



United States Embassy Fact Sheet Drug Demand Reduction

Merida Initiative Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) efforts have been aimed at strengthening Mexico's drug addiction diagnosis, treatment, and data-gathering infrastructure. This effort currently consists of the following programs:

1. **National IT Network Against Addictions (Red Nacional Contra Las Adicciones, or RENADIC):** The RENADIC project created an \$18 million IT platform to link 400 addiction resource centers across Mexico. This network enables accurate case management, standardizes diagnostics and data collection, and encourages best practices.
2. **Clinical Trial Network:** This initiative is developing a network of research "nodes" to conduct clinical addiction research trials in Mexico. These trials will evaluate the effectiveness of addiction treatment and prevention, and will meet the standards of the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to ensure quality patient care. Network installation, staff training, and patient selection have been completed for two pilot trials, using technology developed by NIDA.
3. **Drug Counselor Certification:** In partnership with the OAS Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), this program seeks to institutionalize education of addiction treatment staff through developing a certification program and educational curriculum to train 600 drug treatment counselors across Mexico. The project team has already conducted a national survey of inpatient facilities and available treatment services and created the teaching and evaluation instruments for counselors. All 600 counselors have been fully trained, with certification of those meeting the new standards starting in early 2013.
4. **Addiction Treatment Infrastructure in Ciudad Juárez:** The Merida Initiative also finances the development of a model drug rehabilitation and prevention center in Ciudad Juárez. Mexico's largest and oldest NGO focused on addictions, Centros de Integración Juvenil, A.C., is designing and operating the center, which will provide job training, addiction diagnosis/prevention, and artistic/sports activities for four at-risk groups:
 - a. women working in factories ("maquiladoras");
 - b. youth under 29 years of age;
 - c. families in high-risk areas; and
 - d. migrants.
5. **Other Efforts:** In addition to the work described above, the Merida Initiative funds a drug demand reduction program in the Mexican prison system, as well as an initiative with civil society that aims to build anti-drug community coalitions in cities near the U.S.-Mexico border. It is also financing a diagnostic study of Mexico's only drug treatment court, located in Nuevo León, and the creation of an evaluation framework for the expansion of the concept throughout Mexico. Finally, UCLA and the Mexican National Institute of Psychiatry are using Merida money to conduct a bi-national drug prevalence study, which will identify consumption trends in the Baja California/Southern California area.