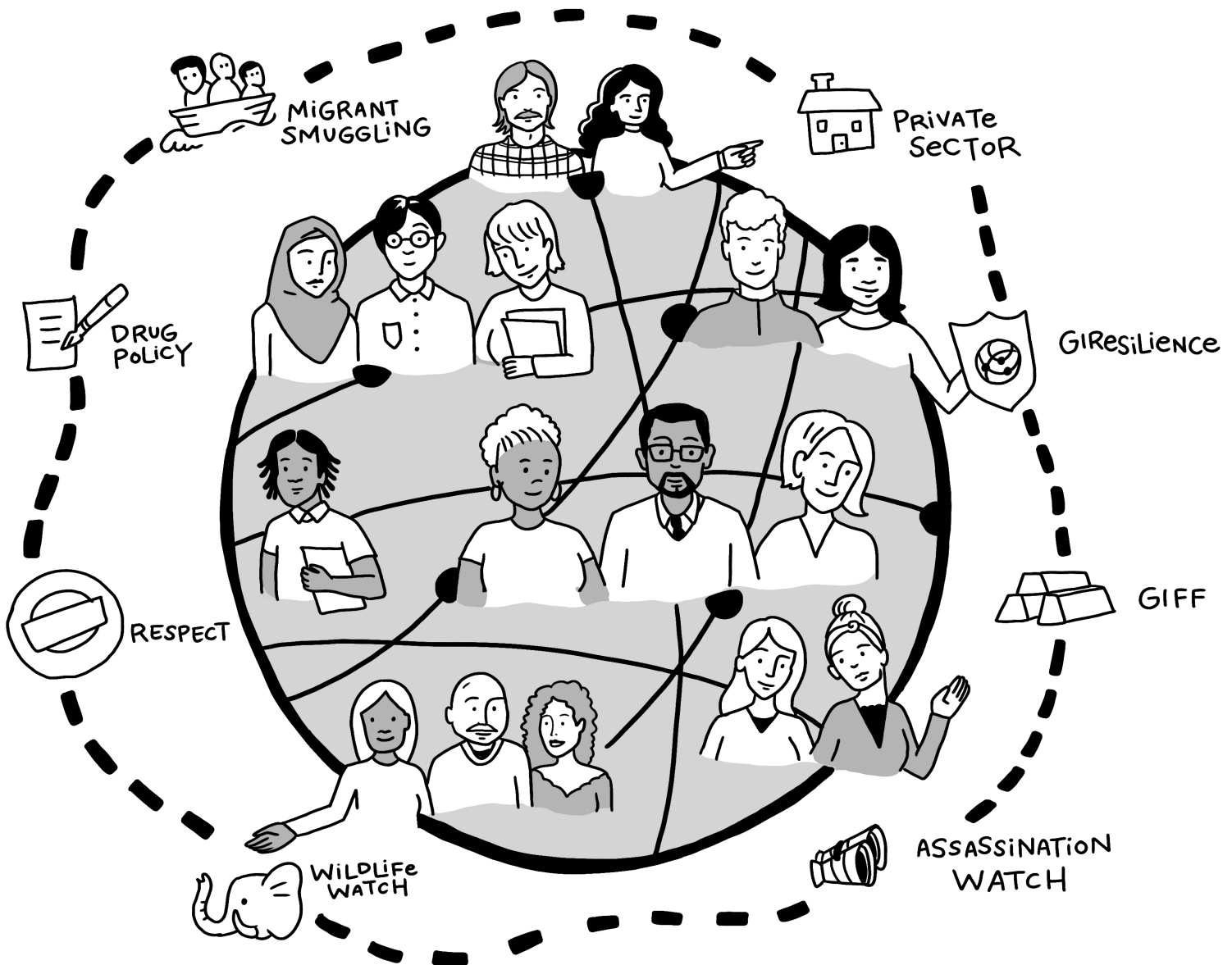
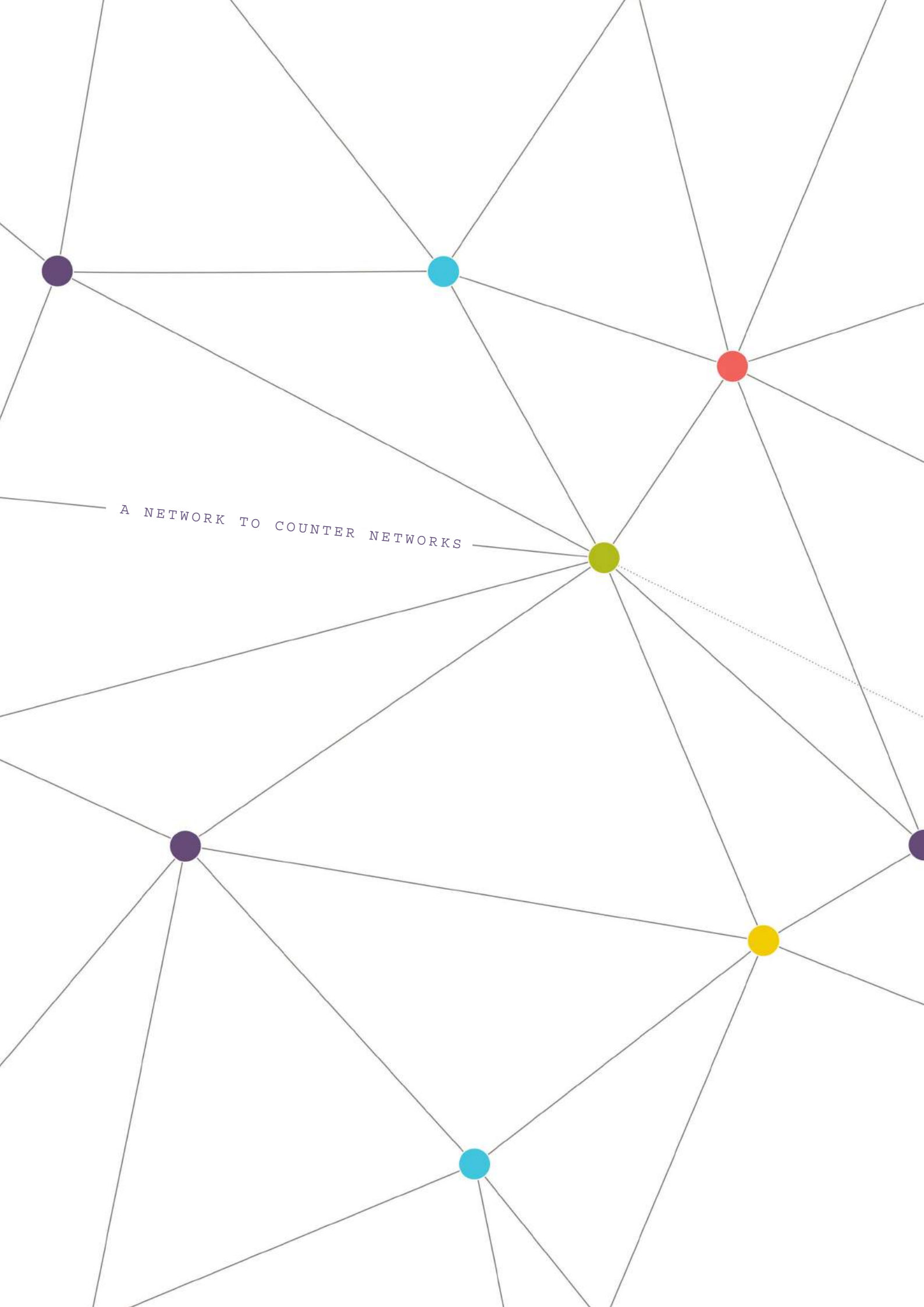


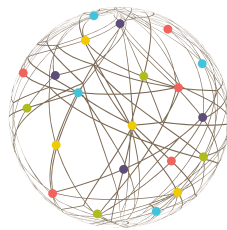
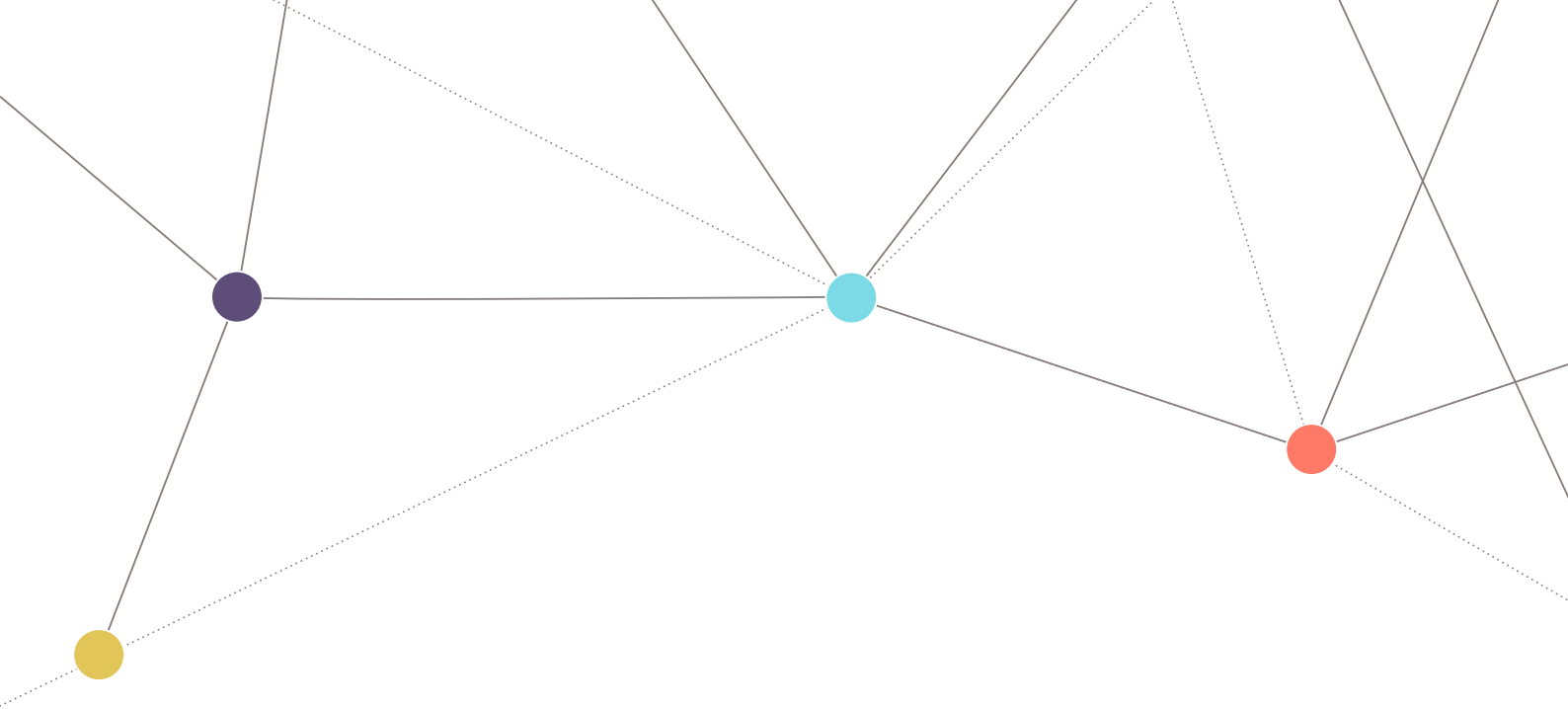
THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime Strategy 2018–2020





A NETWORK TO COUNTER NETWORKS



Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime Strategy 2018–2020

April 2018



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The challenge

Strong evidence suggests that in many parts of the world there has been a surge in illicit markets from the early 2000s, including in those countries that had previously been less affected by organized crime. At the same time, we are seeing increasing diversity and complexity in emerging illicit markets. This is having serious negative impacts on many sectors, including undercutting governance and posing a threat to local and national economies, the environment, health systems and people's livelihoods.

Finding an effective response to illicit trafficking and associated forms of organized crime has been part of the international policy discussion since the 1990s, if not before. However, the debate has often been shadowed by other security issues, most notably terrorism, with the result that tackling organized crime has become less prioritized. Furthermore, the way responses have been linked to development and community resilience has been weak, and there has been a heavy reliance on law-enforcement approaches.

Importantly, the impact of the growth in global illicit activities and flows in the early 2000s was not necessarily fully understood – nor was it fully responded to – at the time and, consequently, multilateral and other responses have failed to curb this growth. Building an effective response to organized crime is now increasingly recognized to be of critical importance. The manifold costs of organized crime continue to mount. These costs are measurable, and they are not only financial – there are costs that are also borne in terms of human security, environmental sustainability and the quality of global governance. The response, however, remains fragmented and often politicized, and relies on policy options that are often too narrowly focused.

The Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime (GI) was formed specifically to address these shortcomings.

The GI response

The GI was officially constituted in September 2013. This followed a three-year period of discussions among an original group of founding members, drawn largely from law-enforcement backgrounds, who met on several occasions in New York in an attempt to understand and determine more effective responses to the challenge of illicit markets and organized crime. The result was the formation of the GI, conceived as a platform to debate the extent of, and the responses needed to better address, illicit markets. Key to the role that the founding members saw fit for the GI to play, and in recognition of the complexity of the challenge of responding to organized crime, was for the organization to cross the boundaries of various approaches and disciplines.

There was considerable debate among the founding members as to what the overall objective of the GI should be. It was agreed that its aim should be to 'put in place the building blocks for a global strategy against organized crime'. The phrasing of the GI's mandate in this way recognizes, firstly, that considerable work is required to build the analytical, political and institutional response to organized crime. And, secondly, it acknowledges that progress across different regions, countries and illicit markets is likely to be uneven. This still remains the case today.

The GI welcomes the fact that more and more organizations now work, from a variety of different perspectives, on the issue of organized crime. We see our global focus and our Network of Experts as strong comparative advantages, and we will continue to seek partnerships with like-minded organizations with the objective of highlighting and reducing the impact of organized crime and illicit markets.



The GI's strategic objectives, 2015–2017

In early 2015, the GI's board approved a strategy for the three-year period from 2015 to 2017. This strategy identified the key focus areas that would need to be worked on during an establishment phase. These were as follows:

- Build the GI into a recognized and respected organization in the field of understanding and responding to organized crime.
- Ensure that the GI was globally active across all regions, but in particular in those areas where organized crime and illicit markets were relatively new phenomena.
- Work towards achieving financial sustainability for the organization, ensuring a broad base of funding partners.
- Expand the number, diversity and expertise of the GI's Network of Experts.

As agreed with the board, the director's performance is measured against the indicators of success in each of these areas. In each of these key focus areas, as outlined in the annual report presented to the board and the GI Network at the end of 2017, the overall objectives of the strategic plan for 2015 to 2017 have been met.

The GI is highly regarded, with strong brand recognition and an active media and web presence (receiving some 10 000 hits on the website a month); it has activities in all regions of the world, with a focus on areas not previously considered to have an organized-crime problem; funding has doubled year on year, with the budget passing the 5 million Swiss Franc mark at the end of 2017, and with multi-year contributions ensuring some financial security to 2020; and the number of the experts in the Network has increased from the original 27 in 2013 to close to 300 at the end of 2017.

The purpose of this document is to lay out briefly and clearly both the overall strategic objectives for the GI and the organization's most significant work streams for the forthcoming three-year period of 2018 to 2020.

The GI's strategic objectives, 2018–2020

If the strategic objectives for the period 2015 to 2017 were to establish an effective and reputable organization, those for the next three years will focus on consolidating the growth and impact of the organization. This includes diversifying the GI's engagement, while continuing to ensure that the Initiative is recognized and respected as a truly global and cross-disciplinary platform to respond to organized crime.

The strategic objectives for the next three years will therefore be as follows:

1. To generate, analyze and publish value-adding information on organized crime by leveraging on a strong network of global partners and organized-crime 'observatories'.
2. To continue to grow the GI Network of Experts and draw effectively on their access, input and influence.
3. To build a well-managed and well-funded organization with a global reach and a committed, professional, expert and representative staff complement.
4. To promote engagements, debate and discussion on effective policy responses to organized crime that cross-cut and cross-fertilize thematic and country expertise.
5. To develop and implement innovative, field-based pilot response programmes.

Each of these areas is considered in more detail below, with specific objectives spelt out and measures to monitor and evaluate their success outlined. These will be included in the director's contract with the board.



1. Generate, analyze and publish information on organized crime

There is an enormous appetite globally for high-quality information and analysis on organized crime and illicit markets to help inform and improve country, regional and global responses to organized crime.

The GI has built its reputation on producing, presenting and debating analysis of organized crime, its evolution and impacts worldwide. As a network, we published approximately 60 reports between 2013 and 2017.

Our focus has been to work in areas where few other organizations have been active, or in those places where, until recently, the challenge of organized crime has not been present, understood or well examined. In our publications, we strive to highlight criminal markets that affect communities away from mainstream attention. We also strongly believe that connections between different criminal markets remain unexplored: we will bring our expertise and resources to bear on the challenge of multiple and overlapping criminal problems and their impacts.

We will aim by 2020 to have produced a global Organized Crime Assessment, which will be used to reflect vulnerability to organized crime, the prevalence of the phenomenon and government responses to it worldwide. We will also seek to more effectively mobilize civil society around any future review mechanism of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

To ensure global coverage, the GI will continue to build a network of partner organizations. This includes establishing organized-crime observatories in countries or regions based on need, and bolstering networks that monitor and report on organized-crime activities.

Overall objective:

Produce on a regular basis, regionally diverse, evidence-based and high-quality publications that support and facilitate country, regional and multilateral deliberations and responses to organized crime.

Measures of progress:

- Thirty high-quality and impactful research products, such as reports or other innovative formats aimed at effective dissemination of information (10 per year).
- An organized-crime assessment tool that provides global coverage.
- The quality of research is measured in terms of feedback from peer review and the GI's target audience, and through media coverage of the contents.
- The topics covered by the publications are relevant to current issues and representative of different regions as well as of the diversity of challenges being faced by countries and communities, and with a focus on lessons learnt from the GI's own field initiatives.
- A new website was launched in 2018 with the objective of increasing hits on the website by over 10% a year, reaching a target of 150 000 by end 2020.
- The GI has an identified research partner/s in each region of the globe, established networks of data/information monitoring in high-profile regions/countries and selected observatories of organized crime.



2. Promote deliberation on effective policy responses to organized crime

The GI constituency often emphasizes the point that the organization must not only focus on generating high-quality analysis but should also provide a platform for deliberating on responses. We are committed more than ever to pursuing this objective over the next three years.

Our aim is also to include within our policy debates and discussions a range of different types of actors – from different countries and regions, and with different disciplines. This will include an appropriate mix of professional researchers and analysts on the one hand, and field-based practitioners on the other.

The challenge for policy discussions is often one of timing, which means being able to introduce new ideas, data and perspectives into debates and emerging trends. To achieve this, the GI will focus on producing informative blogs and policy briefs that aim to address new and unfolding policy discussions. Our purpose is also to present our reports and briefing documents in a timely and accessible way, with a specific focus on informing policymakers and practitioners.

As in the case of our research work, our aim is to focus, in particular, on policy responses in sectors and places where there has not, to date, been enough attention. This includes examining how the impact of organized crime can be reduced by building community resilience, while working to challenge forms of criminal governance (illustrated clearly by extortion, for example) that limit people's life chances and reduce the prospects for local economic growth.

Overall objective:

To promote discussion on effective responses to organized crime across disciplinary boundaries and link different people and perspectives.

Measures of progress:

- Diverse participation at GI meetings, in terms of both location and representation.
- Publication of a minimum 50 policy-relevant briefs and blogs a year.
- Positive feedback received on GI discussions/outputs on policy in individual countries and at regional and global (multilateral) level, and reference made to them in reports, policies and programmes.
- Invitations received, and high-profile technical presentations and communications made by GI staff and associates to, national, civil society, industry and global technical forums.

3. Develop and implement innovative field-based programmes

There has been considerable debate within the GI about the organization adopting a more field-based orientation. At the heart of these discussions has been the question of how the Initiative can use programming in the field, particularly at the community level, to pilot new and innovative approaches to respond to organized crime, to learn lessons and to deliver evidence of their impact.

The role of the GI in project implementation therefore is one that might be termed 'demonstration value'. We will focus on designing projects (and fund-raising for them) that can demonstrate new and innovative approaches. We will work to document and disseminate the message of what has been successful, but equally what failed to make a real difference, and in each case try to explain why, thereby offering lessons for replication.



To have demonstration value, field-based projects will need to deliver across a number of emerging areas. They will need to:

- Take into account community perspectives of the challenges and impact of organized crime, including, for example, building community resilience to organized crime and confronting issues such as criminal governance that GI members at local level often highlight as being of great concern.
- Be designed to confront new and emerging areas of crime, such as cybercrime, where GI expertise may be applicable in bringing complex technologies to bear on established and emerging criminal markets.
- Demonstrate where they would fit into an integrated programme, and make linkages across political, governance, economic, development, peacebuilding and security-based programming objectives.

Overall objective:

A series of innovative, field-based programmes that specifically seek to reduce organized crime or criminal markets, and from which wider lessons can be drawn.

Measures of progress:

- Six demonstration projects implemented over a three-year period.
- Robust monitoring, evaluation and learning from the projects.
- Documented examples of where lessons from GI projects have been used by others to inform responses at local, national, regional or global level.
- A focus on documenting and incubating community resilience, including a focus on civil-society and private-sector responses to criminal governance.

4. Grow and diversify the GI Network, and make effective use of its members as a resource

The Network of Experts remains at the heart of the work that the GI undertakes. It has important constitutional powers, including the approval of board members. The Network makes the GI more than just another ‘think tank’ in a crowded space, because the active intervention and engagement of the members of the Network are central and have moved the organization forward.

From small beginnings, the Network has grown significantly in size, expanding from an initial group of about 30 to nearly 300 in less than five years.

The Network remains a key resource for the GI. Each individual member of the Network decides on how he or she contributes. Many review documents, write blogs, arrange meetings, request briefings, assist in fundraising or participate in projects and research.

Through its secretariat, the GI will manage the Network in a way that allows for the efficient utilization of its expertise, resources and access, while at the same time making sure that the GI provides useful information, contacts and insights to the members.

The effective functioning of the Network represents one of the key objectives of the GI itself: to bring together people committed to fighting organized crime who come from different backgrounds and interests, giving them the opportunity to engage with one another in a trusted space, and to facilitate the kinds of debates that would help them to respond more effectively by drawing from their own work and mandates. In that sense, the founders of the GI have always believed in the creation of the GI as a ‘network to counter networks’.



In the next three years, our strategy around the Network will focus on both growing its size, deepening its diversity and expertise, and finding ways to engage its members more effectively in the work of the GI.

Overall objective:

Develop and grow a diverse and professionally engaged Network committed to the objectives of the GI and working to achieve them.

Measures of progress:

- The Network to consist of 500 members by 2020, of whom at least a third are women with our ultimate goal being to achieve gender parity in membership.
- The Network to provide a balance of representation between all regions and expertise.
- Network members involved in all aspects of the GI's work: research, policy development and advocacy, as well as project implementation.
- An effective system of cross-Network communication measured by the number of interchanges between members of the Network.

5. Build a well-managed, well-funded and professional organization

When it was established, the GI had no full-time professional staff. From 2013 a small, cohort of staff formed the secretariat, often on a part-time or volunteer basis. Over the last few years, however, the number of full- or part-time staff within the secretariat has increased significantly. As of January 2018, the GI has 39 personnel, of whom 22 are full time, six are part time and six are volunteers, while there remain a small number of unfilled posts.

The GI will remain a global network rooted in Geneva. The opening of programme offices elsewhere will be explored, beginning with a liaison office to multilateral organizations in Vienna. This will be done in a way that retains the flexibility and dynamism that have been the hallmark of the GI's growth.

The GI has always sought to hold itself to a high standard of financial management. In 2017 the Initiative received its third unqualified audit. Over the past year, a great many steps have been taken to strengthen the internal systems and functioning of the secretariat in line with the Initiative's growth and global best practice, and commensurate with an organization of the GI's size. The board has been an active partner in this process, with an Audit and Finance Committee that works with GI management in reviewing and improving the institution's administration, systems and processes.

Challenges of course remain. These include improving internal substantive coordination between staff in widely dispersed locations; the need to ensure the security of GI staff, information and systems as the organization becomes more prominent in debates on organized crime and as its field presence grows; and the need to ensure a globally representative staff. These areas will be priorities in the next phase of the organization's development.

Critically, too, a key focus has been on ensuring sustainable and predictable funding for the organization. While the signing of several multi-year contracts with partners has given the GI a higher level of medium-term funding security (extending into 2020), ensuring adequate resources, including those that are not earmarked or are directed at supporting the GI's core operations, remains a prerequisite for the GI's success.

Overall objective:

A professional, expert, diverse and adequately funded secretariat focused on making a difference in the areas of concern to the GI.



Measures of progress:

- Continued growth in the GI's budget with the objective of ensuring quality delivery and impact.
- Clean audits achieved in 2018, 2019 and 2020.
- 50% of staff and consultants from developing countries by 2020.
- Documented internal systems assessed as functioning effectively by the board.

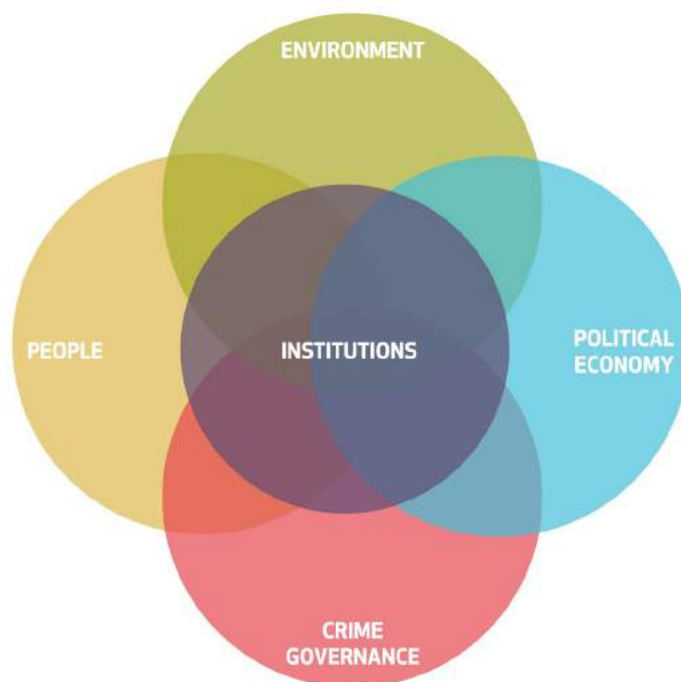
GI's substantive work streams, 2018–2020

Over the past three years, the GI's work has expanded across a wide variety of areas. Our challenge remains to ensure that the Initiative presents a coherent and balanced programme of activities. Even in this short period of time, debates on organized crime and illicit markets have become increasingly complex, crossing multiple sectors and requiring a wide array of expertise to understand and respond to them.

Building on the foundation of activities in which we have been engaged since 2015, our work will focus on five overlapping work streams. These represent strong areas of comparative advantage for the GI, with perspectives and approaches that are not offered elsewhere. They encompass all criminal markets – drugs, people, arms, environmental commodities, violence, and so forth – and their impacts. To remain relevant, the GI must continue to demonstrate its value and leadership in places and on issues where others are not well positioned to do so.

The work streams can be summarized under the following headings, as illustrated in the figure:

- Institutions
- Political economy
- People
- Crime governance
- Environment



Work streams

Institutions

Our work in the area of institutions covers a wide range of areas, but all aimed at strengthening institutional responses to organized crime across multiple sectors. In the next three years these will include:

- Deepening our work with development partners (which we refer to as the ‘development dialogue’) and to improve development responses to organized crime in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Developing, promoting and engaging with countries around an organized-crime assessment.
- Engaging with and monitoring the activities of the UN System, including the launch of a dedicated microsite called UN-TOC Watch.
- Catalyzing, coordinating and bolstering the response of private-sector institutions, in particular public–private sector responses to key challenges related to transnational organized crime.
- Strengthening strategic law-enforcement and criminal-justice responses to organized crime, and fostering links between the law-enforcement community and other sectors.

Political economy

The GI has been an active proponent of political economy-based analysis of organized crime and illicit markets. Our analytical work and new project portfolio explicitly view the response to organized crime through the lens of the political economy – how change can be effected through leveraging political and economic opportunities. Our work over the next three years will continue with this emphasis, focusing on:

- Regional and country studies on organized crime, with a focus on states in conflict and political transition.
- Improving our analytical abilities to measure and document illicit financial flows and their impact on local, national and regional political economies.
- A focus on protecting political processes from the influence of organized-criminal activities.
- Bolstering the role of ethical and professional independent media and investigative journalism in exposing and reporting on illicit markets and organized crime.

People

The impact of organized crime on ordinary people, particularly the poor and most vulnerable, has been at the heart of the GI’s work. Our work will continue to focus on the two criminal markets where people have been commoditized by organized crime: namely human trafficking and human smuggling.

Work in the next three years will focus in particular on the evolution of organized-crime networks involved in human smuggling. Here the focus will be on Libya and the Sahel, where the GI is set to develop a significant on-the-ground presence.

In terms of human trafficking, the GI will further develop the RESPECT initiative – the Responsible and Ethical Private Sector Coalition against Trafficking. This is an initiative that seeks to identify private-sector solutions to the challenges of human trafficking and slavery.

The focus on ordinary people affected by organized crime of course goes beyond just the victims of trafficking and smuggling. It includes men, women and children the world over who are caught up in the daily reality of living or working in places where criminal groups exert influence. Our focus will be on participants in organized crime themselves in an attempt to understand their motivations and seek ways ‘exit’ can be achieved.



Crime governance

At their most extreme, organized-crime networks and groups effectively establish forms of ‘crime governance’, by which we mean using a set of criminal instruments (violence, threat or corruption) and associated criminal players to exert influence. At a national level, this may result in what has been termed ‘criminalized states’, an issue that will continue to be explored in GI publications. At the local level, as criminal actors accumulate power and displace legitimate forms of local governance, economic activity and social order, this has dire implications for many communities. In the period 2018 to 2020, the GI will focus on understanding and countering criminal governance through three broad undertakings:

- Initial work on building resilient communities, which was first piloted in Sinaloa, Mexico, will be expanded to other communities. In doing so, we will focus on influencing the ongoing debate on urban safety and governance.
- Extortion remains one of the most common ways in which criminal groups exert ‘governance’ over local businesses and even individual households. The GI will develop a significant focus on countering extortion, with a focus on Central America, and will also seek to draw lessons for a global response to the challenge.
- One powerful mechanism through which organized crime ‘governs’ is the targeted assassination of local politicians, police, journalists, community leaders, and environmental and human-rights activists. The killing of rival criminal gang members while threatening local security, often endangers local communities caught in the crossfire. The GI will in the period 2018 to 2020 expand its monitoring and reporting of criminal assassinations in several countries, culminating in a global report on the issue.

Environment

Analyzing and countering illicit environmental commodity markets have been an important focus of the GI in its establishment phase. This work will continue. In the 2018 to 2020 period the emphasis will be on:

- Monitoring and reporting on developments in environmental crime markets.
- Building a programme to respond more effectively to the marketing and sale of illicit environmental commodities on the internet.
- Community-resilience initiatives in areas surrounding major conservation areas.
- The application of the GI TOCLAW environment tool, with its unparalleled collection of country environmental legislation.
- Working towards a response with regard to the role of criminal networks in the forestry sector.

Achieving internal coordination and promoting innovation

The five GI work streams have significant overlaps. Yet, in each area, there is a set of core elements around which to structure innovative responses. This is in line with the overall aim of the GI to cross-fertilize knowledge and to encourage new and innovative thinking.

Several new and emerging issues – most notably cyber or web-based crime – are cross-cutting all work streams. We will work to ensure that such issues are developed in line with the GI’s comparative advantage and in a way that complements the work being undertaken by other organizations. The GI will continue to build links with a wide variety of organizations and other initiatives targeting illegal activity.



A flexible strategy

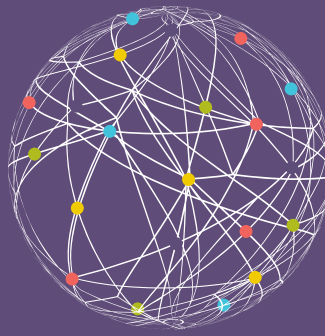
A three-year strategy must be flexible. Much will change in this period, both in the external environment and within the GI as its expertise and capacity continue to grow and change. To take this into account, this strategy will be reviewed at the end of each year. Adjustments will be made as appropriate.

Conclusion

The challenges posed by transnational organized crime and its negative impacts are increasingly being understood. And, all the while, new challenges are emerging. However, responses have not been commensurate or innovative enough. This is where GI has its niche and opportunity, which this strategy seeks to exploit.

We are fully aware of the enormous resources available to the GI Network, but bringing it together can also be a challenge. The GI is a unique but also a diverse and globally dispersed organization. Working together, we can make a critical difference in understanding and responding to organized crime. This is why this strategy needs the buy-in and co-ownership of every member of the Network.





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