

Sub-regional

Name of Project: Prevention of drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS

Duration of Project: January 2004-July 2006

The sub-region addressed (Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan, the Palestinian Autonomous Areas (Gaza and the West Bank) and Syria) is facing tremendous challenges relating to the increase in drug abuse, especially among young people. To face these challenges UNODC in close cooperation with the local governments, undertook to develop a sub- regional drug demand reduction programme (AD/RER/03/G33) within the wider context of regional activities. The programme aims to improve the capacities of demand reduction services with a special focus on the prevention of drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS. It also adopts a comprehensive approach to the drug abuse problem by coordinating prevention measures, addressing varied topics including drug related HIV/AIDS, and covering several countries in the sub-region. (The five G33 countries are arbitrarily selected and do not represent any distinct sub-region)



The programme aims at developing the following outputs:

Output 1: National Action Plans on drug abuse prevention.

Output 2: School based drug abuse prevention programmes.

Output 3: Drug abuse prevention programme among NGOs and the Arab Scout Movement.

Output 4: The provision of training to staff from governmental institutions on the prevention of drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS.

Output 5: The development of sub-regional and national awareness campaigns on drug abuse prevention.

Targeted Areas:

The programme provides for a sub-regional drug abuse prevention programme in Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan. In addition, the Palestinian Autonomous Areas (Gaza and the West Bank) and Syria will also participate in some of the activities.

Partners in Development:

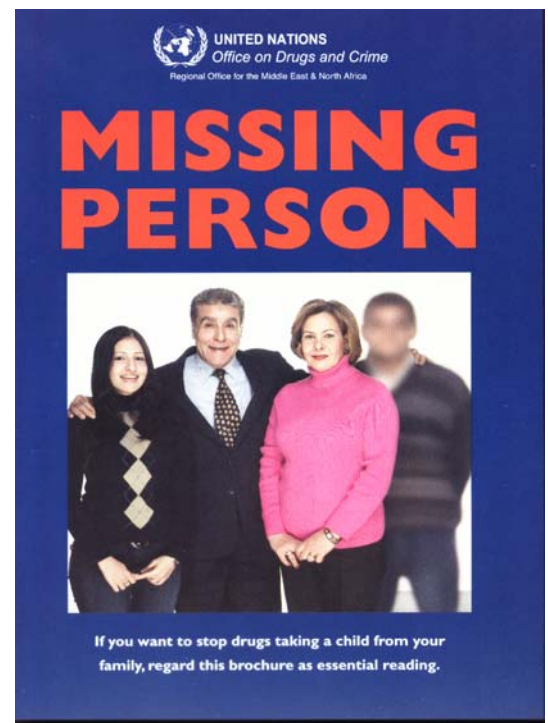
Government (Ministries of Health and Population, and Education), NGOs, the Arab Scout Movement in the participating countries.

Achievements and Impact:

- The Regional Epidemiology Advisor participated in a UNAIDS facilitated Regional Workshop on National Strategic Planning for HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa, held in Beirut, Lebanon. After these consultations it was agreed that drug use will be specifically addressed in the National Strategic Plans on HIV/AIDS that are currently under revision or being developed in the sub-region.



- To assist in developing national action plans on the prevention of drug abuse, a workshop was held in Jordan from 26-28 June 2004 and its recommendations contributed to the development of proposals for the updated action plans.
- The Ministry of Health and Population in Egypt is preparing a National Addiction Strategy. Counterparts have held consultation meetings with the Office on this topic. The report of a recently completed UNODC study on HIV risk behaviors among problem drug users in Cairo is being used as a supporting document for this strategy.
- Under the school based drug abuse prevention programme, an expert consultant has prepared additional chapters on drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS which will be incorporated into the teacher's manual to be used in the school programmes planned in the participating countries.
- As a result of the sub-regional meeting held from 21-22 September 2004 under the school based drug abuse prevention programme, representatives from the Ministries of Health and Education from Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon worked with the consultant to prepare draft action plans for extra-curricular activities. Planned activities include the training of student leaders to act as peer educators within their schools.
- Following the NGO training workshop held from 5-7 July 2004, the NGOs and government counterparts from the participating countries completed project proposals with the assistance of a UNODC consultant. The proposals include a solid basis of outreach activities aimed at preventing HIV/AIDS among injecting drug users, and place an emphasis on documenting challenges faced by outreach workers and project planners. A conference scheduled for July of 2005 will use these documents to review project achievements and lessons learned.
- The first Scout peer education regional training workshop was held from 11-16 December 2004. A total of 21 scout leaders were trained from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank. The workshop provided training to young scout leaders on preventing drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS, and on organizing and planning national peer education campaigns. The regional workshop will be followed by a number of national workshops and awareness campaigns where the trained peer educators will be expected to transfer their knowledge on drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS to young people in their countries.
- Public information materials on drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS were produced to provide information to different sectors of society. A first brochure was produced offering guidance to parents on the key issues of early drug abuse recognition and the prevention of drug abuse among youth. A second brochure addressing the prevention of HIV/AIDS among injecting drug users was produced in collaboration with CARE International. A third brochure aimed at providing young people with information on the prevention of drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS is also being prepared; and an Arabic film providing families with information on the same topic is also in production
- In preparation for World AIDS Day on December 1, 2004, UNODC took part in the task force of the Expanded Theme Group on HIV/AIDS to plan for campaigning activities. UNODC ensured that World AIDS Day messages highlighted the risk of HIV/AIDS transmission through injecting drug use. A series of awareness events were jointly organized and implemented by the task force on and around World AIDS Day with great success. The main event was a music concert held on December 10, 2004 aimed at raising HIV/AIDS awareness among Egyptian youth.





Future Prospects:

During 2005-2006, work will begin on the implementation of outputs 4 and 5 of the project. Specifically, under output 4, a regional consultant has been recruited to design and produce training materials and conduct training workshops for staff from governmental institutions on the prevention of drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS. For the same period Output 5 activities include the development of regional and national awareness campaigns on the prevention of drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS. This will include television and radio broadcasting of national programmes on drug abuse prevention and the production of public information materials on prevention of drug abuse and related HIV/AIDS.

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