

# Antigua And Barbuda



NATIONAL ANTI-DRUG  
STRATEGY PLAN  
2019-2023

## Vision

Drug free Antigua and Barbuda

## Mission

Eradicate dangerous drugs from Antigua and Barbuda

## Goals

1. Reduce the availability of, and the demand for drugs
2. Strengthen corporation between key stakeholders
3. Improve data collection and availability
4. Delay the onset of substance use / abuse
5. Improve implementation ability of the National Drug Council

## Objectives

1. Improve drug prevention education for students
2. Promote the development of targeted programmes to prevent substance use by youths.
3. Improve and implement demand reduction policies and plans with a public health focus.
4. Strengthen awareness raising efforts / activities
5. Work towards establishing a national treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration system.
6. Strengthen the relationship between Substance Abuse Prevention Division and CBO's, NGO's etc.
7. Develop and implement a national strategic approach to tobacco control.

8. Establish evidence-based programmes to inform the public of the dangers and addictiveness of substances such as tobacco, alcohol and marijuana.
9. Improve screening procedures at ports of entry.
10. Strengthen capability of law enforcement agencies to control drug trafficking.
11. Extend and strengthen both regional and international cooperation in anti-drug efforts.
12. Work towards the introduction of legislation to control chemical precursors and pharmaceutical products used in the manufacturing of illegal drugs.
13. Strengthen technical and human resource capacities of stakeholders to deliver on their mandates.
14. Promote evidence-based approach towards the development of policy and programme formulation within national agencies.
15. Institute operational plans to facilitate the achievement of the goals of the National Anti-Drug Strategy.
16. Adapt a performance Management Framework for the National Anti-Drug Strategy.
17. Develop the technical capacity to design and conduct drug control programmes.

## Antigua and Barbuda's Illicit Drug Challenge

The 2019-2023 National Anti-Drug Strategy builds upon the 2010-2014 Anti-Drug Strategy which primarily centered on greater collaboration locally, among all stakeholders, backed by support from regional and international partners. It also looked at the strengthening of existing systems, along with a stronger law enforcement presence at the many quays and inlets that make up the country's coastline as a means of stemming the transshipment of drugs through the country.

The strategy has been devised to produce tangible results in countering various aspects of the drug issue. It also takes into account global patterns and trends in the production, trafficking and use of mood altering substances.

Over the life of this strategy, Antigua and Barbuda will seek to fight the drug problem on several fronts, including demand and supply reduction, treatment and rehabilitation, the criminal justice system, law enforcement, legislation, research and public information.

Antigua and Barbuda's continued vulnerability to transnational drug trafficking and drug abuse is due to a number of natural factors. These factors which make it an ideal transshipment point for drugs are a result of its strategic geographical location on both maritime and aviation routes between South America and Europe and North America; its centrality within the Caribbean region; a coastline comprising numerous coves and bays, which makes it well known for its 365 beaches; and a number of small uninhabited islands just off the mainland.

## Antigua and Barbuda's vulnerability

Situated on the eastern edge of the Caribbean Sea, 17 degrees north of the equator, the country has a total landmass of 441.6 sq. km. (170.5 sq. ml.) of which Antigua (the largest of the Leeward Islands) accounts for 279.7 sq. km. (108 sq. ml.), Barbuda, a flat coral island to the north for 160.6 sq. km. (62 sq. ml.) and the rocky uninhabited islet of Redonda to the south for 1.3 sq. km. (0.5 sq. ml.). Antigua and Barbuda is situated 1,425 miles south-east of Miami and just over 4,000 miles southwest of the United Kingdom.

The 2011 census estimated resident population is 85,567, of whom 40,986 (47.90%) were male and 44,581 (52.10%) were female representing a 11.29% growth in 2011 over 2001; of this figure Barbuda represents 1,325 of whom 687 (51.85%) were male and 638 (48.15%) were female.

Antigua and Barbuda enjoys a relatively high standard of living. In the World Justice Projects Rule of Law index 2016, Antigua and Barbuda received a score of 0.67 and was ranked 29<sup>th</sup> out of 113 countries and was given an income rank of 28/30; the country also ranked 5<sup>th</sup> within the regional Jurisdiction of Latin America and the

Caribbean. Similarly, in the 2015 United Nations Human Development Index Antigua and Barbuda received a value of 0.783 and ranked 58 out of 188 countries, emerging as one of the leading performers in the Caribbean with only the Bahamas (55) and Barbados (57) being ranked higher. Figures from the ECCB show preliminary GDP contributions for the fiscal year 2015 of 3,075.67 (GDP in Market Prices; EC\$M). Although the main industry of Antigua and Barbuda is tourism, it also relies on Offshore Banking and Internet Gambling.

While Antigua and Barbuda is not a major producer of drugs, small quantities of cannabis/marijuana are grown for local consumption. As the drug is illegal in the country these plants are seized whenever detected by law enforcement entities.

According to the Caribbean Drug Control Mechanism (2000) between 1995 and 1999, 143,571 kilos of cocaine were seized in the Caribbean with Antigua and Barbuda accounting for 269 kilos. While the UNODC's Caribbean Drug Trends 2001-2002 states that "the amount of cocaine exported from the Caribbean to the United States declined sharply during the 1980s and 1990s" the World Drug Report for 2017 points out that according to the United States Drug Enforcement Agency's (USDEAs) National Drug Threat Assessment 2016, cocaine trafficking through the Caribbean was reported to have increased. The table overleaf provides a summary of the drugs seized by the police between January 2000 and December 2017.

# Status of Drug Seizures

## SUMMARY OF DRUG STATISTICS

TABLE 1

YEAR	NO. OF CASES	CASES PROSECUTED	CASES CONVICTED	CASES ACQUITTED	CASES WITHDRAWN	CASES PENDING	AMOUNT OF DRUGS SEIZED IN ARRESTS		AMOUNT OF DRUGS SEIZED NO ARRESTS		NO. OF PERSONS ARRESTED			
							CANNABIS	COCAINE	CANNABIS	COCAINE	ADULTS		JUVENILES	
											M	F	M	F
2000	173	83	81		Nil	90	42.3 kg	24.3 kg	24.3 kg	36 gr.				
2001	121	55	55	Nil	Nil	66	372 kg 631 gr.	6 kg 80 gr.	383 kg 458 gr.	12 gr.	150	15	Nil	Nil
2002	105	41	41	Nil	Nil	64	1130 kg 524 gr.	59 kg 859.1 gr.	126 kg 972 gr.	2 kg.	101	27	3	Nil
2003	110	40	40	Nil	1	69	255 kg 270.6 gr.	62 kg 258.7 gr.	104 kg 105.2 gr.	14 gr.	107	30	Nil	Nil
2004	157	41	40	21	Nil	116	7,054 kg 898.8 gr.	26 kg 358.9 gr.	104 kg 699.4 gr.	32.3 gr.	165	21	10	Nil
2005	132	32	32	Nil	Nil	100	2,707 kg 386.6 gr.	24 kg 6.4 gr.	67 kg 491.3 gr.	8 gr.	120	20	1	3
2006	147	32	30	2	Nil	115	40 kg 809.4 gr. 9,153 plants	8kg 519.7gr.	53 kg 624.3 gr. 25,041 plants	10 kg 100.2 gr.	165	13	7	Nil

2007	171	45	45	Nil	Nil	126	1475 kg 32.8 gr. 360 plants	6 kg 668.6 gr.	6 kg 966.8 gr. 11,035 plants	588 gr.	218	17	6	Nil
2008	123	37	37	Nil	Nil	86	152 kg 910.55 gr. 12,442 plants	9 gr.	28 kg. 488 gr. 5,776 plants	15 gr.	149	11	2	Nil
2009	187	68	68	Nil	Nil	131	534 kg. 176.8 gr. 3,058 plants	2 kg 845.4 gr.	45 kg. 279.5 gr. 9,303 plants	154 gr.	221	2	Nil	Nil
2010	109	36	33	1	2	73	84 kg 95.5 gr. 3,345 plants	3 kg 314 gr	88 kg 595.7gr 24,156 plants	37.8 gr.	110	15	Nil	Nil
2011	163	47	47	Nil	1	115	758 kg 964 gr. 1,363 plants	7 kg 450.9 gr	4 kg 431.8 gr 3,758 plants	2 kg 219.3 gr.	183	27	1	Nil
2012	70	28	28	Nil	Nil	42	18 kg 157.9 gr. 5,089 plants	5.2 kg 167 gr	3 kg 597.6 gr 17,157 plants	3 kg 400 gr.	80	19	5	1
2013	186	66	66	Nil	Nil	120	397.8 kg	11 kg 324 gr.	669.9 kg 1,369 plants	176.4 gr	183	22	10	Nil
2014	147	65	65	Nil	Nil	79	27 kg 292 gr. 1,986 plants	109 gr	29 kg 790 gr 3,648 plants	39 kg	154	14	2	Nil
2015	193	99	99	Nil	1	93	2,275 kg 800 gr 21,147 plants	7 kg 293 gr	10 kg 942 gr 21,947 plants	0.4 gr	213	15	2	1
2016	165	83	83	Nil	Nil	82	84 Kg 158 gr	875 gr	22 Kg 631.7 gr	72.3 gr	220	27	2	1

							6,770 plants		19,521 plants					
2017	193	112	112	Nil	Nil	81	16 Kg 741.4 gr 2,893 plants	568.4 gr	142 Kg 939 gr 35,298 plants	78.4 gr	260	27	2	0



Similarly, Table 2 provides a summary of the drugs seized by the Office of National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy (ONDCP) between January 2007 and December 2017

Year s	No. of Cases Prosecuted	Cases Convicted	Cases Acquitted/ Withdrawn	Cases Pending	Amount of Drugs seized in Arrests						Amount of Drugs Seized no Arrests		No. of Persons Arrested
					Cannabis		Cocaine		Hashish Oil		Cannabis		
					Amount (lbs)	Value	Amount (kilos)	Value	Amount (lbs)	Value	Amount (lbs)	Value (EC \$)	
<b>2007</b>	6	5	1	0	6823.75	10,200,000.00	3	1,059,591.00					28
<b>2008</b>	11	11	0	0	1478.92	2,152,300.00	16.38	570,679.00			5.00	7,500.00	24
<b>2009</b>	5	4	0	1	1859.52	8,918,680.00	3.70	130,682.89					21
<b>2010</b>	6	2	0	4	24.94	119,620.80	988.05	139,264,028.29					15
<b>2011</b>	5	0	0	5	1854.48	7,417,733.20	169.65	23,976,948.42					15
<b>2012</b>	6	1	0	6	1654.84	5,349,080.00	4.20	148,342.74			47.96	202,846.68	15
<b>2013</b>	9	3	0	6	657.86	7,775,160.00	22.30	3,150,517.24					18
<b>2014</b>	13	6	1	6	2333.59	37,337,080.00	561.71	19,846,220.13			158.86	313,720.00	24
<b>2015</b>	9	10	1	3	3641.60	14,192,700.00	49.86	1,760,792.04			471.85	1,408,900.00	17
<b>2016</b>	9	1	1	8	2342.88	5,205,000.00	5.60	197,288.00	8.38	33,500.00	2493.75	9,975,000.00	19
<b>2017</b>	4	1		3	1,363.79	5,455,170.00	50.90	1,786,590.00			810	3,243,400.00	5

**Drug Statistics for the Period January 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 – present**

Years highlighted in **RED** include Estimated Wholesale Values

## Trends in Drug Abuse

The United Nations World Drug Report for 2010 points out that:

*As a conduit for cocaine imported into the United States, the Caribbean has greatly diminished in importance over the past 15 years.*

(UNODC, 2010)

Conversely, in the 2017 World Drug Report, it notes:

*In the Caribbean, the quantity of cocaine seized rose from 8 tons in 2010 to 15 tons in 2014 and 23 tons in 2015.*

(UNODC, 2017)

It has been documented that from since the 1970's up to the 1980's 'the Caribbean corridor' had been the preferred route which drug traffickers used to traffic their cocaine into the southern part of the State of Florida (UNODC, 2010; InSight Crime, 2017). InSight Crime suggests that the two reasons for the resurgence in the Caribbean are:

1. Increased US investment in the drug war in Central America and Mexico, and
2. The growing importance of Venezuela as a regional cocaine hub.

The Economist, May 24<sup>th</sup> 2014 referred to this as the "balloon effect"; - This is when a bulge is produced in another area due to pressure being exerted on one of the drug routes.

According to the Office of National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy, the collaborative efforts between Antigua and Barbuda and United States law enforcement agencies have brought about a decrease in drug trafficking activity". The Government of Antigua and Barbuda through its various law enforcement agencies has endeavoured to assiduously enhance its counter narcotic measures in an effort to address issues of drug trafficking.

However, the drug traffickers have become more creative with the ways in which they conceal their contraband and more knowledgeable of the laws relating to possession and trafficking of illegal substances. Along with utilising every conceivable orifice of the human anatomy, fruit and vegetables, fish, cheese tins, clothing, computers and other electronic devices, furniture etc. have all been utilised to traffic illicit drugs in and out of Antigua and Barbuda. The images below are just a few to illustrate how far some individuals will go in their attempts to move narcotics from one destination to another.



Cocaine concealed in frozen fish



Cocaine concealed in False bottoms of toiletries



compressed cannabis concealed in water heater



Cocaine concealed in Ackee cans



Cocaine concealed in bar of soap

When illicit drugs are transhipped through Antigua and Barbuda, often, a small amount is retained in locally as payment for services rendered locals who participate in the illegal effort, while the majority proceed onwards to their destination. This is especially the case for cocaine. It is estimated about 1% or less of the cocaine which arrives in Antigua and Barbuda remains here, while in the case of marijuana/cannabis 98% is consumed here. This in-kind payment has led to the creation and expansion of the domestic drug market.

The 2013 Secondary School Drug Prevalence Survey which examined the patterns of drug use among local secondary school students in Antigua and Barbuda, revealed that alcohol and marijuana are the choice drugs among the secondary school students and that just under a quarter (21.1%) would try an illicit if given the opportunity. The figures revealed in the report show that students have reported consuming alcohol, tobacco and/or other drugs from as early as 5 years old.

The survey found that although overall, the prevalence of substance use has increased in 2013 when compared to 2002 and 2005 this has been relatively small for most. While there has been a reduction in the lifetime prevalence of alcohol use from 73.4% in 2005 to 71.1% in 2013, the past year and past month prevalence increased from 53% in 2005 to 56.0% in 2013, and from 32.6% in 2005 to 36.2% in 2013 respectively. The life time prevalence of marijuana use also rose from 25.1% in 2005 to 31.0% in 2013, the past year prevalence rose from 13.6% in 2005 to 22.4% in 2013 and the past month prevalence practically doubled from 8.5% in 2005 to 16.7% in 2013.

More males (58.4%) than females (41.6%) reported having used marijuana. Just over half of the students (51.1%) considered marijuana to be quite easy to get and just under a third (31.4%) said that they had gotten it from a friend.

## Legislation

There has been a noticeable intensification of measures designed to better cope with the legal requirements of the fight against illicit drugs and related activities. Over the years several pieces of legislation have been enacted to counter the drug problem including tougher anti-drug, anti-money laundering and anti-terrorism financing legislation, has been instated by parliament as can be seen below:

**Criminal Procedure Act, CAP 117:** This act was amended by The Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2004

**The Evidence Act Cap 155:**

**The Misuse of Drugs Act Cap 283:** This Act was further amended by the Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Act 1993 and the Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Act 2008

**Proceeds of Crime Act 1993:** This Act was further amended by the Proceeds of Crime Amendment Act 2008

**Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Act 1993:**

**Money Laundering Prevention Act:** This Act was further amended by the Money Laundering (Prevention) (Amendment) Acts of 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2008, 2009 and 2010

**Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Government of United States of America) Ratification Act 2000**

**Prevention of Terrorism Act 2001**

**Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005:** This was amended by The Prevention of Terrorism (Amendment) Acts of 2008 and 2010

**ONDCP Act:**

**The Evidence (Special Provisions) Act, 2009** This act has been further amended by The Evidence (Special Provisions) (Amendment) Act, 2016

## Drugs and Crime

Apart from the fact that drug trafficking and drug dealing are crimes in themselves, other crimes and criminal behaviours are often associated with the drug trade. Since the drug traffickers and drug dealers have their interest to protect, and unlike the rest of the public, they can't turn to law enforcement for assistance, they have developed their own 'criminal code of conduct'.

As disagreements or disputes between drug dealers about drug related matters cannot be brought before a court of law to be settled, persons involved in this illicit trade rely on violence to settle their differences and/or punish those who may have offended them.

Additionally, substance dependency induced criminal behaviour further exaggerates the situation. A number of persons known to have drug dependency issues, are well known to law enforcement and prison officials as repeat offenders.

Data from the Antigua and Barbuda 2013 Prison Survey reveals that over a quarter of the convicted prisoners interviewed and just under half of those on remand reported that the crime which they had committed had some type of relationship with drugs.

## Treatment and Rehabilitation

There is an immense need for the establishment of a National Treatment Centre since Antigua and Barbuda has no national treatment facility, and there is only one private treatment centre (Crossroads Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre). While the majority of the clients are International (USA, Canada, Europe), a small number of residents from other Caribbean Islands are also treated at the facility. Each year, a number of Antigua residents are treated at the facility free of cost.

After the four-week residential program at Crossroads, continuing care services are provided for at a 15-bed transitional living halfway house (Bevon House) where services include: halfway house placement; day treatment program, individual counselling and a continuing care group. As the Crossroads facility is an adult treatment facility, individuals below the age of 18 years are not availed the privilege of this type of treatment and rehabilitation.

Counselling and referrals, are primarily the responsibility of the Substance Abuse Prevention Division (SAPD). They also provide information and education to the public on the dangers of abuse / misuse substances.

With the number of individuals seeking treatment as well as the number of recorded addicts within the prison system in need of treatment and rehabilitation, there is a definite need for a government drug treatment and rehabilitation facility which will also see to the reintegration of recovering addicts into their communities.



Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug in Antigua and Barbuda and the Caribbean as a whole. It is also the illicit drug of choice for most young people seeking to use or experiment with narcotics. While Antigua and Barbuda has joined other countries in decriminalizing marijuana use, that action should not negate the responsibility of controlling the abuse of this drug which can be as dangerous as any other illicit drug.

Unwanted effects of marijuana use, some of which can lead to long term medical issues, include:

- altered senses (for example, seeing brighter colors)
- altered sense of time
- changes in mood
- impaired body movement
- difficulty with thinking and problem-solving
- impaired memory
- hallucinations (when taken in high doses)
- delusions (when taken in high doses)
- psychosis (when taken in high doses)
- increased appetite
- lung problems (associated with smoking)
- elevated heart rate

## General Remarks

On review of the challenge of illicit drugs which Antigua and Barbuda faces, it is noted that whereas some progress may have been achieved in regard to counteracting this trade, the drug dealers/traffickers have over time become more creative in their mode of trafficking and more knowledgeable of the laws and regulations pertaining to the possession and transfer of illegal substances.

While Law Enforcement Agencies have been more successful with the increasing number of seizures in recent times, this does not mean that there has been a reduction in the quantity of drugs being trafficked through our waters. This Anti-drug strategy plan looks at ways of improving the supply reduction by keeping abreast of new methods and techniques being adopted by the drug dealers/traffickers.

For a number of years, the question of whether or not to legalise/decriminalise marijuana has been a topical subject worldwide. The Caribbean is no different in this

regard and in February of 2015 Jamaica became the first Caribbean country to decriminalise possession of small amounts of marijuana.

In February 2018, the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda passed the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Act, paving the way for the decriminalization of 15 grams or less, of marijuana for personal use. This amendment also allows individuals to grow up to 4 cannabis plants within the confines of their home / yard. However, large scale cultivation, transport or sale of the drug remains illegal.

This action was primarily based on the notion that it is too costly to pursue prosecution for such small amounts, as well as that fact that it can be harmful to young persons, when caught with the substance, are prosecuted and given criminal records. This in turn inhibits their ability to achieve since a criminal record curtail their ability to take advantage of migration, academic, social or other opportunities in life.

The strategy therefore takes this decision into account but recognizes that decriminalizing or legalizing marijuana will not change the negative effects it has on its users. As such, it is necessary to continue the endeavour to curtail demand, reduce supply and confiscate the proceeds of drug trafficking, thereby taking the profit out of the crime and dismantle the drug networks.

## National Drug Council

The Antigua and Barbuda National Drug Council, is the national authority for the coordination and implementation of national anti-drug policies and comprises of stakeholders from several Governmental Institutions and Non-Governmental organisations (NGOs). The Secretariat of the National Drug Council is housed within the Office National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy (ONDMP). It is the national body designated to coordinate stakeholders in the fight against drugs to discuss policy, share information and promote public awareness.

Functions of National Drug Council includes:

- Maintain the status of the drug situation in the Nation of Antigua and Barbuda under review (with respect to Demand, Supply and Treatment).
- Formulate, develop and see to the execution of drug prevention and rehabilitation policies and programmes.
- Review and further strengthen the legal framework on the production, supply and use of illicit narcotics.
- Advise the Minister on drug prevention and rehabilitation policies and programmes; the licensing and operation of treatment and rehabilitation centres; drug supply control measures; and law reform relating to the misuse of drugs.
- Educate the public, particularly the young, on the dangers of drug abuse, and to initiate, sponsor and support conferences, seminars, and meetings related to drug abuse.
- Promote and support training in the field of Drug Abuse Prevention and Rehabilitation.



- Promote and encourage the establishment of a system to coordinate the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers and the care of persons associated with drug abusers.
- Promote the establishment and operation treatment centres.
- Conduct research into, develop and maintain a database of information on drug abuse in the islands in order to:
  - determine and monitor the prevalence of drug use
  - educate the adolescent public on the hazards of drug abuse
  - reduce or eliminate drug abuse through cooperative efforts between the Government and voluntary agencies

## Data Gathering

The National Drug Council and the National Observatory on Drugs will collaborate to promote investment in tablet devices and associated software to facilitate the production and execution of various surveys to inform the drug situation on the island. The ability to gather timely and accurate data is paramount to the development of appropriate supply reduction, demand reduction and treatment programmes. Additionally, such data is critical for the support an Early Warning System designed to raise awareness of the availability new drugs and/or habits in the country.

Likewise, work will continue to seek support and assistance for a national household drug use survey to determine drug use prevalence on a national level. A survey of this type has never been conducted in Antigua and Barbuda. Additionally, it is necessary to conduct another Secondary Schools Drugs Survey to follow up on developments since the last such survey was conducted in 2013.

## National Observatory on Drugs

In Antigua and Barbuda, the Anti-Drug Strategy Unit within the Office of National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy serves as the National Observatory on Drugs.

Although the Observatory on Drugs has existed in one form or another since 2000, it only began gaining traction in May 2016 when a permanent, full time person was engaged.

The National Observatory on Drugs performs the administrative functions of DINAB which include:

- Data Collection and Monitoring at the national level
- Analysis and Interpretations of the information collected
- Report preparation and dissemination of information
- Established network of stakeholders / contributors.
- Developed standardized forms based on indicators.
- Forms are sent to stakeholders / contributors bi-annually (June & December).

- Completed forms are due mid-July for 1st half of the year and mid-January for 2nd half of the year.
- Forms and letters requesting information are sent electronically via email and followed with hard copies.
- Presently, data is collected on fourteen (14) indicators (these are shown below)

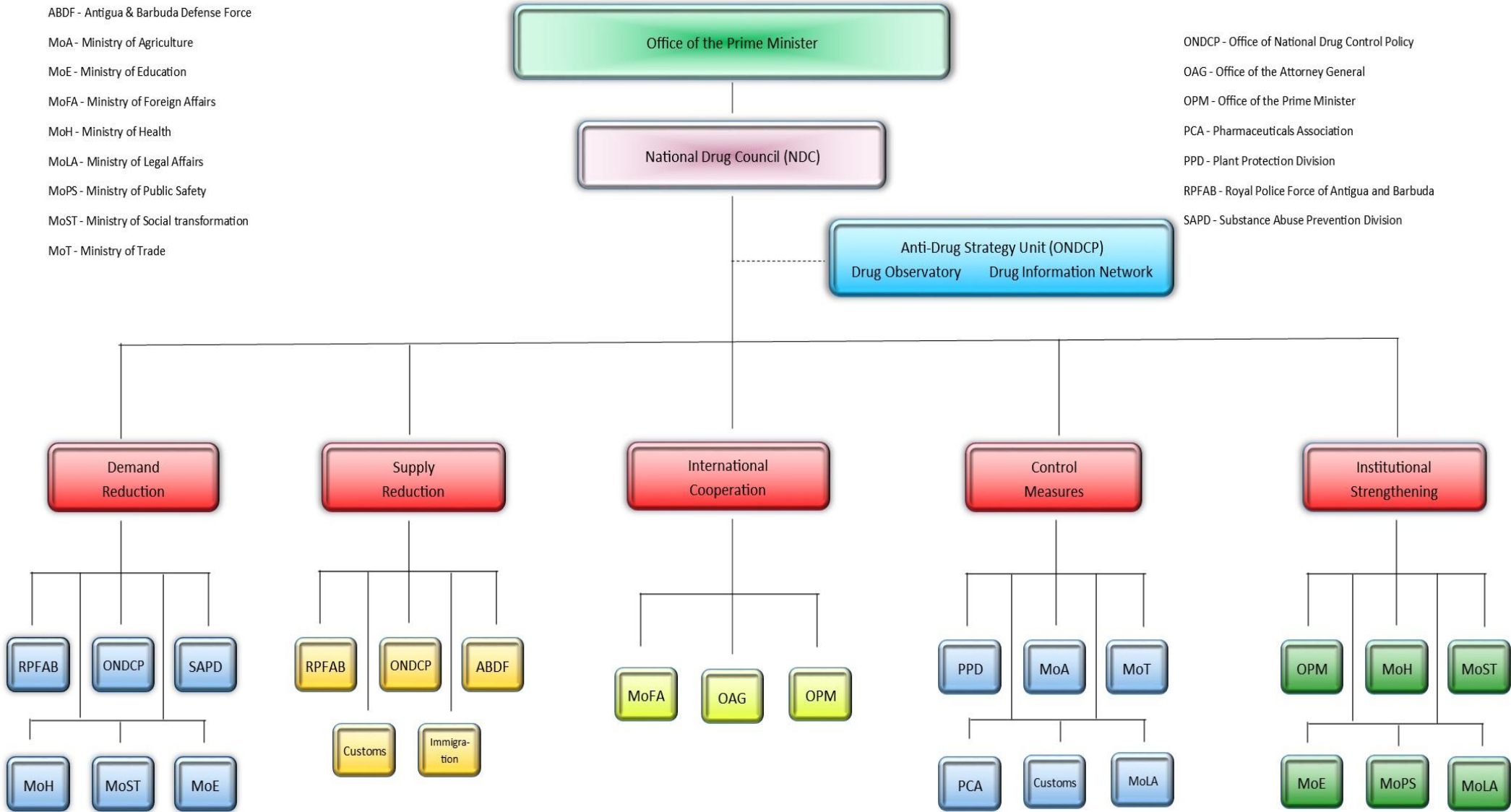
Challenges in this area include:

- Lack of financial and other resources.
- Slow responses from stakeholders / Contributors.
- Insufficient buy-in on a national level.
- Some Stakeholders apparently not appreciative of the value of good data.

# Organizational Chart - National Anti-Drug System

ABDF - Antigua & Barbuda Defense Force  
 MoA - Ministry of Agriculture  
 MoE - Ministry of Education  
 MoFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
 MoH - Ministry of Health  
 MoLA - Ministry of Legal Affairs  
 MoPS - Ministry of Public Safety  
 MoST - Ministry of Social transformation  
 MoT - Ministry of Trade

ONDCP - Office of National Drug Control Policy  
 OAG - Office of the Attorney General  
 OPM - Office of the Prime Minister  
 PCA - Pharmaceuticals Association  
 PPD - Plant Protection Division  
 RPFAB - Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda  
 SAPD - Substance Abuse Prevention Division



## Demand Reduction

The scourge of drugs is a menace to society and carries with it disastrous consequences for the health and welfare of a country's citizens, particularly its youth. It also has the tendency to bring with it increased crime and violence. Individuals of all ages, gender, ethnicity, religious persuasion, economic and social status, and educational backgrounds fall prey to the disease of narcotic and psychotropic substance use/abuse.

Also growing in notoriety is the misuse / abuse of inhalants. These are everyday items with chemical compositions which when inhaled, give the user a 'buzz'. These include a variety of glues, permanent markers, solvents, nail polish, aerosol sprays and correction fluid.

Being liberally available, alcohol use among youth continue to rise. The explosion of the 'party culture' with numerous all-inclusive fetes throughout the year and more so, the carnival season, facilitates over indulgence. Each year, a number of persons are treated for alcohol poisoning, the majority of them under the age of 25.

Demand reduction seeks to reduce the desire for these substances. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda recognising the potential harm of this, is committed to seeing the desire for substance use / abuse reduced.

Thus, the development, implementation and strengthening of policies, plans and programmes geared to reducing society's desire for mood altering substances will form a significant element of the Nation's Anti-Drug Strategy Plan.

Efforts to reduce demand will focus on the following:

- Decrease drug and mood-altering substance use, abuse and consequences.
- Delay the onset of drug and mood-altering substance use / abuse.
- Lower the number of deaths caused by drug and mood-altering substance use / abuse.
- Reduce drug related violence and criminal behaviour.
- Establish drug prevention, education, treatment, rehabilitation services and offer care and programmes.
- Develop a national treatment and rehabilitation facility.
- Work with Civil Society in preventing young people from becoming users of illicit and other mood-altering substances for recreational and other purposes.
- Focus on Youths in the national fight against substance use and abuse.
- Improve and implement demand reduction policies and plans with a public health focus that are evidence-based, multidisciplinary and respectful of human rights, considering the guidelines and recommendations of specialised international organisations.
- Strengthen the relationship between the National Drug Council, educational, youth organizations and the media with the goal of raising awareness of the impact of drugs.

- Expand the substance abuse curriculum to include all Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Levels of education, both Public and Private.
- Train more individuals in counselling young people to resist the use of drugs and other harmful substances.
- Establish a national treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration system for people with problematic substance use / abuse, including a human rights and gender-based approach, considering internationally accepted quality standards.
- The establishment of a treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration programs for persons incarcerated at Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) with problematic substance use / abuse. (Drug Induced Criminal Behaviour)
- Strengthen the relationship between Substance Abuse Prevention Division and Community Based & Non-Governmental Organizations with the goal of implementing and managing mood altering substance demand reduction programs.
- Develop a media strategy to facilitate increased public awareness as part of the strategy to prevent substance abuse, which will result in improved lifestyle choices.

## Alternatives to Incarceration

Dependent drug use, particularly among low income individuals often places them in positions of vulnerability. The 2013 Antigua and Barbuda Prison Survey revealed more than 25% of convicted prisoners and almost 50% of those on remand, reported that the crime which they had committed had some type of relationship to drugs.

The decriminalization of small quantities (15 grams or less) of marijuana for personal use goes a long way in this regard.

The anticipated establishment of a national treatment centre would also provide the conduit necessary to divert drug induced criminals from prison and into the care they need.

It is also anticipated that the establishment of a Drug Treatment Court would offer alternatives to incarceration for minor drug related or drug induced offenses. Here the focus would be on rehabilitation and treatment of the addiction instead of punishment of the offender.

## Supply Reduction

The amount of drugs available has a relationship with the demand for it. When drugs are available in abundance the cost goes down and therefore it becomes more affordable and within the reach of a larger cross section of individuals. Although Antigua and Barbuda is not a major producer of narcotics it is a transshipment point accompanied with associated illegal arms trafficking and money laundering. In order to manage the demand for illicit substance use its supply has to be stunted. This will be tackled both on the local as well as international fronts.

Efforts to reduce the supply of drugs will seek to accomplish the following:

- Reduce the availability of drugs in Antigua and Barbuda.
- Reduce the rate of shipment of illicit drugs from source countries
- Reduce the rate of illicit drug flow transiting through Antigua and Barbuda
- Reduce the drug trafficker success rate in Antigua and Barbuda
- Strengthen capability of law enforcement agencies to control drug trafficking through training.
- Extend and strengthen both regional and international cooperation in anti-drug effort.
- Implement desirable selection and continuing evaluation criteria as well as a code of conduct for staff of law enforcement agencies, ports of entry and associated establishments.
- Introduction of legislation to control chemical precursors and pharmaceutical products used in the manufacturing of illegal drugs.
- Improve intelligence capability, interdiction operations, specialized personnel, communication equipment and other material resources available to agencies concerned with the control of the illicit drug trade.
- Promote inter-agency cooperation among law enforcement agencies to enhance the efficiency of counter-narcotics operations.
- Improve cooperation and coordination with regional and international counter trafficking law enforcement agencies to support sharing of intelligence regarding trans-border shipments.
- Improve surveillance activities and maritime patrols to intercept smuggling at unauthorized landing areas.
- Remove the proceeds of crime from criminals and dismantle the drug syndicates

## Institutional Strengthening

The ability of Institutions to perform their duties/functions effectively is key to achieving the goals and objectives set out in their policy documents. This can only be realised if the institutions are provided with the requisite tools in the forms of trained competent human resources as well as the relevant physical resources. In an effort to enhance the current Anti-Drug Strategy, the institutional framework will have to be further strengthened to facilitate the co-operation of all stakeholders involved in drug control.

To achieve the goals and objectives set out in this Anti-Drug Strategy Plan, the strengthening of governmental and non-governmental agencies in terms of capacity building is imperative to success.

This capacity building which consists of continued professional development, increased human and physical resources, updating of the relevant legislative framework, must be accompanied by the building of community partnerships between communities, stakeholders and the private sector. This will complement and support current programmes and activities while at the same time seeking to further develop and enhance these programmes through the partnerships of societal institutions such as churches, schools, youth groups and friendly societies.

Antigua and Barbuda will seek to develop, strengthen and maintain institutional mechanisms to facilitate the effective and efficient coordination, planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the National Anti-Drug Strategy through the following:

- Improved implementation and coordination of the National Anti-Drug Strategy by utilizing available media outlets.
- Strengthened technical and human resource capacities of stakeholders to deliver on their mandates.
- Improved performance of Agencies undertaking activities within the National Anti-Drug Strategy.
- Promotion of evidence-based approach towards the development of policy and programme formulation within national agencies.
- Effective functioning of the National Drug Council.
- National compliance with international obligations.
- Instituting operational plans to facilitate the achievement of the goals of the National Anti-Drug Strategy.
- Adaption of a performance Management Framework for the National Anti-Drug Strategy.
- Conducting a gap analysis report on agencies capacity to fulfil their mandate under this strategy.
- Coordination of the participation of agencies in strategic planning exercises around the development of work programmes to address components of the Strategy
- Developing the technical capacity to design and conduct drug control programmes.



## Control Measures

The control measures are designed to directly target local drug lords and support the dismantling of international criminal organisations and their associated networks. The Law Enforcement Agencies will conduct thorough intelligence gathering investigations and seizures while the Criminal Prosecution Services will pursue the prosecution of those who engage in illicit activities as well as the confiscation and forfeiture of all assets which are deemed to be the profits derived from illicit activities.

This will entail a proactive approach which can adapt to the changing nature of drug trafficking and its associated crimes and networks. Our intelligence gathering systems and processes must therefore be developed to such a degree as to keep pace with the changing tactics of the drug traffickers.

Systems will also be put in place to monitor precursor chemicals and avert the diversion of pharmaceutical products that could be used in the production of amphetamine type stimulants (ATS).

Antigua and Barbuda intends to enhance its control measures by:

- Establishing and executing the appropriate strategies to empower Law Enforcement Agencies to apply counter measures that will reduce the occurrence of drug trafficking and related illicit activities.
- Averting the diversion of controlled chemical substances, precursors, pre-precursors and post-precursors from illicit drug activities.
- Equipping the coast guard and other Law Enforcement Agencies with the necessary resources and adequate training to monitor maritime and land-based activities within the jurisdiction
- Adopting and/or strengthening comprehensive and balanced programs aimed at preventing and reducing drug trafficking, in accordance with the territorial realities of Antigua and Barbuda and respecting human rights.
- Adopting and/or strengthening control measures to prevent diversion of controlled chemical substances towards illicit activities.
- Adopting and/or strengthening control measures to prevent diversion of pharmaceutical products containing precursors substances or those containing narcotic drugs and/or psychotropic substances towards illicit activities.
- Strengthening national measures to address the challenge of new psychoactive substances and the threat of amphetamine stimulants.
- Strengthening agencies for the administration and disposition of seized and/or forfeited assets in cases of drug trafficking, money laundering and other related crimes.
- Strengthening national information gathering systems and mechanisms for exchanging intelligence information to detect routes and methods used by criminal drug trafficking organizations.



## International Cooperation

In 1993, Antigua and Barbuda ratified the 1988 United Nations Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances which provides comprehensive measures against drug trafficking, including provisions against money laundering and the diversion of precursor chemicals. It provides for international cooperation through, for example, extradition of drug traffickers, controlled deliveries and transfer of proceedings.

Antigua and Barbuda frequently participates in regional and international forums which provides opportunities to network and develop national capacity. Such forums have proven to be very beneficial and will continue to influence the local anti-drug landscape. The country is also committed to regional and international initiatives of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

As a member of the Inter-American Commission on Drug Control (CICAD), Antigua and Barbuda will continue to work closely with its OAS partners in implementing the Hemispheric Drug Strategy, and carrying out the essential work of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM), as well as other CICAD initiatives.

Regional action to counter drug abuse and illicit trafficking will be also supported within the framework established by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), particularly through the Council for National Security and Law Enforcement (CONSLE). The cooperative action for drug control supported by the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), launched in Washington D.C. in May 2010 will be advanced through participation in the Dialogue, Commission, and Technical Working Groups. Antigua and Barbuda will also continue to work with other Caribbean states in supporting the work of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF).

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is an essential component of the National Anti-Drug Strategy Plan. It allows the National Drug Council, which has oversight of its development and execution, to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the various goals, objectives and programmes/projects. Thus, monitoring and evaluation will be used as a means of measuring the progress in relation to the stated objectives, to evaluate the need and establish the direction of regulations, in particular, in relation to activities.

The main aspects of the monitoring and evaluation component are:

- Institutional Capacities;
- Monitoring indicators for the duration and by the completion of the five-year timeframe;
- Information sources and measuring instruments;
- Dissemination and utilization of the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation.

The monitoring and evaluation indicators will include but not limited to:

- Number of respective laws regulations, that have entered into force following the approval of the Strategy;
- Number of bilateral and multilateral agreements signed with other countries;
- Strategy monitoring and evaluation reports;
- Percentage of the population that has become aware about the drug misuse issue;
- Number of cases treated on the medical aspect;
- Number of treatment, reintegration and rehabilitation projects and programmes for drug users;
- Number of drug misuse cases as well as the number of drug users;
- Amount, type and value of drugs that have been confiscated;
- Average of sentences and additional measures of confiscation for drug misuse crime perpetrators;
- Number of cases dealt with by the Law Enforcement Agencies, Prosecution and Courts;
- Number of extracurricular activities implemented.

The National Drug council will conduct consultation with the main stakeholders as it relates to the outcomes before they are publicised through the media. It will also organise seminars and round table discussions involving civil society, in order to draw conclusions in relation to further strategy development.

## Conclusion

The 2019-2023 National Anti-Drug Strategy builds upon the 2010-2014 Anti-Drug Strategy Plan, devised to produce tangible results in countering various aspects of the drug issue.

Antigua and Barbuda has adapted a multi-pronged approach to the fight against drugs, to include demand and supply reduction, treatment and rehabilitation, the criminal justice system, law enforcement, legislation, research and public information. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda, through its various law enforcement agencies has endeavoured to assiduously enhance its counter narcotic measures in an effort to address issues of drug trafficking.

In this regard, over the years, several pieces of legislation have been enacted to counter the drug problem including tougher anti-drug, anti-money laundering and anti-terrorism financing legislation has been instated by parliament.

However, Antigua and Barbuda is in dire need of the establishment of a National Treatment Centre as no such facility exists. There is only one private treatment centre (Crossroads Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre) on the island.

In consideration of the number of individuals seeking treatment as well as the number of recorded addicts within the prison system in need treatment and rehabilitation, there is a definite need for a government drug treatment and

rehabilitation facility which will also see to the reintegration of recovering addicts in to their communities.

The establishment of a Drug Treatment Court would offer alternatives to incarceration for minor drug related or drug induced offenses and focus on rehabilitation and treatment of the addiction instead of punishment of the offender.

Over the years, there has been much progress in regards to counteracting the trafficking of illicit substances. However, the drug dealers/traffickers have over time become more creative in their mode of trafficking and more knowledgeable of the laws and regulations pertaining to the possession and transfer of illegal substances

The passage of the amendment to the Misuse of Drugs Act which decriminalised small quantities of cannabis and allows the possession of up to 15 grams of the controlled substance and also allows the individual having actual control of the property to cultivate not more than four plants of cannabis on his property.

The development, implementation and strengthening of policies, plans and programmes geared to reducing society's desire for mood altering substances will form a significant element of the Nation's Anti-Drug Strategy Plan.

In an effort to enhance the current Anti-Drug Strategy, the institutional framework will be further strengthened through capacity building to strengthen and maintain institutional mechanisms to facilitate the effective and efficient coordination, planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the National Anti-Drug Strategy.

Antigua and Barbuda will continue to target local drug lords and support the dismantling of international criminal organisations and their associated networks through various control measures. Systems will be put in place to monitor precursor chemicals and avert the diversion of pharmaceutical products that could be used in the production of amphetamine type stimulants (ATS).

**ANNEX**  
**Antigua and Barbuda**  
**National Anti-Drug Strategy Plan of Action**  
**2019 - 2023**

1. Demand Reduction	Programmes	Objectives	Expected Outcomes	Responsible Agencies	Implementation Timeframe	Budget		
						Donor	GoAB	Total
1.1 Prevention	National Anti-Drug Campaign	Strengthen the relationship between the National Drug Council, educational, youth organizations and the media with the goal of raising awareness of the impact of drugs.	Stakeholder buy-in and participation in awareness raising activities. Robust anti-drug campaign utilizing print, electronic and social media platforms.	ONDCP / Substance Abuse Prevention Division	1 <sup>st</sup> Year of Plan Implementation			
	Psychological evaluation of individuals with substance dependency issues	Identify underlying psychological factors leading to substance use / abuse. Assess the impact on individual pathology caused by substance use / abuse.	Available actionable data on factors leading to substance use / abuse which can be used to develop targeted preventative programmes.	Family and Social Services Division / Ministry of Health / Substance Abuse Prevention Division				
	Maximize support for the Substance Abuse Prevention Division	Strengthen the capacity of SAPD to better manage outreach and other prevention education activities.	Robust programmes encouraging persons to avoid drug and alcohol use and by extension their negative consequences.	Substance Abuse Prevention Division				
1.2 Treatment	Work towards establishing a Residential Substance Dependency Treatment Centre	Establish a National Treatment Centre to provide services to persons with substance dependency / abuse issues which will also serve as an alternative to incarceration.	A national Treatment Centre able to provide services to persons with substance dependency. Reduction in drug dependency induced crime.	National Drug Council / Ministry of Health / Ministry of Legal Affairs / Ministry	Life of Plan			

				of Public Safety / Ministry of Works				
	Improve the cadre of professionals trained to address drug abuse issues	Support education and training required to build specialist qualifications, knowledge and skills necessary for dealing with drug abuse issues, particularly those involving children and young people.	Improved ability to respond to the drug use / abuse challenges	Substance Abuse Prevention Division / Ministry of Health	Life of Plan			
		Actively seek capacity building initiatives offered by regional, hemispheric and international organizations, with a view to improving the country's initiatives to reduce the demand for drugs and psychotropic substances.						
1.3 Alternative to Incarceration	Establish Diversion Programmes	Establish national diversion programmes which can be utilized by the courts when dealing with cases where drug use may have caused an individual to break the law.	Programmes available for use by the courts.	Substance Abuse Prevention Division / Ministry of Health / Ministry of Legal Affairs	2 <sup>nd</sup> Year of Plan Implementation			

	Programme	Activities	Expected Outcomes	Responsible Agencies	Implementation Timeframe	Budget		
						Donor	GoAB	Total
<b>2. Supply Reduction</b>	Reduce access to illicit / controlled substance	Arrest drug dealers and reduce the sale of drugs on the domestic market by increasing the number of undercover operatives.	Reduction in the availability of drugs in the domestic market and resulting crimes.	RPFAB / Ministry of Public Safety	1 <sup>st</sup> Year of plan Implementation			
	Reduce Trans-shipment of drugs through Antigua and Barbuda.	reduce the trans-shipment of drugs through Antigua and Barbuda by increasing the number of Law Enforcement Officers / analysts to gather and process information about the drug producers and markets.	Reduction in the amount of drugs passing through Antigua and Barbuda and the amount of crime associated with its trans-shipment.	RPFAB / Ministry of Public Safety / Prime Minister's Office	4 <sup>th</sup> Year of Plan Implementation			

		Intensify bilateral relations with Venezuela, Colombia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Jamaica etc. to obtain information regarding the movement suspicious vessels.		Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Ministry of Public Safety	2 <sup>nd</sup> Year of Plan Implementation			
		Training of the Joint Intelligence Group (JIG) to gather intelligence about the movement of drugs into and through Antigua and Barbuda.		Ministry of Public Safety / Prime Minister's Office	2 <sup>nd</sup> Year of Plan Implementation			
		Explore agreements with key source and destination countries to exchange information concerning illicit drug trafficking.	Reduction in the trans-shipment of drugs and the conviction of traffickers.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Ministry of Public Safety	1 <sup>st</sup> Year of Plan Implementation			

	Programmes	Objectives	Expected Outcomes	Responsible Agencies	Implementation Timeframe	Budget		
						Donor	GoAB	Total
<b>3. Institutional Strengthening</b>	Improve counter drugs coordination	Integrate national sectors tasked with countering the drug problem as well as the effective planning and implementation of national drug policies.	Consolidation of the national counter drug structures to facilitate implementation of an anti-drug strategy which can effectively deal with the drug situation in Antigua and Barbuda.	National Drug Council / ONDCP	Within 1 <sup>st</sup> Year of Plan Implementation			
	Strengthen the National Drug Information Network (DIN)	Generate, collect, analyse data to produce studies, update drug related statistics and other related information products and their dissemination.	Increased availability and accessibility of data including demand deduction, supply control, prevention, treatment, reintegration and illicit crop cultivation, diversion of pharmaceuticals products, drug market information and criminal offences.	National Drug Council / ONDCP / Prime Minister's Office				
	Conduct a gap analysis of stakeholder partners	Determine agencies' capacity to fulfil their mandate under this strategy	An awareness of each stakeholder agency's ability to implement requirements of the National Anti-Drug Strategy and recommend remedial action where necessary.	ONDCP	1 <sup>st</sup> 6 Months of plan implementation			

	Legislation to control chemical precursors.	Introduce legislation to monitor control chemical precursors and pharmaceutical products used in the manufacture of illegal drugs.	Legislation to control precursor and pharmaceuticals which can be used in the manufacture of illegal drugs.					
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	Programmes	Objectives	Expected Outcomes	Responsible Agencies	Implementation Timeframe	Budget		
						Donor	GoAB	Total
<b>4. Control Measures</b>	Implementation of automated information system for the control of pharmaceuticals / precursor chemicals	Manage and Control of the availability / accessibility / diversion of potentially dangerous pharmaceutical products in Antigua and Barbuda by tracking importation, and dispensing.	Control of the availability of unauthorized pharmaceutical products.	National Drug Council / ONDCP / Ministry of Health	2nd Year of Implementation			
	Improve law enforcement's ability to respond to drug trafficking activities	Equip the coast guard and other Law Enforcement Agencies with the necessary resources and adequate training to monitor maritime and land-based activities within the jurisdiction	Improved ability of law enforcement to respond to drug trafficking activities. Increased interdiction resulting in less available product in the country. Increased convictions of drug traffickers.	Prime Minister's Office / Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Ministry of Public Safety				