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# MULTILATERAL EVALUATION MECHANISM (MEM)

*Measures to Control and Counter the Illicit Cultivation, Production, Trafficking, and Distribution of Drugs, and to Address their Causes and Consequences*

## Hemispheric Brief

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

2023

Based on the results  
of the 2022 national  
evaluation reports





**Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American  
Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)  
2023 HEMISPHERIC BRIEF OF THE  
MULTILATERAL EVALUATION MECHANISM (MEM):  
MEASURES TO CONTROL AND COUNTER THE ILLICIT CULTIVATION,  
PRODUCTION, TRAFFICKING, AND DISTRIBUTION OF DRUGS,  
AND TO ADDRESS THEIR CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES  
(Based on the results of the 2022 country evaluations)**

During 2022, member states<sup>1</sup> of the Organization of American States (OAS) were evaluated by the Governmental Experts Group (GEG) of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) on their level of compliance with drug supply reduction<sup>2</sup> priority actions outlined in the CICAD's Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs 2021-2025.<sup>3</sup> The results of the evaluation indicate that noteworthy progress has been made at the hemispheric level, with a substantial number of priority actions exceeding 90% compliance, including:

- Improving access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.
- Strengthening control systems to prevent the diversion and trafficking of controlled chemical substances, pharmaceutical products, and chemical precursors used in the illicit manufacture of drugs.
- Streamlining the process for issuing authorizations for national production of, and to import and export controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.
- Updating regulations and other measures to prevent diversion of pharmaceutical products containing narcotic drugs and/or psychotropic substances.
- Reviewing and updating of legal frameworks related to the use of specialized investigation tools and techniques in drug-related investigations.
- Promoting and strengthening the exchange of information and intelligence on matters of drug interdiction and effective border control measures to prevent drug trafficking.
- Strengthening implementation of the legal, regulatory, and operational frameworks in the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution, and control of money laundering derived from drug trafficking.
- Applying legislative and regulatory measures to facilitate the seizure, forfeiture and management of assets, instruments, or product of illicit drug-related activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Member states that participated in the evaluation: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas (Commonwealth of The), Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica (Commonwealth of), Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis (Federation of), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, and Uruguay.

<sup>2</sup> Measures to Control and Counter the Illicit Cultivation, Production, Trafficking, and Distribution of Drugs, and to Address their Causes and Consequences.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.cicad.oas.org/main/aboutcicad/basicdocuments/Hemispheric\\_Plan\\_of\\_Action\\_on\\_Drugs\\_2021-2025\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.cicad.oas.org/main/aboutcicad/basicdocuments/Hemispheric_Plan_of_Action_on_Drugs_2021-2025_ENG.pdf)

However, the national reports<sup>4</sup> highlight that additional efforts need to be made in the following areas:

- The highest rate of noncompliance refers to the control of **new psychoactive substances (NPS) and synthetic drugs**. In this regard, 63% of countries have not made progress toward establishing and/or strengthening early warning systems (EWS), while 72% of countries have not developed innovative regulatory approaches to enhance their national control of NPS or synthetic opioids used for nonmedical purposes.
- Regarding the **illicit production, trafficking and distribution of drugs**, priority action 1.1, related to the capacity to detect, investigate, and dismantle laboratories or facilities used in the illicit manufacture of drugs<sup>5</sup> requires special attention, as 50% of member states have not developed or strengthened national intelligence or interdiction capabilities in this regard.
- Regarding the **control of chemical substances and pharmaceutical products**, 63% of member states do not offer ongoing specialized training in guaranteeing adequate access to substances subject to international control for medical and scientific purposes, and only 22% of countries require the competent national authorities to join the International Import and Export Authorization System (I2ES) of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB).
- Regarding money laundering control, member states need to increase their specialized and ongoing training for officials responsible for the **administration and disposition of seized and forfeited assets**, given that noncompliance with the corresponding priority action stands at 38%.
- Regarding **comprehensive and sustainable alternative development programs**, while countries exchange good practices on program design and implementation, there is a need to enhance collaboration between the public and private sector and with the international community. Increased efforts are needed in conducting research and studies on the environmental impact of **illicit crop cultivation and drug production**, as well as formulating plans to mitigate that impact, and promote and strengthen tools for managing those efforts.
- Regarding the **trafficking of drugs in small quantities**, 47% of countries do not promote programs and strategies to prevent the exploitation of at-risk populations<sup>6</sup> by drug trafficking networks, at the national and international level.

In conclusion, there is evidence of significant commitment, along with notable progress having been achieved by member states, in actions aimed at reducing the supply of drugs. Key aspects have been identified where efforts should continue to be made and cooperation strengthened, in order to effectively counteract the illicit cultivation, production, trafficking, and distribution of drugs in the Americas.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.cicad.oas.org/Main/Template.asp?File=/mem/reports/8/ronda\\_8\\_eval\\_2022\\_eng.asp](http://www.cicad.oas.org/Main/Template.asp?File=/mem/reports/8/ronda_8_eval_2022_eng.asp)

<sup>5</sup> This priority action covers ongoing training and protocols and operating procedures (with adequate safety and health measures, and actions that minimize damage to the environment and optimize the management of chemical and hazardous waste) to detect, investigate, and dismantle clandestine laboratories or facilities for the illicit manufacture of drugs.

<sup>6</sup> At-risk populations may include: women, children, adolescents, LGBTIQ+ persons, people who use drugs, prison population, indigenous groups, migrants, homeless individuals, and other socially disadvantaged groups.





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