Embassy of the United States in Mexico
Fact Sheet
Drug Demand Reduction

The Merida Initiative's Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) effort is aimed at strengthening Mexico's drug addiction diagnosis, treatment, and data-gathering infrastructure, in order to facilitate long-term reduction in illegal drug consumption. This effort is currently comprised of the following programs:

1. **Drug Treatment Courts:** INL Mexico has provided technical assistance since 2009 for the creation and expansion of drug treatment courts in Mexico. Currently, it is financing a $200,000 project with Mexico's first drug treatment court, located in Guadalupe, Nuevo León. Implemented by the Organization of American States (OAS), the project began with a team performing a diagnostic study of the court. Upon completion of the diagnostic, the OAS will use the results to create an evaluation framework that the Government of Mexico can follow to expand such courts throughout the country. Additional Mexican states are expected to implement drug courts within the coming year, with training supported by INL Mexico.

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 procedures 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 development of a certification program and educational curriculum to train approximately 3,000 drug treatment counselors across Mexico. The project team has already conducted a national survey of inpatient facilities and available treatment services, and has created teaching and evaluation instruments for counselors. About 600 counselors have already been fully trained, with certification of those meeting the new standards starting in 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 provides 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. **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.

6. **Other Efforts:** Additionally, INL Mexico funds an initiative with civil society that aims to build anti-drug community coalitions in cities near the U.S.-Mexico border, as well as a drug demand reduction program in the Mexican prison system. Finally, UCLA and the Mexican National Institute of Psychiatry are conducting a bi-national drug prevalence study, which will identify consumption trends in the Baja California/Southern California area.

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