



Regional Office for South Asia

Funded by:



Sweden

SRL/C71- Strengthening selected demand reduction programmes in Sri Lanka

Duration: 1999-2002

Budget: US\$287,000

The immediate objective of the project was to strengthen selected programmes through demand reduction data collection, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation in Sri Lanka. The project was executed by WHO and implemented by the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) of Sri Lanka. WHO provided the necessary technical and administrative support, and closely monitored the implementation of the project. Both the UNODC Regional Office for South Asia and UNODC Headquarters monitored project progress on the basis of reporting from WHO.

NDDCB's ACTIVITIES

Demand reduction carried out with the support of UNODC:

- **Institution-building** within NDDCB itself, to support its capacity to implement demand reduction activities including a drug abuse monitoring system.
- **Prevention activities:** the establishment of an outreach team; inpatient treatment centres; a pilot prison quality assurance scheme for treatment activities; and a pilot prison diversion scheme. However, there was no provision of prevention activities specifically targeted at the high-risk groups.

- **A pilot quality assurance programme** in the four NDDCB-managed treatment centres. This programme was monitored, enhanced and expanded across governmental and non-governmental inpatient treatment centres to allow the comparison of different treatment methodologies.
- **Diversion schemes:** NDDCB had previously developed pilot prison diversion schemes in three prisons in the country under which participating drug abusers had been separated from other types of inmates. The pilot prison diversion schemes involved 300-400 prisoners. Under C71, the schemes were expanded and institutionalized to benefit an increased number of prisoners.



Sri Lanka

The estimated number of heroin users in Sri Lanka is 20,000. These are in the age group of 20 to 35 years, males, and from urban areas. High-risk groups in the country include manual labourers, street vendors, taxi drivers, commercial

sex workers and tourist industry workers in Colombo. Approximately half of the total number of prison inmates are drug abusers. Treatment activities are carried out by the National Dangerous Drug Control Board (NDDCB), NGOs, and, to some extent, by the health sector.

ACTIVITIES

Strengthening the Drug Abuse Monitoring System (DAMS)

- Both quantity and quality of data have improved by adding additional data sources and inclusion of qualitative data from 26 general hospitals at the district level, prison system, out-reach and drop-in centres.
- Data were now available on a quarterly basis and were being utilized by NDDCB in monitoring trends and advising the Government.

Improvement of outreach prevention for high-risk groups

- Five Drop-In Centres were opened in Colombo, Kandy, Anuradhapura, Galle and Kurunegala.
 - About 3,000 clients used these centres.
 - A pilot quality assurance programme was developed to cover government and non-governmental inpatient treatment centres.
- The programme contained many unique features: low cost, short duration, uses the existing health care delivery system, includes preventive programmes, links with local businesses, and has programmes for police, administrators, teachers etc.

The Prison Diversion Scheme

- The Prison Diversion Scheme (PDS) was particularly successful, with all other 13 prisons requesting NDDCB to establish similar services.