

PREFACE

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

The major components of this study are National Household Survey of Drug and Alcohol Abuse (NHS), Drug Abuse Monitoring System(DAMS) and Rapid Assessment Survey (RAS). Additionally, special studies on populations like women, rural subjects, people living in border towns and prison population have also been carried out.

The data on drug abuse among women in India is scanty, though it is widely believed that this phenomenon is not non-existent. The current monograph extracts information from the special focussed thematic study titled 'Drug Abuse among Women in India' and the data pertaining to women drug abusers from the component RAS to provide a glimpse of pattern and dynamics of drug abuse by women. Women, even if they are non-users themselves, perceive the adverse impact of drug abuse in the family. The second focussed thematic study titled 'Burden on Women due to Drug Abuse by Family Members' examines just this and describes the various 'burdens' of having a drug user in the family. Thus, the monograph presents a composite picture of drug abuse as it affects women. However, a degree of caution is required in interpreting the data. As the sample interviewed in all the three studies is non-random and small, the information should not be generalised for women and drug abuse in India. Despite these shortcomings, the information in the monograph enriches the National Survey.

The report is the collective effort of several persons who designed, executed and analysed the data obtained by a multitude of field research staff. The effort has been enormous and it is no mean achievement. It is hoped that the monograph would provide sufficient scientific leads to plan a larger study on Drug Abuse among Indian Women.

It is expected that the detailed information in this monograph will aid policy makers frame responses and strategies for interventions.

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