisphere, as well as with relevant international and regional organizations. In this sense, the Ministry of Public Health (MSP) works with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan-America Health Organization (PAHO) to receive technical assistance and support in strengthening comprehensive strategies and actions related to tobacco control, especially with respect to the fiscal tracking and tracing system for tobacco products in Ecuador. Likewise, the National Directorate of Strategies for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, Mental Health and the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs of the Ministry of Public Health reports that it receives support to boost the response capacity of professionals to care for people with problematic drug use with the Colombo Plan, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC), and the Cooperation Program between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union on Drug Policies (COPOLAD).

The country has established secure communication channels for the exchange of intelligence on drug interdiction and control. In this sense, the country uses confidential bilateral police cooperation mechanisms for the exchange of information on drug interdiction and control processes and uses secure information channels of organizations such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) or the Police Community of the Americas (Ameripol). In addition, the country has mechanisms for coordination, information exchange, and cooperation between the police and military establishments derived from the Binational Annual Operational Plans (POAB) signed with Colombia and Peru. Moreover, the permanent presence of an officer of the Ecuadorian Armed Forces is maintained at the International Maritime Analysis Center against Drug Trafficking (CIMCON), located in Cartagena, Colombia, for coordination and communication with other countries.

Ecuador promotes the exchange, with member states and with states outside of the Western Hemisphere, and with relevant international and regional organizations, of best practices on training, specialization, and professional development of the staff responsible for implementing the national drug policies and strategies. In this sense, the country participates in:

- Colombo Plan, with training in the Universal Prevention Curriculum (UPC) and the Universal

Treatment Curriculum (UTC)

- CICAD/OAS Group of Experts on Chemical Substances and Pharmaceutical Products
- COPOLAD Precursors Working Group

The country participates in regional coordination activities to prevent crimes related to drug trafficking, such as firearms trafficking, extortion, kidnapping, money laundering, and corruption, among others, through the following organizations:

- UNODC
- Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA) - OAS
- Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) - OAS
- Committee against Trafficking in Persons - OAS
- Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering in Latin America (GAFILAT)
- Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF)
- Andean Community (CAN)
- Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR)
- Forum for the Progress and Integration of South America (PROSUR)

In addition, Ecuador analyzes unusual and unjustified economic operations or transactions, together with the financial intelligence information it receives through the Egmont Group and alerts the State Attorney General's Office to initiate a possible investigation, in addition to having mechanisms for coordination, exchange of information, and cooperation between the police and military establishments derived from the Binational Annual Operational Plans (POAB) signed with Colombia and Peru. Moreover, the permanent presence of an officer of the Ecuadorian Armed Forces is maintained at the International Maritime Center for Analysis against Drug Trafficking (CIMCON), located in Cartagena, Colombia, for coordination and communication with other states.

In the country, there are bilateral mechanisms for coordination and collaboration with other countries focused on the dismantling of criminal groups linked to drug trafficking and related crimes. In this sense, the country implements actions to identify organized criminal groups involved in illicit drug trafficking and related crimes, such as the characterization of organized crime groups as part of the activities of the Binational Annual Operational Plans, as well as the Evaluation of the Threat of Transnational Organized Crime in Latin America (IDEAL) and its platforms for entering information on organized criminal groups. Additionally, Ecuador has participated in joint operations and investigations with other countries aimed at dismantling organized criminal groups involved in illicit drug trafficking and related crimes, such as the Orion International Naval Campaign and the Reappearance II, Gran Impacto 81, and Rescate Ecuador Gran Impacto 96 operations.

The countries with which these mechanisms have been established are: Chile, Brazil, USA,

Colombia, Peru, the European Union, and Belgium, having permanent communication, especially when it is required to resort to international technical assistance for the exchange of information.

Priority Action 1.2: Promote technology transfers and information sharing among and between member states and international organizations.

Ecuador has promoted technology transfers among OAS member states and international (including regional) organizations.

In this sense, on October 12, 2020, the country signed an interinstitutional cooperation agreement through which the Central Bank of Ecuador (BCE) would transfer to the Financial and Economic Analysis Unit (UAFE), the source code and algorithm, and the components of its technological tool so that the UAFE adapts it to the needs of the institution by generating a new system called “Coincidence Search System”, which allows cross-referencing with different databases, among which are terrorists identified in the lists of the Security Council of the United Nations Organization, in order to obtain possible matches on the lists of clients, suppliers and employees of the subjects obliged to report to the UAFE.

Additionally, within the framework of the Global Synthetic Drug Monitoring: Analysis, Reporting, and Trends (SMART) Program, several training sessions were held in Panama, aimed at law enforcement agencies and forensic laboratories of the 13 countries that were initially included in the SMART program (Barbados, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Mexico, Peru, Saint Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago), on the use of TruNarc, an detection tool that was donated to each of the member states that participated in the program.

Ecuador has promoted information sharing among and between member states and international (including regional) organizations.

In this sense, the country has mechanisms for coordination, information exchange, and cooperation between the police and military establishments derived from the POAB signed with Colombia and Peru. Moreover, the permanent presence of an officer of the Ecuadorian Armed Forces is maintained at the CIMCON, located in Cartagena, Colombia, for coordination and communication with other countries.

In addition, information exchange is carried out for the management of joint operations for the dismantling of criminal organizations that commit crimes such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, organized crime, and other related crimes.

Priority Action 1.3: Promote the dissemination of good practices and exchange of successful research experiences among and between member states and international organizations.

Ecuador does not promote the dissemination of good practices or the exchange of successful research experiences among and between member states and international organizations on drug policies.

OBJECTIVE
2**STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AS DEFINED IN THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS RELATED TO THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM, MAINTAINING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.****Priority Action 2.1: Strengthen regional and international cooperation by competent authorities to investigate and prosecute criminals on drug-related offenses.**

The competent authorities of Ecuador carry out cooperation activities at the regional and international level to investigate and prosecute criminals for drug-related offenses.

Starting in 2019, the Attorney General's Office of Ecuador, through the Directorate of Cooperation and International Affairs, has strengthened its participation in networks and working groups, in regional forums, such as the Ibero-American Association of Public Ministries (AIAMP) and the Specialized Meeting of Public Ministries (REMP) of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), and has received training and technical support from International Organizations, such as the Assistance Program against Organized Crime (PACCTO), OAS, and the Global Program on Criminal Network Disruption (CRIMJUST). Within the framework of the AIAMP, in June 2019, the first joint investigation team was formed on drugs, with the agreement of the highest authorities of the participating countries (Chile, Colombia, and Ecuador) which is an important international cooperation exercise in the fight against transnational crime. Under the national criminal legal framework, there are regional regulations, the Framework Cooperation Agreement between the States Parties to MERCOSUR and Associated States for the Creation of Joint Investigation Teams, international legal instruments such as the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Additionally, within the framework of CRIMJUST, the Investigation Forums of cases between Ecuador and Spain have been strengthened, with the participation of prosecutors from specialized units investigating transnational crimes, specifically drug trafficking. Another international cooperation technique that has been used is controlled delivery, which has been successfully executed, managing to seize considerable quantities of drugs in European countries.

Lastly, the Ecuadorian State is a country that guarantees rights, therefore all activities, regulations, and public policy have an orientation to protect human rights and not violate them. These elements are reflected in the Constitution of the Republic, in the International Agreements that Ecuador has signed and adopted, as well as in each regulatory instrument of each Ecuadorian institution.

Priority Action 2.2: Strengthen regional and international cooperation to facilitate, where appropriate, mutual legal assistance, extradition, and transfer of proceedings, in accordance with international legal instruments, when investigating and prosecuting criminals on drug-related offenses.

Ecuador carries out activities to strengthen regional and international cooperation to facilitate,

where appropriate, mutual legal assistance, extradition, and transfer of proceedings, in accordance with international legal instruments, when investigating and prosecuting criminals on drug-related offenses.

In this sense, the country has signed several international instruments related to international cooperation mechanisms in criminal matters, specifically in the field of mutual legal assistance. The Attorney General's Office, designated as the central authority in criminal matters for the execution of international mutual judicial assistance, through its operational unit in the field of international criminal cooperation, the Directorate of Cooperation and International Affairs, manages mutual judicial assistance on the basis of a single format (international criminal assistance request) for the request and practice of proceedings abroad. Its actions are mainly based on multilateral international instruments, which have been the basis for the signing of bilateral and inter-institutional agreements, with the purpose of more effectively enabling the exchange of information and attention to requests for international criminal assistance. In January 2018, the specialized National Investigation Unit against Transnational Organized Crime (UNIDOT) was created with the purpose of investigating and prosecuting crimes linked to organized crime, terrorism, and its financing; as well as the implementation of special investigation techniques such as undercover operations, monitored and controlled deliveries, effective cooperation, management of informants, submission of evidence, joint investigations, extradition, among others, which were incorporated into the Comprehensive Organic Penal Code, which came into effect in August 2014.

Priority Action 2.3: Enact national legislation and/or take administrative actions, as appropriate, to more fully implement the obligations set forth within these legal instruments.

Ecuador has not enacted or adopted, during the evaluation period (2019-2023), legislative or administrative measures or actions to improve the implementation of obligations set forth within international legal instruments related to the global drug problem, respecting human rights and gender equality.

Priority Action 2.4: Promote the accession, ratification, and implementation of the international legal instruments related to the world drug problem and related crimes.

Ecuador has ratified or acceded to the following international legal instruments:

Conventions and Protocols		Yes	No
United Nations Conventions	Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000	X	
	Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children		
	Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air	X	

		Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition	X	
		Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961	X	
		Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971	X	
		Convention against Corruption, 2003	X	
Inter-American Conventions		American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA), 1997	X	
		Convention against Corruption, 1996	X	
		Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, 1992	X	

EVALUATIVE SUMMARY

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Objective 1

Establish and/or strengthen national drug authorities, placing them at a high political level and providing them with the necessary capabilities, resources, and competencies to coordinate formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of national drug policies.

CICAD notes that Ecuador has a national drug authority, which has a legal basis. However, CICAD observes that, in the country, there is no annual budget for the national drug authority. Likewise, CICAD notes that Ecuador has an ongoing coordination and collaboration mechanism among agencies and other levels of government (national and subnational) to formulate, implement, monitor, evaluate, and update national drug policies and/or strategies. and that the national drug authority coordinates the areas of demand reduction, supply reduction, preventive alternative development programs, control measures, international cooperation, and program evaluation.

Objective 2

Formulate, implement, evaluate, and update comprehensive national drug policies and/or strategies that promote balanced, multidisciplinary, and evidence-based approaches, while fully respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, under the principle of common and shared responsibility, consistent with obligations of parties under international law, and take into account gender, age, community, cultural context, and socially inclusive development.

CICAD notes that Ecuador does not collect and use evidence as a basis for formulating and updating of national drug policies and strategies. On the other hand, CICAD observes the involvement of relevant actors from priority areas in the development, implementation, evaluation, and updating of national drug policies and/or strategies. CICAD notes that the country has fully delegated drug-related responsibilities to subnational/local governments to implement concrete actions related to drug policies and strategies, in coordination with the national drug authority, and that said authority has, in its organizational structure, functional offices to promote, coordinate, train, or provide technical support to local or sub-national governments or agencies on drug-related issues. In addition, the national drug authority has coordinators, offices, or representatives in the subnational/local territories, as part of a decentralized operational and coordination at the local level, to respond to the drug problem. However, Ecuador does not have a specific and ongoing mechanism or program for the transfer funds or finance drug initiatives or projects implemented by sub-national/local governments. CICAD observes that the country does not engage private sector entities to develop innovative approaches in the implementation of drug policies and exchange of information and best practices. CICAD notes that Ecuador the 2020 OAS Hemispheric Strategy on Drugs and its corresponding Plan of Action to formulate or update national drug policies and strategies. Likewise, these policies and strategies take into account the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. CICAD observes that the country's national drug policies and strategies take into account the human rights approach, the gender perspective, and

the social inclusion approach. However, CICAD notes that Ecuador does not have the necessary resources to implement drug policies and programs.

Objective 3

Design and coordinate national drug policies, that can be harmonized across related government policies and/or strategies, that address the fundamental causes and consequences of the drug problem.

CICAD notes with satisfaction that Ecuador has interagency and multisectoral policy and technical coordination mechanisms to address the drug problem through a comprehensive, balanced, and multidisciplinary approach, including its causes and consequences. Likewise, CICAD observes that the country has concrete multisectoral plans and programs to address the socioeconomic causes and consequences of the drug problem, which are based on the principles of human rights, public health, and development. Furthermore, CICAD notes that Ecuador participates in international cooperation programs at the bilateral and multilateral levels to strengthen policies, programs, institutions, and their internal processes. Likewise, CICAD observes that the country promotes comprehensive and cross-cutting public policies to reduce and prevent crime, violence, social exclusion, and corruption. Additionally, CICAD notes that Ecuador implements measures that promote equal access to justice and due process, taking into account gender, age, community, and cultural context. Likewise, CICAD observes that the country implements measures that foster citizen participation in crime prevention, build community cohesion, increase public safety, and emphasize social inclusion.

Objective 4

Design, adopt, and implement alternatives to incarceration for minor or non-violent drug or drug-related offenses, while taking into account national, constitutional, legal, and administrative systems, and in accordance with relevant international instruments.

CICAD notes with satisfaction that Ecuador's laws provide for alternative measures to incarceration for minor non-violent drug-related offenses, which respect human rights and take into account the gender perspective in accordance with relevant international instruments. Furthermore, CICAD observes that the country develops mechanisms to monitor and evaluate alternative measures to incarceration for minor or non-violent drug-related offenses, which involve academic and research institutions and civil society, and promotes common understanding of national legal norms, regulations, and internal procedures for the implementation of said measures.

Objective 5

Promote and implement, as appropriate, in accordance with the policies, laws and needs of each country, comprehensive programs that promote social inclusion, especially to those at-risk populations.

CICAD notes that Ecuador has interagency and multisectoral programs that promote the social inclusion of individuals, families, and communities affected by the drug problem, taking into account the specific needs of at-risk populations. However, CICAD observes that the country does not disseminate best practices or lessons learned to improve institutional responses to the needs of at-risk populations.

Objective 6

Promote proportionate sentencing for drug-related crimes that provides for penalties commensurate with the relative seriousness of offenses, in line with the international drug conventions and respecting the principles of due process, with gender perspective, age, community, and a human rights approach.

CICAD observes that Ecuador promotes legal reforms regarding proportional sentencing for minor drug-related offenses, in accordance with national legislation, however, it does not have special courts or tribunals for these offenses. Likewise, CICAD notes that the country promotes legal reforms regarding proportional sentencing for minor drug-related offenses.

RESEARCH, INFORMATION, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION**Objective 1**

Establish or strengthen national observatories on drugs, or similar technical offices, strengthening national drug information systems, and foster scientific research to generate, collect, organize, analyze, and disseminate information to inform the development and implementation of evidence-based drug policies and strategies.

CICAD notes that Ecuador does not have a national drug observatory (NDO). However, CICAD observes that the country has established and maintained working relationships with academic and research institutions and has carried out studies on the drug problem through them. However, CICAD notes that Ecuador has not developed and adopted quantitative and qualitative methodologies and information-gathering mechanisms that allow for the comparison of data among countries, nor has it conducted studies drug use applying the SIDUC methodology or used CICAD's standardized indicators for drug information networks for the collection, analysis, and reporting of national drug-related information. Likewise, the country has not carried out studies using methods that are non-representative of the population or qualitative methodologies to obtain information on drugs that can be shared with other countries that have conducted studies with similar methodologies. Likewise, CICAD observes that Ecuador does not have a national drug information network (DIN). Furthermore, the country does not have early warning systems (EWS)

or similar mechanism to identify new psychoactive substances (NPS) or other emerging drug-related threats. Additionally, CICAD notes that, given that the country does not have a national drug observatory, the Priority Action corresponding to Building capacity among relevant stakeholders to enhance the collection, management, and dissemination of drug related information is not applicable. Additionally, CICAD notes that Ecuador has not established forums that allow drug researchers to present their findings to policymakers. Likewise, CICAD notes that the country does not promote or disseminate best practices and the exchange of successful research experiences among member states through its technical entities.

Objective 2

Expand access to information on drug use and related issues through the use of sound, systematic data collection practices, scientific research, and standardized methodologies, ensuring that countries have the information necessary to develop sound demand reduction programs and policies.

CICAD notes that Ecuador has not carried out the demand reduction studies in the evaluation period (2019-2023). On the other hand, CICAD observes that the country has a national system for the collection of data on the number of patients treated, diagnoses, clinical history, and available information on treatment outcomes. Furthermore, CICAD notes that Ecuador has not carried out studies to evaluate the supervision of prevention or treatment programs and/or interventions, nor process, intermediate results, or impact evaluations of these programs. However, the country has mechanisms to continually monitor and evaluate the results of care programs and services in the public health network, but not of treatment, rehabilitation, or recovery and social integration programs.

Objective 3

Expand and enhance the collection and dissemination of information on illicit drug production, trafficking, and related issues, through the use of sound, systematic data collection practices, scientific research, and standardized methodologies.

CICAD notes that Ecuador has mechanisms to collect and analyze information related to the illicit supply of drugs and has information related to supply reduction, trafficking, and related crimes. However, the country does not carry out periodic studies and research on the drug market for illicit drugs or on the medical and scientific uses and other legal use of narcotics or psychotropic substances subject to international control systems. CICAD observes that the country does not collect information drug prices, purity or concentration, or chemical profile of drugs nor does it conduct chemical characterization or tests of purity for substances that may or may not be subject to international control. On the other hand, CICAD notes that Ecuador has an institution responsible for analyzing chemical substances, precursors, and pharmaceutical products, including new psychoactive substances. However, the country does not implement or participate in periodic training programs for personnel involved in the analysis of these substances.

Objective 4

Participate in and strengthen the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) process, considering its recommendations.

CICAD notes that, for the eighth MEM evaluation round, Ecuador compiled information on the implementation of the 2021-2025 Hemispheric Drug Action Plan and submitted it in a timely manner for evaluation by the Governmental Expert Group (GEG). CICAD observes that, for the eighth MEM evaluation round, the country designated delegates for all MEM groups, actively participating in and contributing to the evaluation process. However, CICAD notes that Ecuador does not carry out periodic activities to promote and raise awareness of the MEM Evaluation Reports on Drugs Policies aimed at national institutions. Likewise, CICAD observes that the country has not promoted the analysis of the findings of the MEM Evaluation Reports on Drug Policies for national institutions to identify areas where technical assistance is needed to improve national drug policies and programs. Additionally, CICAD notes that Ecuador has not reviewed the MEM Evaluation Reports on Drug Policies, nor has it identified opportunities to increase cooperation and partnerships with other member states or share best practices and lessons learned (horizontal cooperation).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**Objective 1**

Promote and strengthen cooperation and coordination mechanisms to foster technical assistance, improve exchange of information and experiences, and share best practices and lessons learned on drug policies.

CICAD notes that Ecuador develops and implements a plan for the promotion and strengthening of technical assistance and horizontal cooperation among member states and with states outside the Western Hemisphere, as well as with relevant international and regional organizations. In addition, the country has established secure communication channels for the exchange of intelligence on drug interdiction and control. Additionally, Ecuador promotes the exchange, with member states and with states outside of the Western Hemisphere, and with relevant international and regional organizations, of best practices on training, specialization, and professional development of the staff responsible for implementing the national drug policies and strategies. Likewise, the country participates in regional coordination activities to prevent crimes related to drug trafficking, such as firearms trafficking, extortion, kidnapping, money laundering, and corruption, among others. Additionally, in Ecuador there are bilateral mechanisms for coordination and collaboration with other countries focused on the dismantling of criminal groups linked to drug trafficking and related crimes. Likewise, CICAD observes that the country has promoted technology transfers among OAS member states and international (including regional) organizations and the information sharing among them. However, CICAD notes that Ecuador does not promote the dissemination of good practices or the exchange of successful research experiences among and between member states and international organizations on drug policies.

Objective 2

Strengthen international cooperation as defined in the international legal instruments related to the world drug problem, maintaining respect for human rights.

CICAD notes that the competent authorities of Ecuador carry out cooperation activities at the regional and international level to investigate and prosecute criminals for drug-related offenses. Likewise, CICAD notes that the country carries out activities to strengthen regional and international cooperation to facilitate, where appropriate, mutual legal assistance, extradition, and transfer of proceedings, in accordance with international legal instruments, when investigating and prosecuting criminals on drug-related offenses. However, CICAD notes that Ecuador has not enacted or adopted, during the evaluation period (2019-2023), legislative or administrative measures or actions to improve the implementation of obligations set forth within international legal instruments related to the global drug problem, respecting human rights and gender equality. However, CICAD observes that the country has ratified or acceded to all of the international legal instruments of the United Nations and all of the OAS Inter-American legal instruments regarding the world drug problem and related crimes.



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