

Report: Sub-standard medicine floods Afghan market

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Half of all medicine available on the Afghan market has either been smuggled into the country or made under sub-standard conditions in neighboring Pakistan, according to a report released on Wednesday.

Up to 300 companies in Pakistan produce [poor](#) quality drugs exclusively for Afghanistan because their products do not meet Pakistani government standards, said the report by the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, a joint body set up by the Afghan government and international community.

Since there is no Afghan government regulation of pharmaceuticals, the medicine can be sold freely in Afghanistan, it said.

"The market for imported pharmaceuticals here is between \$700 million and 800 million, and more than half of it is illicitly imported drugs," said Eva Joly, the head of the committee. Joly called on the Afghan government to begin regulating the pharmaceutical market.

This flood of poor quality drugs causes wider health problems for the Afghan people; in addition to ineffective treatment of illnesses, the substandard drugs often cause dangerous side-effects. The poor standard of local drugs and healthcare forces many Afghans who can afford it to travel abroad for medical treatment.

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