

Much of the information on drug abuse in India is anecdotal, and the few reports available are from small-scale surveys carried out in isolated parts of the country. Rational responses and national programme planning require accurate data accumulated through painstaking research covering many parts of the nation. In 1999, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Regional Office for South Asia, decided to undertake a large-scale national survey to obtain information on Extent, Pattern and Trends of Drug Abuse in the country. For this purpose, multiple indicators and several methods to assess the situation were chosen.

The major components of the National Survey were National Household Survey (NHS), Drug Abuse Monitoring System (DAMS) and Rapid Assessment Survey (RAS). Additionally, focused thematic studies on specific populations like women, rural populations, people living in border towns and prison populations have also been carried out. Allocation of resources is dependent upon accurate data on the magnitude of the problem. Treatment seekers provide ample opportunity to study the demand on establishment of delivery of service facilities.

Systematic information on injecting drug use and related HIV/AIDS issues in India is scanty. The current monograph extracts information from three components – the NHS, the DAMS and the RAS – of the National Survey as listed above and describes various facets of injecting drug use and related HIV/AIDS issues in the country. The RAS component in particular describes various qualitative aspects. Some additional information is also available from three focused thematic studies, namely drug abuse among women, prison population and among those living in border areas. Thus, the monograph documents the profile of drug injectors and the dynamics of injecting drug use in India in a methodical way. The information described in this monograph enriches and expands upon the National Survey.

This monograph is primarily based on information available from the RAS and cannot be generalised on the extent of injecting drug use in the country.

The monograph is a collective effort of several persons who designed, executed, participated and analysed the data obtained by a multitude of field research staff of the various components of the National Survey. It is hoped that the monograph would provide sufficient impetus to carry out more detailed study on injecting drug use and HIV/AIDS in India.

It is expected that the detailed information in this monograph will enable policy makers to frame responses and strategies for interventions to address injecting drug use and HIV/AIDS in the country.



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