



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

Regional Office for South Asia

Funded by:



Sweden



Norway



DRUG ABUSE AND HIV/AIDS

RAS/G23: Networking to reduce HIV risk among young drug users using Peer-Led interventions

The objective of the interventions was to reduce risk taking behaviour and break the chain of HIV transmission among young drug users. The interventions were divided into three phases. They dealt with (1) the service provision in the community, (2) incorporating research findings (analysis of knowledge, attitude, practice of drug users) which are used as intensive training based risk reduction intervention among current users to break the chain of transmission of HIV among young people, and, (3) the project formed support groups of current users to sustain risk reduction practices and facilitated access to treatment services. The project has employed over 70 peer-outreach workers and trainers who observed, interacted with and trained about 4,800 young drug users on the streets. Selected drug users (approximately 50 per site) were then trained in the risk reduction methodology and functioned as peer volunteers to spread the risk reduction messages among their drug using peers. The project had in-built components for monitoring and evaluation which helped in generating evidence for the efficacy of this innovative approach.

KEY FINDINGS FROM INTERVENTION

Drug use:

- 1) Reduced, but not significantly
- 2) Effect more pronounced for illicit drugs (i.e., not alcohol)
- 3) Significant reduction in sharing of needles/syringes

Sexual behaviour:

- 1) Number of partners reduced
- 2) Condom use increased

HIV awareness and attitude:

- 1) Awareness increased
- 2) Increased tendency to get self tested

