



Green Crescent Health  
Development Initiative  
Nigeria

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## Drug use in Nigeria

- The past year prevalence of any drug use in Nigeria is estimated at 14.4 per cent or **14.3 million people** aged between 15 and 64 years.
- **One in seven persons** aged 15-64 years had used a drug (other than tobacco and alcohol) in the past year.
  - One of every four drug user is **woman**.
- The highest levels of any past-year drug use was among those aged **25-39 years**.
  - One of five people who had used drugs in the past year is suffering from **drug user disorders**.



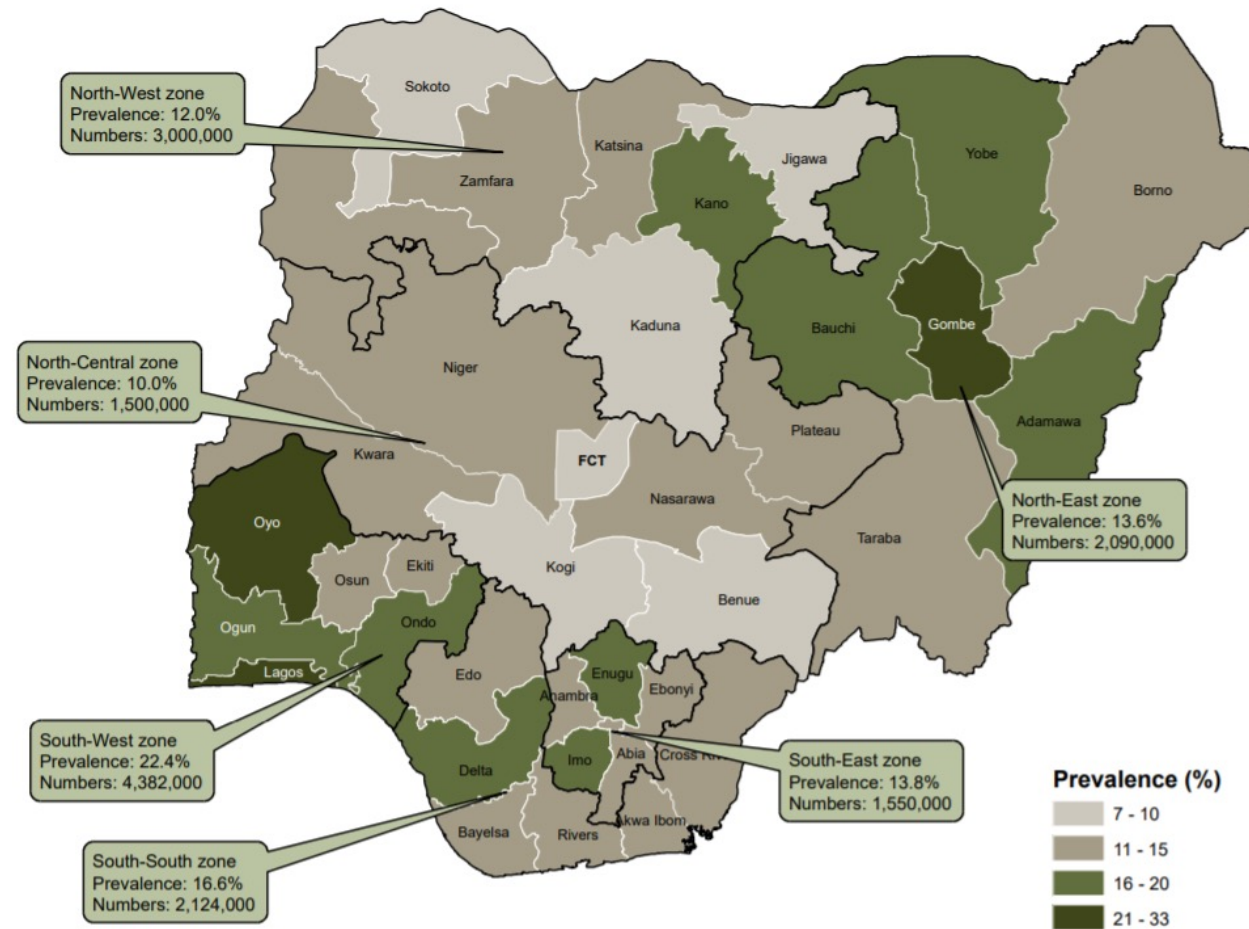
## Number of Past Year Users in Nigeria, 2017

- Cannabis → 10.6 million
- Opioids → 4.6 million
- Cough syrup → 2.4 million
- Tranquilizers and sedatives → 481 thousand
- Ecstasy → 340 thousand
- Solvents and inhalants → 300 thousand
- Amphetamines & prescription stimulants → 238 thousand
- Cocaine → 92 thousand



# Prevalence of Drug Use by Regions

Prevalence of drug use in Nigeria by geopolitical zones and states, 2017



Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



## High-risk drug use:

- High-risk drug users were defined as those who had used opioids, crack/cocaine or amphetamines **in the past 12 months**, and had used those drugs on **at least 5 occasions** in the past thirty days.
- **Numbers of people who are defined as high-risk drug users are concerning!**
  - Estimated **376,000 high risk drug users** in Nigeria.

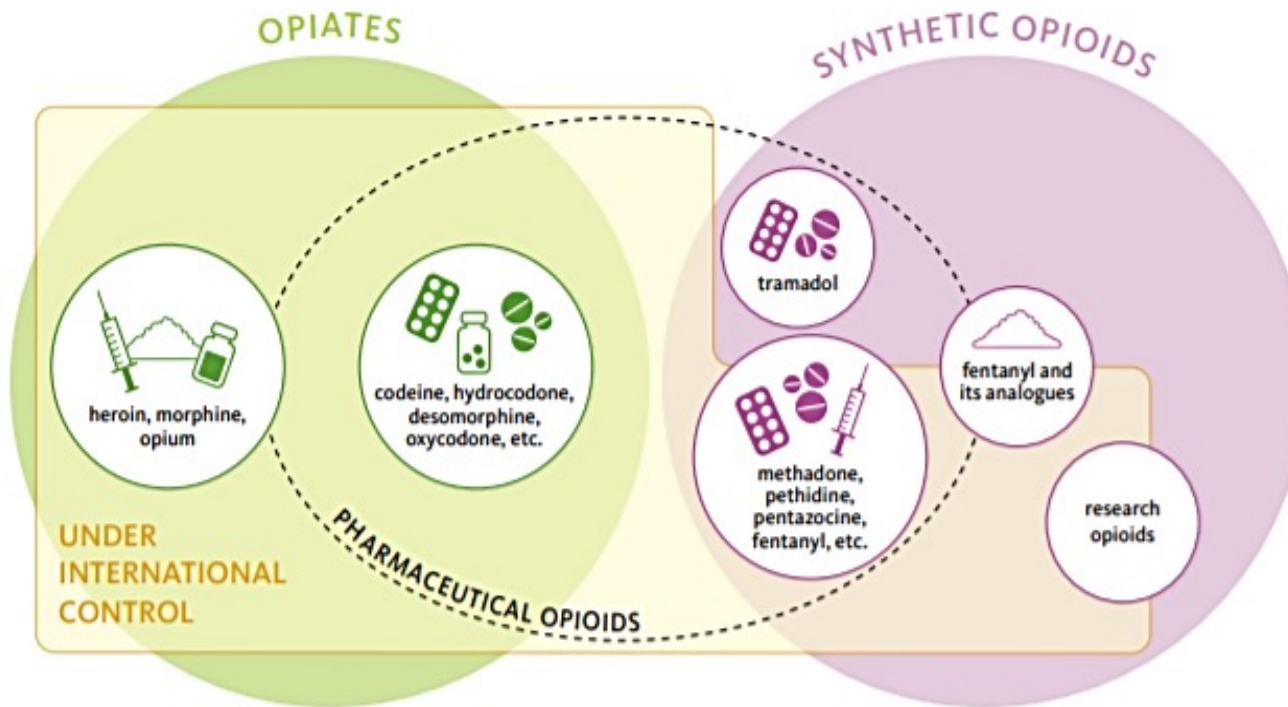


## High-risk drug use:

- From those who are high risk users nearly **90% them** had been regularly using pharmaceutical opioids such as **tramadol, codeine or morphine**.
- **ONE of FIVE** high risk drug users, injects drugs (80,000 users **inject** drugs in Nigeria)
  - The most common drugs injected in the past year were **pharmaceutical opioids**, followed by cocaine and heroin.
- An estimated 4.7 per cent of the population, i.e. **4.6 million people** **had used opioids** (such as **tramadol**, codeine, or morphine) for non-medical purposes in the past year.



# Pharmaceutical Opioids and Tramadol



## Tramadol:

- An opioid medication used to treat moderate to severe pain.
- It is not under international control but is under national control in a number of countries in all regions.
- It has dual properties as an opioid analgesic with energy- and mood-enhancement properties.
- This is why the non-medical use of tramadol has spread in various subregions, in particular North Africa, West Africa and the Middle East.



## Pharmaceutical Opioids and Tramadol

- In West, Central and North Africa and the Middle East, tramadol, a pharmaceutical opioid **not under international control, has emerged as a major opioid of concern.**
- The drug, in addition to being diverted from the legal market, is mainly trafficked into those subregions in dosages **higher than those prescribed for pain management:**
  - Resulting in an increasing number of people with tramadol use disorder entering treatment in recent years.





## Why does Tramadol cause risks?

- Easily accessible
- More profitable for traffickers
- Absence of international regulations
- Demand driven





## Consequences of drug use:

### Health consequences:

- Drug dependence & **inadequate treatment services.**
- High blood pressure and chronic pain, heart diseases
- Diabetes and asthma.

### Social consequences:

- Family issues (conflict or breakup),
- Loss of work or employment,
- Legal issues (criminality or arrests),
- Domestic violence.



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*(UNODC and Government of Nigeria, Drug Use Survey in Nigeria, 2018)*



## Drug supply in Nigeria

### According to the 2017 Report by the International Narcotics Control Board:

- West Africa is still a **key transit point** for drug trafficking.
- Synthetic opioid **tramadol**, which is not under international control, is **increasingly being misused** in Nigeria and in the West African Region.
- The illicit manufacturing of amphetamines and cultivation and production of cannabis are also areas of concern in Nigeria.

According to the **World Drug Report 2017**, yearly seizures of tramadol in the region have risen since 2013 from **300 kg** to **over 3 tonnes**.





## Nigeria in World Drug Reports

### WDR 2021:

- In 2018, 4.6 million people were estimated to have used opioids (mainly tramadol but also codeine and morphine)
  - 6% male,
  - 3.3% female.
- Nigeria has been identified as the most frequently mentioned country, after India as a country of origin, departure and transit of tramadol over the period 2015–2019.
- The global quantities of tramadol seized → 122 tons in 2017

### WDR 2020:

- Tramadol is more accessible opioid than heroin, although it is still relatively costly if used frequently.
- Use of tramadol appears to cost about one third the price of heroin (\$3.60 versus \$10 per day of use in the past 30 days).

### WDR 2018:

- In Nigeria, the non-medical use of opioids is of concern.
- In 2016, cannabis 45%, and opioids 36% were the main substances.
- Most people treated for opioid use disorders were misusing tramadol, codeine and pentazocine.





## How do we improve our work?

- After the Covid19 pandemic, people with substance use disorders has become even more vulnerable due to inadequacy of treatment and rehabilitation services in Nigeria.
- Use of tramadol has risen to its highest points on 2017, and slowly decreased after that year. But, it is still too **reachable, affordable and common**, and people who suffer from tramadol use **cannot find an accessible treatment service** even though **40% of them would like to receive a drug treatment**.





## How do we improve our work?

- We, as Green Crescent Health Development Initiative based in Nigeria, are working on **prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services** for people who suffer from addictions.
- With the data from UNODC and Government of Nigeria's document on "Drug use in Nigeria 2018" and World Drug Reports provided by UNODC, we are able to **monitor our country's recent situation** regarding drugs and we are using these documents to **improve our capacity** while **integrating these valuable datasets and evidence**.





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*Thank you for listening!*



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