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Nugget 7.12

Police crackdown in London had limited impact on drug dealing

Findings The largest police offensive against drug dealers ever seen in London caused some ripples but no major impact on the availability of crack – its prime target.

Mounted in two phases of two and six weeks in the winter of 2000/2001, Operation Crackdown netted over 1600 arrests from concentrated 'sting' or 'test' purchases and during raids on scores of crack houses and dozens of street drug markets. [Study 1](#) investigated the impact in four of the 10 boroughs initially targeted but also gathered data from police records in 13 boroughs.

A priority was to reduce street crime. Reported robberies and burglaries near the operation sites yielded no indication that this had occurred. Local police agreed, with the exception of areas where street robberies were strongly linked to adult users of crack houses. Where juveniles were the main offenders some police felt that the diversion of officers to Crackdown had allowed an increase in street robberies.

Police, community safety and drug service staff, and crack users all said that the operation had not caused difficulties in obtaining cocaine or heroin or an increase in prices. Crack house operators rapidly relocated and test purchases caught easily replaceable 'retail' staff rather than business managers. However, closure of notorious crack houses was welcomed by residents and in one area test purchases netted core dealers and caused at least medium term disruption of a street crack market. Police said the centrally timetabled crackdown had distorted normal anti-drug enforcement and could only be mounted by drafting in less experienced staff, reducing effectiveness. They also agreed that Crackdown had diverted attention from potentially more effective ways of tackling drug markets. A major limitation in the operation's ability to dent crack dealing was that most crack purchases are arranged over mobile phones rather than in street markets or crack houses.

After Crackdown was underway, [study 2](#) interviewed 174 heroin and crack users at treatment services mainly in the initially targeted boroughs. Three-quarters had recently bought heroin and over half crack. The great majority had not noticed any recent changes in the price, purity, availability or adulteration of heroin or crack. Nearly 1 in 5 felt crack had become more easily available since the operation started, four times the number who felt the reverse.

In context Despite the nebulous nature of drug dealing and lack of definitive data on availability, the triangulation of different types of data sources in [study 1](#) lend confidence in the findings. Where [study 1](#) was weakest – data direct from drug users – [study 2](#) adds weight to its conclusions.

A clear lesson from the literature and from [study 1](#) is the need to tailor policing to local dealing dynamics and context. Crackdowns have the best chance of success in the early stages of rapidly spreading markets when they can contain the spread of the business. In contrast, well established markets often quickly relocate or re-establish themselves once the drive is over. In these circumstances, crackdowns can still have a useful initial impact by clearing the way for more sustainable policing and long-lasting alterations in the social and physical fabric which prevent a reversion to the pre-crackdown situation. Among these tactics (which are also viable without an initial crackdown) are a continuous low-level police presence inconveniencing purchasers and sellers, engaging the local community and local agencies in informal and quasi policing (such as evictions of drug dealing tenants, denying access to meeting places such as fast-food outlets and pubs), and environmental and social changes which make areas less amenable to drug crime (securing vacant properties, street lighting and surveillance, etc). In response, markets rarely disappear but become closed, operating on the basis of deals pre-arranged usually by mobile phone rather than selling their wares in public. The result may not be to reduce the level of dealing, but nuisance to local residents and fear of crime diminish and entry into the market by new users may be impeded.

A consistent theme in the literature is that crackdowns have a more lasting impact when communities are strong enough and have sufficient investment in their neighbourhood to sustain improvements and keep hold of the territory 'liberated' from drug dealers and buyers. Another important factor is the availability of attractive treatment services to mop up users 'inconvenienced' into retiring from the scene. Without these, the risk is that user-dealers will simply be pushed into more non-drug crime and that addicts will engage in more risky drug purchase and drug use behaviour.

Practice implications See [Additional reading](#) for a fuller account. Where markets are widespread and well established, police resources will not be great enough or able to be sustained at a high level for long enough to noticeably reduce drug dealing. Relocation and resurgence reverse immediate gains. However, sustained, locally organised enforcement reinforced by community partnerships and action by local residents and businesses to make areas less 'drug market friendly' can limit collateral damage by forcing markets to be more circumspect. Feasible goals include reducing serious crime and the fear or crime and the nuisance caused by open drug use and dealing. Such actions are aided by and in turn aid reversal of the deterioration of the social and physical environment which creates spaces for drug markets to flourish.

Without tolerating drug dealing, a policy which focused on these goals will also harness the very flexibility of the drug market which defeats head-on attacks. Concentrating limited resources on the most troublesome dealers and markets entails a de-focus on those which cause least aggravation and crime, giving these a market advantage which magnifies the impact of policing on priority targets. Such targeting requires an in-depth assessment of the causes of local nuisance and crime and how far these truly are related to drug use and dealing. Without this, diversion of police resources to drug dealing could relieve pressure on the non-drug related perpetrators of street robberies and other crimes of public concern, decreasing community safety and increasing the fear of crime.

Featured studies 1 Webster R. *et al.* [An evaluation of the impact of Operation Crackdown](#). Criminal Policy Research Unit, South Bank University, 2001. Best D. *et al.* [“Assessment of a concentrated, high-profile police operation.”](#) *British Journal of Criminology*: 2001, 41, p. 738–745. Copies: apply DrugScope.

Additional reading Jacobson J. [Policing drug hot-spots](#). Home Office, 1999. Copies: Home Office Police and Reducing Crime Unit, phone 020 7271 8225.

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Links [Nugget 3.14](#)

Appendix to Nugget 7.12

About the studies

Mounted in two phases of two and six weeks in the winter of 2000/2001, Operation Crackdown resulted in over 1600 arrests.¹ The second phase was London-wide, the first confined to 10 boroughs. Study 1 investigated the impact of both phases in four of the 10 boroughs but also gathered data from police records across 13 boroughs.² These revealed that in the first phase alone police had raided at least 88 'crack houses' – premises used for the sale and often also for the use of crack – and 36 street markets. Concerted 'sting' or 'test' purchases were also used to gather evidence against dealers. About 80% of the operations resulted in drug seizures and nearly three-quarters in arrests most of which resulted in drug dealing convictions. However, cocaine (including crack) was found in just a third of the operations.

A priority was to reduce street crime. In three boroughs records of reported robberies and burglaries in the vicinity of the operations yielded no indication that this had occurred. Interviews with local police supported this interpretation with the exception of areas where street robberies were known to be strongly linked to adult users of crack houses rather than juveniles. In the latter some police felt that the diversion of officers to Operation Crackdown had allowed an increase in street robberies. Police, local authority community safety staff, staff from drug services dealing with crack users, and crack users themselves generally agreed that the operation had not caused difficulties in obtaining cocaine or other drugs in class A of the Misuse of Drugs Act or an increase in the price of cocaine or heroin. Dealers from raided crack houses commonly rapidly relocated and test purchases caught out easily replaceable low-level 'retail' staff rather than the business managers. However, in one area where test purchases netted core dealers there was at least a medium term disruption of a street crack market, and the closure of crack houses was welcomed by local residents. Interviews with police strongly suggested that the concentrated and centrally timetabled crackdown had counter-productively interfered with normal anti-drug policing planning and procedures and created a shortage of experienced staff, making the operations less fruitful than was hoped. For example, operations had to occur within the few weeks of Crackdown rather than being timed to net the most arrests and drugs. Police agreed that Crackdown's focus on raids and public dealing venues had diverted attention from what might have been more effective ways of tackling drug markets. A major limitation was that probably most crack purchases are arranged over mobile phones rather than in street markets or crack houses, though the latter may attract particularly heavy users.

After phase one of Operation Crackdown was underway study 2 interviewed 174 heroin and crack users seen at treatment services mainly located in the targeted boroughs.³ Three-quarters had recently bought heroin and over half crack. A third were aware of the increased police activity. The great majority of the 174 respondents had not noticed any recent changes in the price, purity, availability or degree of adulteration of heroin or crack. Nearly 1 in 5 felt crack had become more easily available since the operation started, four times the number who felt the reverse. Though still a minority, more felt that the purity of crack may have decreased and the degree of adulteration increased than felt the reverse had

occurred, possibly a hint that some dealers had maintained supply by decreasing the quality of the product.

Other studies of police crackdowns

Reviews and commentaries

A Home Office review of studies of police drug crackdowns and place management strategies acknowledged that rather than cease trading, market players often take target-hardening measures and that displacement occurs, but argues that counter-productive impacts are rarely so great as to invalidate police crackdowns and place management strategies.⁴ A similar assessment of the evidence comes from the Australian Institute of Criminology which also accepts that benefits can be short-lived and dependent on the cooperation of the targeted community.⁵

The Home Office review cites British evidence that crackdowns do deter drug dependent purchasers, but only from buying at that location. Benefits can include raising the social and economic profile of an area by 'clearing out' drug dealers and presumably also their customers and reducing signs of disorder. Especially where the targets of the action are not socially separate from other local residents, or where targeting has gone awry, there is a risk of deteriorating police-public relations with long-term impacts on the flow of intelligence to the police to guide future operations. Often, however, the reverse is the case and the action is welcomed by local residents. Evidence cited includes a controlled US study (comparing 'crackdown' neighbourhoods with those subject to normal policing) which found that crackdowns altered the pattern of local drug dealing by forcing it off the streets but did not alter the level of dealing overall. Crackdowns on their own have very short-term impact – just two weeks in another controlled US study. Another controlled US study found that continued heightened policing can prolong the impact of a crackdown on visible drug use/dealing and disorder as reflected in calls to the police. A similar embedding effect may be achieved by following crackdowns with environmental changes which make drug dealing less convenient or safe for seller and buyer. Place management strategies involving police liaison with residents, landlords, businesses and local authorities and public services have been shown to reduce visible drug crime, improve the local environment, and to reduce the local experience of crime as reflected in calls to the police, but in one study there was evidence of displacement at one of the three US sites studied. At London's Kings Cross Operation Welwyn first conducted a traditional crackdown on the local street market but the impact was seen as transitory, leading to it being supplemented by an attempt at place management and environmental change. The improvements were valuable and probably welcome to local residents but the impact on the drug trade in the area appears to have been minimal. Dealers became more covert in their operations, moved from the streets to local estates (creating a new locus of nuisance) and some relocated to nearby neighbourhoods. However, one US study does suggest that the principle – combining traditional intensive policing with place management strategies – was correct. As the review remarks, strategies like place management and intelligence-led policing depend on community support for and investment in the process.

A leading UK academic authority on drug policing and enforcement acknowledges the public support for crackdowns which take out socially disruptive and violent

dealers but favours 'low-level' or 'street' policing as a more sustainable tactic.⁶ This approach typically positions a visible police presence at dealing venues to deter both customers (particularly novices) and sellers. Both can move to another site but at the cost of some inconvenience and the new site is likely to be a second-best venue. Police-led partnership working with local authorities, residents and media improve effectiveness. The Kings Cross operation is cited as a successful example. This involved high-profile patrolling as well as partnership initiatives to make the local environment less amenable to drug crime. While it helped improve the quality of life in the targeted area, other work casts doubt over the impact on drug availability and there was some evidence of displacement (see above).⁷

Where communities are fragmented and the residents have little investment in their neighbourhood and its future results can be disappointing and harder to sustain. This observation from the reviews cited above⁸⁻⁹ is supported by research in the USA which found community cohesion strongly linked to success in combating drug-related nuisance (see below).¹⁰ Similarly, an account of police crackdowns in New York reports that these were most successful in the more affluent areas.¹¹ That account also observes that low-level dealing is typically conducted by people with little to lose, echoing the observation in study 1 that in one area illegal immigrants were the primary retailers working as 'runners' for the dealers.¹² In the USA it has been observed that dealers run the risks they do because they have few revenue-raising alternatives, particularly once they have a record for drug dealing offences.¹³ Similarly in Manchester the threat of long prison terms and of violence from other dealers filtered out all but the most desperate young men.¹⁴ Such people are likely to be unresponsive to police pressure, or to respond in such a way as to continue their business or diversify into other crimes rather than to move into legitimate enterprise. Crackdowns based on targeting the purchase event and the dealing venues may net only the disposable runners rather than the dealers supplying the drugs.¹⁵

US authors have persuasively put the case for police community partnerships in tackling drug markets which make the local environment unpleasant for ordinary citizens, creating a downward spiral as they move out or stay away, leaving the territory to drug users and dealers.¹⁶ Strongly anti-drug communities may be able to drive away developing drug markets but where these are established and/or the community is divided and dispirited, a police crackdown with community follow up organised in advance can make a lasting difference. Without community involvement the risk is that crackdowns will give the message that tackling objectionable drug markets is to be left to the police, whose crackdown can then only have a fleeting impact. Alternatively, low-level street policing can succeed in meeting quality of life objectives even if it does not diminish the supply of drugs, paving the way for the residents of affected locales to reclaim and feel comfortable in their neighbourhood.

There is an argument that crackdowns can reduce drug use by sweeping up heavy users and user-dealers and diverting them into treatment using new court orders and arrest referral schemes.¹⁷ Disrupting markets and generally preventing the establishment of settled and predictable trading routes could raise the level of inconvenience sufficiently to deter purchases by new and occasional users. Sellers too will be less willing to risk selling to new contacts and be forced to resort to

protective tactics which reduce profitability. The net result of such impacts would, it was argued, be preventive.

In Australia where the national drug policy is avowedly based on harm reduction principles, an argument has been made for policing drug markets to reduce priority harms rather than to net arrests or seizures.¹⁸ Because this does not threaten the dealers' main objectives – to make money – it can take advantage of the very flexibility of the market which defeats head-on attacks. This approach dovetails with low-level policing strategies because displacement – the usual objective of those strategies – can count as a success within this framework. For example, 24-hour police presence at a street market in a residential neighbourhood and near a school might cause it to be displaced to a non-residential area with community safety, preventive and environmental benefits. Similarly, in Rotterdam a meeting of local interests considered tactics which would favour small-scale dealers whose interest in the continuity of their businesses dictates a quiet, heads-down approach which does not impact on the neighbourhood.¹⁹ Instead policing would target 'get rich quick' dealers who blight neighbourhoods because their priority is to maximise profit by maximising the number of customers leading them into violent competition with rivals. Another particularly disruptive element were young men who engaged in nuisance-creating street dealing as a form of bravado. These undesirables would presumably learn to become 'respectable' dealers or go out of business because their costs would be driven up while those of the 'quiet' dealers would remain stable or improve as they gained customers. Such an approach may be particularly appropriate in areas where the illicit market for a particular drug is already entrenched and gains from where a head-on attack are quickly reversed. When a market is new but rapidly expanding from a small base a pre-emptive policing strike does have the potential to moderate the acceleration and reduce the peak in the spread of that market.²⁰

However, neither low-level policing with harm reduction objectives nor place management (or indeed, concentrated crackdowns) featured at all among the most important elements of UK police forces' anti-drug strategies in the '90s, possibly because they had no central endorsement in the national strategy.²¹

A clear lesson from the literature as well as from the study 1²² is the need to tailor policing to local dealing dynamics and the social context. In some circumstances targeting dealers takes out entrepreneurs who have built up their businesses over several years, making a lasting impact; in others, it merely increases the turnover of 'hired hands' who are easily replaced from a local pool of people with few alternatives and/or little knowledge of the risks they are running. In some areas communities are strong enough and have sufficient investment in their neighbourhood to sustain improvements and keep hold of the territory liberated by crackdowns, in many others considerable work is needed to build a resilient community and/or other enforcement methods must be considered. Where partnerships can be forged with local authorities, agencies, businesses and resident groups to constrict the ability of dealers to return to targeted locations crackdowns have a more lasting impact. In some areas accessible treatment services will mop up users 'inconvenienced' into retiring from the scene but in others these are not available and the risk is that addicts will simply move into more extreme crime and risky drug purchase and use behaviour. Sometimes the opportunities for rapid

relocation are such that little is gained from closing down a dealing venue or crack house, sometimes not.

Recent studies

Prompt entry into treatment?

Disruption of familiar and accessible markets could mean that each purchase takes more time and effort and entails greater risk, leading some users to 'retire early' or cut down their consumption via treatment. A Swiss study found that closure in 1995 of the last open street dealing scene in Zurich coincided with a statistically significant peak in admissions to local methadone maintenance programmes, amounting to 68 more than the typical 457 admissions per quarter.²³ The peak might have been far greater but for the fact that half the affected addicts were not local residents and were therefore ineligible for treatment and half the remainder were already in treatment. There was no evidence that the addicts entering treatment during this period were any more likely to leave early.

A similar issue was addressed in a study based on interviews with 511 heroin users in a part of Sydney known for its street dealing venues and high concentration of heroin injectors.²⁴ While it was not the reason cited most often, over 40% of respondents currently in methadone maintenance said avoiding more trouble with the law had been a very important motivation for treatment entry. Cited more often was cutting spending on heroin, itself perhaps a consequence of the price premium created by enforcement. Once other factors had been taken into account, heroin expenditure was the biggest single influence on ever having entered methadone treatment. Also significant were having experienced the drug-related imprisonment of a friend or relative. Increased personal experience of arrest and imprisonment were probably reasons why duration of heroin addiction and age were associated with an increased chance of having been in treatment. The pattern of results is consistent with a cumulative pressure to enter treatment arising directly or indirectly from enforcement.

In Massachusetts a police crackdown on drug transactions and drug markets in a small city in the mid-1980s led to an 85% increase in the demand for drug treatment places.²⁵

It goes without saying that unless attractive treatment options are rapidly accessible, any potential 'retire early' gain will not be realised. This was the case for the customers of an English inner city drug market where waiting lists for methadone maintenance stretched to 12 months²⁶ and in Cabramatta in Australia.^{27 28}

Studies showing improved perceptions/reality of safety and crime in the targeted areas

A major Australian study was based largely on in-depth interviews with 143 heroin users who frequented Cabramatta, Sydney's principal street-level drug market, a market to which police responded with an intensive and highly visible uniformed presence and repeated crackdowns. Police crackdowns improved the quality of life locally, netted arrests and convictions, and reduced property crime in the area.^{29 30} However, these gains were made at some cost (see below).

In Massachusetts a police crackdown on drug transactions and drug markets in a small city in the mid-1980s had a clear impact on robbery, burglary and crimes against the person.³¹ In the first 12 months after the start of the crackdown, reported robberies decreased by 18.5%, reported burglaries by 37.5% and reported crimes against the person by 66%. In the second 12 months after the start of the crackdown the decrease in reported burglaries was sustained and reported robberies declined even further. Surveys of residents revealed a perception of decreased disorder and increased quality of life.

Studies showing counterproductive effects

Rather than abandoning their activities, sellers and buyers adapted to police crackdowns on the Cabramatta street market in Sydney, Australia in ways which increased health risks and spread nuisance and crime to other locations.^{32 33} Both groups resorted to storing heroin in the nose and mouth, heightening the risk of transmitting diseases and of injuries when police attempted to recover the evidence. Fear of being found with injecting equipment resulted in increased re-use of needles and syringes. The accent on quickly completing both purchase and ingestion encouraged indiscriminate use and disposal of whatever equipment was to hand, overdose risks due to less careful testing and titration of dose levels, and hurried, highly unsafe injection practices. Users and dealers moved to as yet unpoliced locations, leaving users isolated and more vulnerable to overdose fatalities, severing links with harm reduction services, making re-contact harder, and spreading nuisance and drug availability to previously unaffected communities. The crackdowns led to target-hardening – increased professionalisation of the market and protective devices such as selling larger amounts in fewer transactions and using mobile phones to arrange transactions. Unable to raise as much as before through drug sales, some user-dealers said they resorted to more property crime, though if this occurred it seems it was spread more widely leading to a reduction in property crime in Cabramatta itself. Potential benefits in terms of prompting users to ‘retire early’ via treatment were hampered by the lack of rapidly available detoxification or methadone treatment slots.

Echoes of the Cabramatta experience have been documented in Britain. In London a settled central location for drug dealing was found to facilitate harm reduction interventions and prevent nuisance from street dealing.^{34 35} Police action against drug users found with injecting equipment is thought to have contributed to the sharing of equipment and to the HIV epidemic in Edinburgh.³⁶

Policing drives against drug purchasers or drug dealing venues may encourage fewer but larger buys to minimise the danger of arrest. This occurred in Cabramatta^{37 38} (see above) and in Rotterdam in response to a crackdown on house-based cocaine and heroin dealers.³⁹ This occurs partly because unless a similar and heavily penalised drive is mounted against the possession of drugs in the home, the incentive for users is to build up stocks and minimise the number of transactions needed to replenish these stocks. This response could increase the supply of drugs because it also reduces the risks faced by dealers who no longer need to expose themselves as frequently to the risk of arrest entailed in distributing drugs and in handling drugs in public.⁴⁰ In Rotterdam dealers initiated this protective device to cut down on the number of times customers drew attention to their businesses by going in and out of their houses. Especially with crack, larger sales units and

stockpiling drugs at home could lead to an increase in consumption: just buying what is 'needed' for the immediate period is one way to retain control over your consumption.

Echoing comments of some London police officers in study 1,⁴¹ a US study reports that a sharp increase in drug enforcement in Florida during 1984–1989 resulted in a reallocation of police resources which reduced the effectiveness of property crime enforcement and increased the property crime rate.⁴² The mechanism posited is that as police efforts shifted to drugs, the chances of being arrested for a property crime fell, and burglars could commit more crimes before being apprehended. As a result there was an estimated 10% increase in property crimes.⁴³ Moreover, this relationship remained evident even in the period 1994–1997 when there was no escalation in anti-drug policing, suggesting that it was not simply a one-off side-effect of the atypical focus on drugs in the late '80s.⁴⁴ Similarly, the same authors report that increasing drug enforcement in Illinois resulted in a decline in general traffic control and a sharp decline in drunk driving arrests. Roads in Illinois became more dangerous as a consequence and traffic fatalities rose dramatically relative to the rest of the country.⁴⁵

Alternatives to crackdowns

In a variation on place management strategies, police in Oakland, California established 'Beat Health' teams to generate official and self-help initiatives in neighbourhoods affected by drug dealing/use and disorder to make them less attractive to criminals.⁴⁶ Housing, fire and safety regulations were enforced and the civil law used to force property owners to take action against nuisance and dealing involving their premises. A key element is identifying and forming working relationships with 'place managers' – local residents, landlords, shopkeepers or other individuals with a stake in improving the neighbourhood and who engage in informal policing of their streets, premises and homes. 100 street blocks referred to the Beat Health teams (three-quarters had drug dealing problems) were randomly allocated either to the teams or to conventional police responses. Researchers observed the sites at notification and again five months later, surveyed residents, and interviewed place managers. Beat Health blocks evidenced greater reductions in visible drug dealing and neglect (litter, graffiti, etc) and signs that women felt safer and more comfortable on the streets, improvements at least partly attributable to official interventions. However, improvements were also associated with collective community responses and social cohesiveness evidenced by variables such as confidence that neighbours would intervene to prevent crime. In contrast, improvements were not associated with individualistic action such as calling the police.

In Adelaide police mounted a six-month operation targeting street dealers with a high reliance on local intelligence and which combined place management and problem-oriented policing (ie, gearing responses to an analysis of what the problem is for the locality and its causes and being prepared to go beyond conventional policing to reduce the identified problems) towards explicitly harm reduction objectives such as encouraging treatment uptake.⁴⁷ The result was to stabilise previously escalating rates of property and drug crime including robberies and housebreaking.

A British study has documented how low-level policing largely closed down two open street markets. Dealers responded by retreating into closed markets where deals were pre-arranged by mobile phones.⁴⁸ Both markets featured gun violence and dealers were relatively unconcerned about risks from police action. Test purchases by police officers were neutralised by tactics such as requiring a code before arranging a deal, selling only to known customers or after an introduction, requiring new contacts to consume the drug, and by the prospect of violence against undercover officers. In this situation the use of informants (a priority in police strategies across the UK⁴⁹) was considered the best way to disrupt the markets. Though police were frustrated at their inability to make progress, with the problem now less visible, the local community did not see drug selling as a priority concern, posing problems with gaining the support needed to sustain a diversion of police resources into tackling drug dealing. In this study as in London (study 1)⁵⁰ officers commented that closed down crack houses were rapidly replaced.

Recommendations included coordinating enforcement tactics across markets to prevent displacement, accompanying enforcement with tactics to sweep displaced buyers into treatment, and putting into place situational prevention measures to 'proof' the area against the return of drug dealing.

Another study from the same research centre of six London markets (four open, two closed) concluded that a triangulation of measures could disrupt markets and prevent them attracting a critical mass of customers.⁵¹ These were attractive treatment options (especially drug of choice prescribing), low-level enforcement, and situational prevention. Low-level enforcement was a deterrent to purchasers determining which markets they would visit and was likely to deter novice users. Though displacement occurred it was unlikely to be 100% and dispersal reduced the intensity of impact on a single community. Situational prevention included place management strategies engaging local businesses and workers in discouraging drug use and dealing in areas under their control, CCTV surveillance, and environmental changes to make local amenities less attractive to users and dealers. In four of the markets, sex workers dependent on drugs were a major part of the customer base, suggesting that measures to disrupt prostitution and/or engage the sex workers in treatment would also have a major impact on the sustainability of the markets.

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