



NorTEST

Red Comunitaria de Análisis de Sustancias
en la Frontera Norte MX

-  **Prevecasa A.C.**
Tijuana, Baja California
-  **Verter A.C.**
Mexicali, Baja California
-  **Programa Compañeros A.C.**
Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua

1. Mexico's northern border



Binational cities

Daily interaction with U.S. border regions



Mobility

High movement of people and goods



Environment

Arid areas, extreme heat and long distances

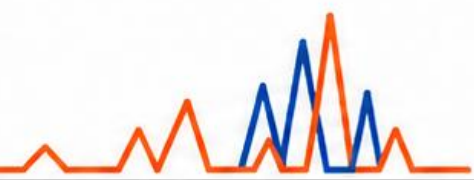


Local variation

Different social and substance contexts



2. National differences in the presence of opioids



HIGHEST REPORTED FENTANYL USE

1

43.2%

Baja California

2

27.1%

Sonora

3

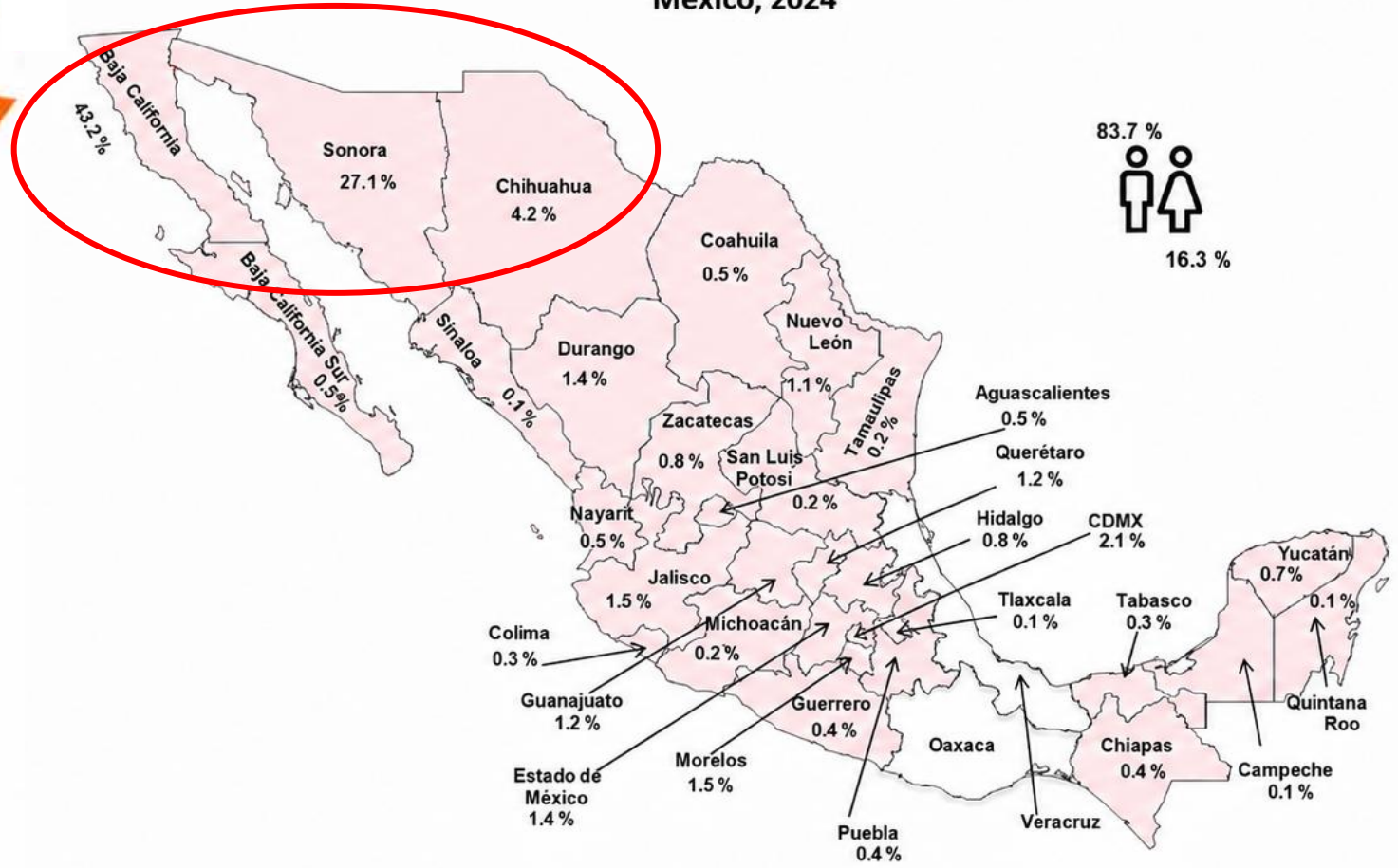
4.2%

Chihuahua



The highest reported prevalence is concentrated along the northern border.

MAP 1. Proportion reporting fentanyl use at least once in life (LTL) by geographic distribution
Non-Governmental Treatment and Rehabilitation Centers
Mexico, 2024



Source: Ministry of Health / DGE / DIE / Epidemiological Surveillance System for Addictions (SISVEA) / Non-Governmental Treatment and Rehabilitation Centers, 2024

3. Complementary levels of substance monitoring



SISVEA

National surveillance system

1 Three levels of validation:



Local



State



Federal



2 Treatment, forensic, and emergency services



3 People in contact with services



4 Broad national surveillance indicators



NORTEST MX

Community-based monitoring system



1 Three northern border cities



2 Direct work with people who use drugs



3 Community-provided samples



4 Local information on substances and adulterants

4. Building NORTEST MX



1

Social capital



Trusted
community access



2

Technology



Strips → FTIR →
confirmation



3

Training & standardization



Common methods
and interpretation



4

Alliances



- Government
- Laboratory
- Binational

4A. Social capital came first

Programa Compañeros

Ciudad Juárez

40 YEARS
OF EXPERIENCE



COMPAÑEROS

PrevenCASA

Tijuana

25 YEARS
OF EXPERIENCE



PrevenCasa A.C.

Verter

Mexicali

13 YEARS
OF EXPERIENCE



verter

4B. From community HIV work to substance analysis



The tools changed; community networks and trust made each new stage possible.

1

Community HIV work

The foundation



Community networks of people who use substances



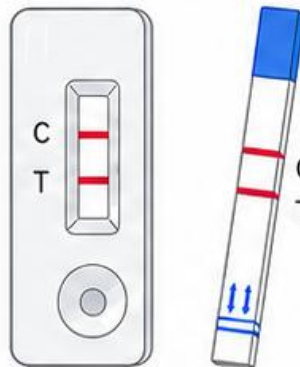
Community trust and access



2

Immunoassay strips

First specialization



Targeted substance analysis



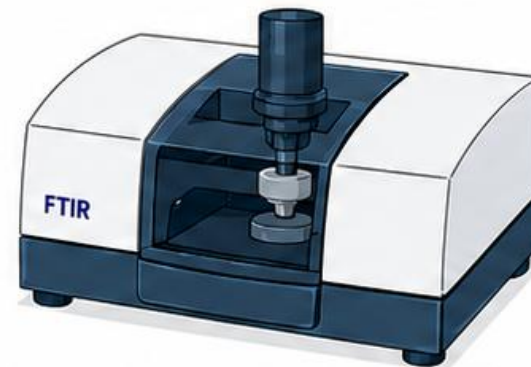
Built on already existing networks and capacities



3

FTIR analysis

Greater analytical capacity



Broader characterization of samples



New technical and interpretive competencies

4C. Building analytical capacity with Remedy Alliance



Step-by-step training included:



1 Analytical foundations

Basic analytical chemistry and principles of FTIR technology



2 FTIR operation

Equipment setup, sample analysis and routine use



3 Spectrum interpretation

Reading spectra, library matching and understanding analytical limitations



Remedy Alliance continues to provide technical follow-up and opportunities for collaboration.



4D. Alliances turn local testing into a network



State partners



CEAADIC Chihuahua



IPEBC Baja California

Connecting community findings with state-level addiction services and local decision-making.

Confirmatory laboratory



Tecnológico de Tijuana

Selected confirmatory testing and analytical validation.

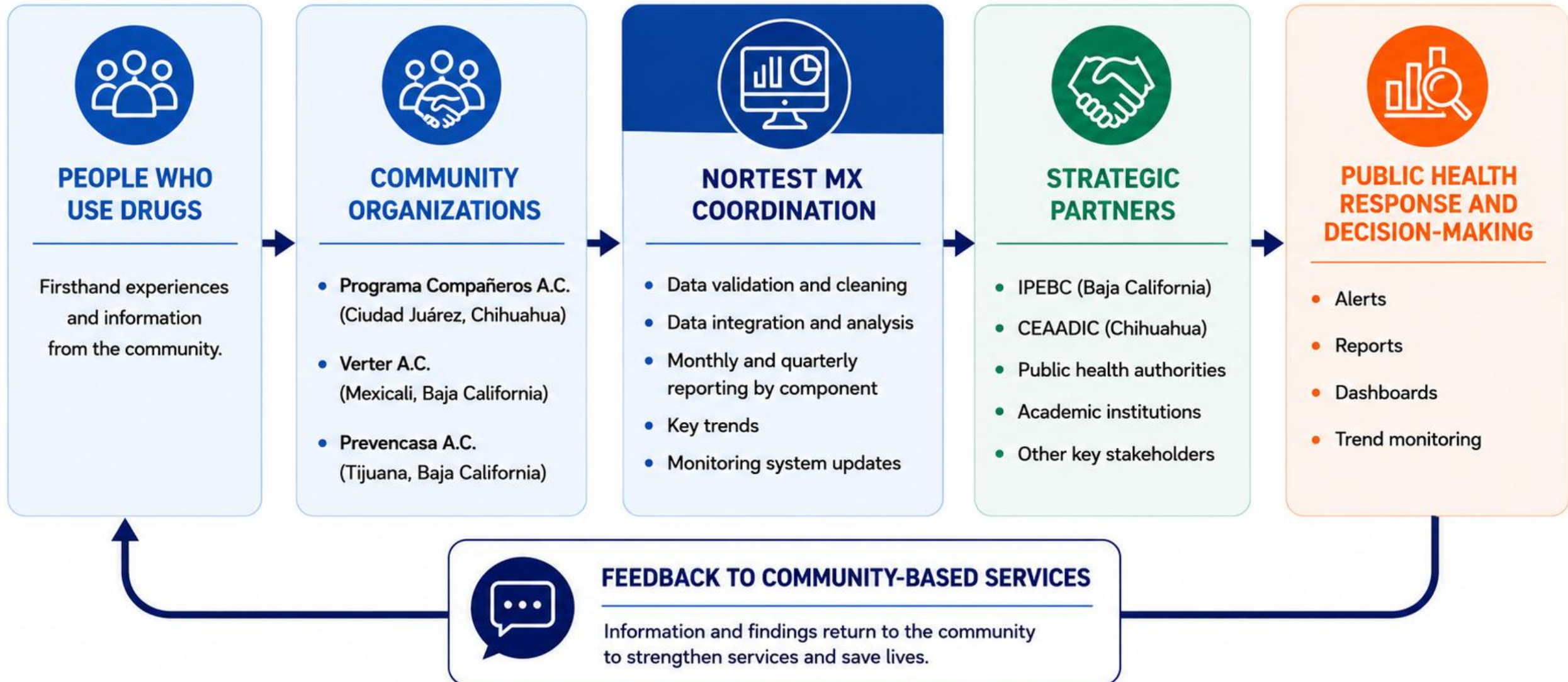
Binational & peer collaboration



U.S. peer organizations

Exchange of community-based practices, emerging trends and local substance information.

5. The challenge between sampling and communication



Turning Data to Information

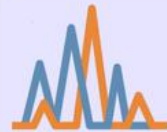


**COMMUNITY WATCH
ADIVSORY**
Issued date: July 8, 2026

April-June 2026
NorTEST
Red Comunitaria de Análisis de Sustancias
en la Frontera Norte MX

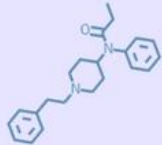
Executive Summary, Drug Checking Program CIUDAD JUÁREZ, CHIHUAHUA

NorTEST MX documents the composition of samples and drug-use residues using FTIR and test strips. The results apply only to the samples collected and do not represent all substances available in the region.



108

Samples
analyzed by
FTIR



Reactive
fentanyl
results

TRENDS OF DETECTION OF FENTANYL IN PARAPHERNALIA IN OPIOIDS BY MEANS OF REACTIVE IMMUNOASSAY STRIPS



OPIOID CHARACTERIZATION USING FTIR

NUMBER OF
SAMPLES



488

488 opioid
samples
analyzed from
paraphernalia

HEROÍNA: 34 MUESTRAS

23.5% Heroin Primary active compound n=8	76.5% 6-MAM 6-monoacetylmorphine Associated with heroin degradation n=26	85.3% Diluents Mannitol (1), Lactose (1), Microcrystalline cellulose (1), Unidentified carbohydrate (26) n=29

COCAÍNA: 35 MUESTRAS

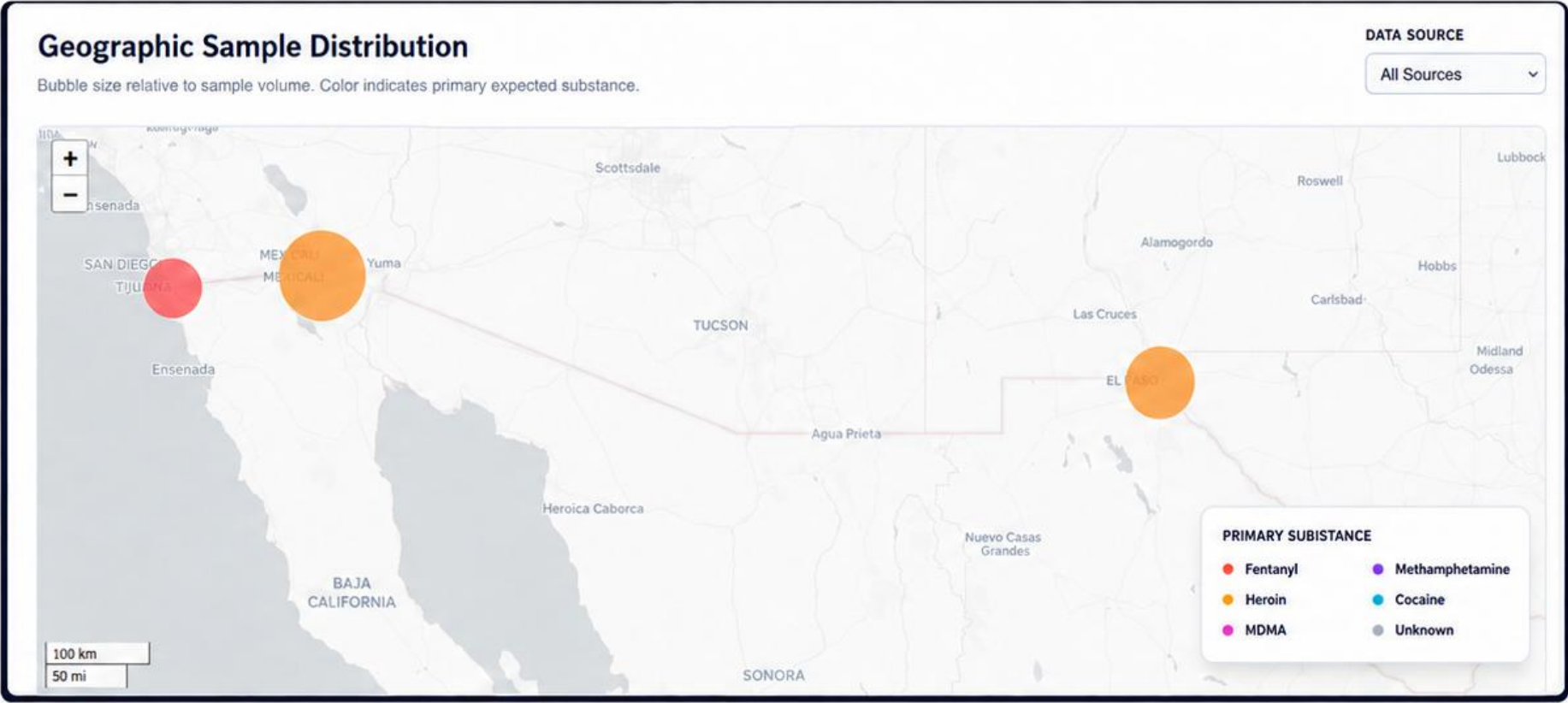
100% Cocaine Primary active compound n=8	14.3% Levamisole Veterinary medication n=5	14.3% Lidocaine Local anesthetic n=5	74.3% Diluents Inositol (14), Mannitol (6), Lactose (4), Creatine (2) n=26

Percentages indicate the frequency of each finding. A single sample may contain more than one finding.

Sharing selected findings beyond the network



The website makes selected findings accessible beyond the three participating organizations.



Website highlights

Dynamic charts

Monitoring fentanyl trends

Diluents and adulterants by substance

Thank you



“One of our main lessons is that NORTEST MX did not begin with a machine. It was born from organizations that had spent years walking alongside people who use drugs, knowing their communities, and building relationships of trust.”