



Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to Issue 04 of our Newsletter.

We have had an eventful two months since our last Newsletter Edition, including an awareness- and adrenaline-raising bungee jump for Women's Rights, the launch of the Annual Report of the International Narcotics Control Board, as well as an enlightening study tour of the prison facilities of Mauritius.

I hope you will find this 4th Issue of our Newsletter as insightful as the previous ones. I would like to encourage once again feedback and suggestions from our readers.

On behalf of UNODC Southern Africa, I wish all our readers a successful 2012

Mandiaye Niang
Regional Representative



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CSOs Trained on UN Convention against Corruption in Johannesburg

Johannesburg - From 20-23 March 2012, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) together with the [UNCAC](#) Coalition hosted a training workshop for civil society organisations on the Review Mechanism for the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). The 4-day training workshop took place in Johannesburg and was attended by over 50

participants, representing some 30 countries across Africa and Asia. The [Convention](#) is the only legally binding international anti-corruption instrument. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in October 2003, it is the first global framework to harmonise anti-corruption efforts worldwide. The convention entered into force in 2005 and currently has 159 State Parties.

It is unique not only in its worldwide coverage, but also in the extensiveness and detail of its provisions. It is widely recognised as the most promising initiative to curb the scourge of corruption. In November 2009, the 3rd UNCAC Conference of State Parties adopted a review mechanism for the UN Convention against Corruption. The review of implementation

of the Convention is a crucial process, as it helps State parties to identify challenges and good practices. The resolution adopting the review mechanism encouraged governments to include civil society and private sector inputs to their self-assessments and left it optional for governments to decide whether to allow a country visit and whether to involve civil society and the

private sector to make inputs during the country visits. UNODC Regional Representative, Mandiaye Niang remarked: "Because corruption is a globalised crime, the Convention takes the fight beyond the boundaries of a given country. [...] The UNCAC provides an effective response to make sure that the world becomes too small a place for those criminals to hide".

READ THE FULL STORY ON www.unodc.org/southernafrica

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- <http://www.unodc.org/treatment/index.html>
International Network of drug dependence treatment and rehabilitation resource centres
- www.ahppn.com
The African HIV in Prisons Partnership Network
- www.incb.org
International Narcotics Control Board



Warning, Exception and Example - Lessons to be learned from HIV in Mauritius



During a Study Tour organised by UNODC Southern Africa, prison officials from Mozambique and the Steering Committee of the [African HIV in Prisons Partnership Network \(AHPPN\)](#) gained insight into the policy and programmatic initiatives undertaken by the Mauritian Government to reduce HIV among drug users in the community and in prisons.

In 2005, Mauritius - a small island nation in the Indian Ocean, a prime holiday destination for tourists from all over the world and renowned for its beautiful beaches, was confronted with a dramatic increase in HIV infections. Nearly twice as many infections than in 2004 were reported in 2005 and nearly ten times more than in 2002. However, even more dramatic than the HIV prevalence rate in the general population, was the rate among prison inmates - in 2006 almost 50 times higher.

Worldwide, the HIV prevalence rate is generally higher among prison populations than in the general population, due to several contributing factors, e.g. practices such as sharing of needles and syringes for drug use, tattooing, unsafe sex (consensual and forced), violence, malnutrition, poor sanitation and poor access to health care.

While Mauritius shares many of the challenges and socio-economic issues of its neighbouring countries on the African

continent, the HIV epidemic in the country is to a large extent driven by injecting drug users (IDU) and not by unsafe sex practices, as in most other countries. In 87% of the new HIV cases reported in 2004, the transmission of the virus was due to sharing of needles and syringes amongst IDUs. As in most countries, drug use is a criminal offence in Mauritius, which quickly translated into a high number of prisoners living with HIV.

Even though the sheer existence of HIV infections in the country should have prompted policy and programmatic initiatives to fight the epidemic, these were only implemented when the infection rate reached a dramatic peak in 2005. One Mauritian prison official asked the delegates from Mozambique and the AHPPN to use Mauritius as an example: Firstly, as a bad example of the severe consequences of remaining inactive for too long; and secondly, as a good example of how a comprehensive approach, consisting of prevention, treatment, care and support measures, can help to significantly reduce the number of new infections and improve the quality of life of persons living with the virus.

It was particularly the latter - the good practices and their impact, demonstrated in Mauritius - that motivated UNODC Southern Africa to organise a Study Tour for a high-level delegation

from Mozambique and the Steering Committee of the AHPPN to Mauritius. The tour should enhance awareness, knowledge and understanding of drug-prevention and harm reduction programmes and activities with the principal aim of preventing the transmission of HIV both in prisons and in the community.

Since 2008, UNODC has been implementing a regional programme of support entitled "HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support in Prisons in Sub-Saharan Africa". Through this programme, UNODC aims to support national responses in prisons that are both human rights- and evidence-based, and which are tailored to the epidemiological situation and national priorities. Mozambique is one of several countries in the region to benefit from this programme. During the course of UNODC's work with national partners and other stakeholders in Mozambique, it has been found that Mozambique is in fact experiencing increased drug use, including Injecting Drug Use (IDU).

Prior to the peak in HIV infections in 2005, the government of Mauritius had taken some measures to fight the HIV epidemic: Prophylaxis for Mother-to-Child-Transmission (MTCT) had been offered since 1999, as well as Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT), and free Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART) had been made available from 2002. In spite of these efforts, it was not until 2006 that an HIV/AIDS Act was passed, introducing a number of important measures, such as the decentralisation of VCT services in all Health Centres, including mobile screening and close cooperation with NGOs, especially for psycho-social support and follow-up. Most relevant with regards to the particular nature of the epidemic in Mauritius, however, was the adaptation of several so called harm reduction strategies for IDUs in the general population and in prisons: (1) A Needle-Syringe Exchange Programme (NEP) and (2) an Opioid Substitution Therapy Programme (OSTP).

The NEP was originally introduced by NGOs with support from the Government in 2006. By 2010, the NEP was reaching nearly 6000 clients on 45 sites, including mobile caravans, and by now, almost all regions of the island are being covered. Mauritius was also one of the first countries in Africa and the only one in the region to start an OSTP in 2008. To date, a total of 5153 IDUs have been induced on Methadone, and the programme is recognized as best-practice by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and as a "ray of hope". The OST programme works in three stages: (1) selection and recruitment; (2) induction and (3) follow-up. In addition to tackling the addiction itself it also emphasises the systematic integration of HIV/AIDS responses.

Since OST is also being carried out in Mauritian prisons, the delegation from Mozambique, which included the Commissioner of Prisons, could observe the induction facilities and practices first-hand, as well as the strong focus on VCT for HIV and measures for re-integration of prisoners.

The delegation from Mozambique strongly confirmed that they gained much valuable experience, which would be very helpful in future efforts in their home country, to tackle HIV and substance abuse in prisons and the general population.

The Commissioner of Prisons of Mauritius, Mr. Jean Bruneau, also expressed his gratitude for the support of UNODC with introducing harm reduction strategies, and emphasised the value and need for sharing experiences and information, when he stated:

"In order to develop an effective and Human Rights- based approach to address the abovementioned threats, it is imperative that we develop and implement coordinated international, national and multi - sectoral action."

Harm Reduction

One of the aims of the Harm Reduction interventions is to reduce the risk of contracting or transmitting HIV and other infectious diseases by substituting non-injecting drugs for the injected substance. Drug substitution also switches users from "black market" drugs to legal drugs dispensed under the care of a health professional, so the risk

of overdose and other medical complications is minimised. Drug substitution helps to reduce crime and high risk behaviours among drug users since it reduces the urgency of acquiring the drug. Drug substitution also allows health professionals to keep in contact with drug users, which aids in keeping them in treatment and thereby reduces relapse.



Motah Sagar, Chief Hospital Officer of the Mauritian Prison Service, shows delegates the methadone induction unit

For more information click here:

[AHPPN](#) | [UNODC and HIV and AIDS](#) | [HIV/AIDS in Prison Settings](#) | [Publications](#)



Taking a Leap for Women's Rights on International Women's Day 2012



Back row, from left: Gilles Virgili (UNICEF), Patrik Engström (UNODC), Henna Mustonen (UNODC), Mawande Mazibuko (UNICEF), Thabang Lediga (UNODC), Boshigo Matlou (ILO). Front row, from left: Melissa Cawthra (UNODC), Tumi Moche (UNODC), Neesha Fakir (UN Women).

UNODC participated in several initiatives to mark International Women's Day on 8 March this year. On the morning of International Women's Day, UNODC Regional Representative for Southern Africa, Mandiaye Niang, gave an address to ROSAF staff to commemorate this event, in which he passed on the message of the UN Secretary General, devoting this year to rural women and girls. Addressing the female staff of the Regional Office, Mr. Niang congratulated them for their unique role in maintaining the high spirits in the office, in addition to their regular tasks. He noted that every day should be women's day, as women fulfil numerous tasks that are so necessary for

our well-being. Unfortunately, men often take them for granted and, as a result, may not necessarily value those tasks their contribution enough. Later in the day, UNODC staff members were invited to participate in a bungee jump at Orlando Towers in Soweto, along with others UN agencies in South Africa. The jump was organised by the UN Gender Theme Group, under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General's UNiTE Campaign, which aims to raise global awareness about Violence against Women and Girls in Africa and seeks concrete national commitments. The Orlando Towers are the remains of an old

power station. They offer the world's first bungee jump between two cooling towers. Established in 2007, the bungee supports the booming tourism industry in Soweto. Jumpers and viewers (who accompanied the jumpers for encouragement and moral support) took the lift to the top of the viewing platform. Jumpers then individually crossed the suspension bridge to the jumping platform in the centre of the two cooling towers, before taking the plunge from a height of 100m! Of the six staff members from UN agencies in South Africa who took part in the bungee jump, four were from UNODC and two from UNICEF.

MoRaba – Learning about Violence against Women on your mobile



Johannesburg - The official launch for a new cell phone game on gender-based violence (GBV) was held in Johannesburg on 1 February 2012. MoRaba is an educational digital game designed to inform, change mindsets and empower users to take action around issues of GBV. The game was developed by AFROES, an organisation that creates mobile applications and transformational games with a uniquely African feel for social development agencies and companies. [It is free to download](#) and targets South African youth. The event was hosted by the Southern African Regional Office of UN Women.

The initiative is part of the United Nations Secretary General's UNiTE Campaign to End Violence against Women. This is a broad-based campaign, bringing together a range of UN agencies and offices to galvanise action throughout the UN system to prevent and punish violence against women. UNiTE also provides a platform for UN agencies to collaborate with individuals, civil society and governments to end violence against women. UNODC Southern Africa is a partner organisation within the Africa UNiTE campaign. A message of support by Mr. Mandiaye Niang, UNODC Regional Representative for Southern African, was read out during the course of the event. In his message, Mr. Niang reiterated UNODC Southern Africa's commitment to combating violence against women in the region, by identifying it as a priority crime.

He wrote: *"Violence against women represents a violation of dignity, safety, and human rights. Eliminating violence against women is one of the priorities of the crime prevention and criminal justice strategy of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime – globally and within this region."* According to Ms. Shongwe, AFROES' goal was to find a way to change the conversation about GBV from despondency to one of hope, especially amongst youth. Market research showed that a cell phone game would be an effective platform for reaching a large number of youth, as there are 28 million young mobile users in South Africa, who spend an average of 2 to 8 hours a day on their phones. 43% of all young mobile users play cell phone games. Following the demonstration, feedback on the game's success was provided by a motivational

speaker who visits schools to talk about GBV and had tested MoRaba with learners. He reported that the game had been well received, as, for the first time in this position; he had received requests from learners to visit the schools a second time for further discussion on the topic. The keynote speech was delivered by the Chief Director for Institutional Support and Capacity Development at the Department of Women, Children and Disabilities, Ms. Ntsiki Sisulu-Singapi, who highlighted the need to change mindsets and perceptions surrounding GBV from an early age. Her speech preceded the closing remarks by Dr. Agostinho Zacarias, United Nations Resident Coordinator for South Africa, who emphasised the importance of non-violence, on the occasion of the 64th anniversary of Gandhi's assassination on the 30th of January. [Playunite.org](#) [www.africaunitecampaign.org](#)

INCB calls for more efforts to break the vicious cycle of social exclusion and substance abuse

Cape Town - On 29 February, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) together with UNODC Southern Africa launched the Annual Report of the INCB in the Auditorium of the Provincial Legislature of the Western Cape, in Cape Town, South Africa.

The INCB is an independent, quasi-judicial expert body, established to monitor the implementation of the International Drug Control Conventions. Its Annual Report reflects on the previous successes, identifies existing challenges and discusses

recent developments affecting global production of and demand for licit and illicit drugs. The year 2012 marks the centenary of the first international drug convention, the **International Opium Convention of The Hague**.

UNODC Regional Representative for Southern Africa, Mandiaye Niang, remarked in his address: *"Today, one hundred years later, we are still trying to control the scourge of drug abuse in our communities, trying to prevent that our*

children become addicted, treating those that were and are addicted and dealing with the effects of drug abuse in our communities: crime, death, families torn apart..." **Read the Full Story on** [www.unodc.org/southernafrica](#)

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For comments, suggestions, questions or to unsubscribe please contact the Newsletter Team at fo.southafrica@unodc.org | unodc.org/southernafrica