

UNODC helps countries and its people to reduce illegal drugs and crime throughout the world and to address justice and human security. It helps Member States with technical assistance, legal advice and research within the framework of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three Protocols, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the three United Nations Conventions on Drugs.

UNODC South Asia is present in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

UNODC trainings in South Asia

India: A training of trainers workshop on 'Reaching out to Spouses and Female Sex partners of male IDUs' was organised in Mumbai from 2nd to 4th June 2011. The training aimed at providing technical support to government and civil society counterparts to scale up interventions for female partners of drug users. 14 trainees from the State AIDS Control Societies (SACS), State Training and Resource Centres (STRCs), Technical Support Units (TSUs) and NGO networks from the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh participated in the training.



Nepal: A training on 'Positive Living' was held in Kathmandu, Nepal's capital city from 3rd to 5th May 2011. The training focussed on building capacities of service providers to assist drug users, people living with HIV and their families in living quality lives. A training for outreach workers working with drug users was conducted near Kathmandu, from 29th April to 1st May 2011 for NGO participants from different parts of Nepal. The workshop covered the practical aspects of handling outreach work amongst drug users in community settings.

India: As part of a 3 month certificate course on drug de-addiction, counseling and rehabilitation organised by the National Institute of Social Defence, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, UNODC organized an orientation session on drug use related issues for the course participants, who included project directors, senior counsellors and social workers from different parts of the country working in drug treatment and rehabilitation centres funded by the Ministry. The session took place on 5th May 2011 at the UNODC ROSA premises in New Delhi.



Bangladesh: A training on the syndromic management of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) for staff from six UNODC supported prison sites was held on 26th April 2011 in Dhaka. The training was conducted with technical support from Family Health International, an International NGO in collaboration with the Prisons Department and the National AIDS Control Program, Bangladesh. The participants included prison doctors, pharmacists, health nurses and NGO representatives, who learnt about different aspects of STI management through class room sessions, practical demonstrations and a field visit to a STI clinic.

Bhutan: Review of National HIV/AIDS Programme

Recently, UNODC participated in the review of Bhutan's National HIV/AIDS Programme. The review took place between 2nd and 8th May 2011 and was conducted jointly by national and international partners. The review members made field visits to different parts of the country and prepared a report based on the status of the epidemic, behaviours and practices that put the communities at risk, existing policies, interventions and responses for prevention, treatment and care being provided through various institutions/agencies/departments and their effectiveness. The findings from the review will form the basis of drafting the country's next National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS and STIs (2012-16).

Maldives: First ever detoxification camp held for female drug users



A detoxification camp for female drug users was conducted in the Hura Island of the Maldives from 8th to 14th May 2011. The camp was conducted by the Society for Women Against Drugs (SWAD), an NGO and the Department of Drug Prevention and Rehabilitation Services (DDPRS), Government of Maldives, with support from UNODC. Due to the stigma associated with drug use, female drug users usually hesitate to access services from existing treatment settings which are mainly accessed by males, thus becoming a hard to reach and hidden population. The camp was

held to specifically address the needs of the female drug users and to demonstrate alternative models of providing services to drug users in community settings.

Nine female drug users from Male, Maldives' capital city, aged between 20 to 32 years, participated in the camp. The resource persons included two counselors and two volunteers from SWAD, one nurse hired from the local health center and a doctor from the DDPRS. All the medicines required for the camp were provided by DDPRS. Three patients who were not motivated to continue left the camp halfway, while the rest completed the treatment and were brought back to Male. They will now be supported through a three-month long aftercare program, which has been initiated by SWAD.

The activity demonstrated that it is feasible to provide low cost community based care and support to drug users in Maldives. Using available expertise and resources, more camps of similar nature can be held if the right combination of medical and psychosocial treatment is available. The camp also illustrated the benefits of bringing together the expertise of NGOs and Government agencies to address the drug related problems in the country. More importantly, the camp highlighted the need to address the specific issue of drug use among females in Maldives.

UNODC INTERNAL NEWS CORNER

Our Office bids farewell to two of our colleagues, Abhishek Chandra and Lipi Chowdhury.



Abhishek joined UNODC in August 2009 as 'Administration and Finance Assistant' and worked on projects related to HIV prevention in prisons and anti human trafficking. He now joins a firm in New Delhi, India as a financial monitoring coordinator. "UNODC was a very good learning experience for me. It is here that I got hands on experience in financial management," says Abhishek. We will miss Abhishek's helpful, unassuming nature and happy laughter!



Lipi first joined UNODC in 2006 as an intern! She then worked as Project Associate and Project Officer on regional projects related to drug use and HIV prevention. Passionate about working on prison and rule of law related issues, Lipi applied for the post of Correctional Policy Officer at the Office of Rule of Law & Security Institutions, Department of Peacekeeping Operations at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA. She got selected for the post and will soon be moving to New York.

We wish both Abhishek and Lipi all the very best for their new assignments and lives ahead!