



## IRN/Z78 - “Drug Use Prevention, Treatment, Rehabilitation, and HIV Care”

**“Assess needs and develop a model for integrated treatment of substance use and mental health disorders among women”**

### **Call for Consultancy Organization**

#### **Background and Context**

The problem of drug use has been linked with mental illness. Many individuals who develop substance use disorders (SUD) are also diagnosed with mental disorders, and vice versa. Multiple national population surveys have found that about half of those who experience a mental illness during their lives will also experience a substance use disorder and vice versa. Data show high rates of comorbid substance use disorders and anxiety disorders—which include generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Substance use disorders also co-occur at high prevalence with mental disorders, such as depression and bipolar disorder, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), psychotic illness, borderline personality disorder, and antisocial personality disorder. Patients with schizophrenia have higher rates of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use disorders than the general population. It is often difficult to disentangle overlapping symptoms. Comprehensive assessment tools should be used to reduce the chance of a missed diagnosis. Patients who have both a drug use disorder and another mental illness often exhibit symptoms that are more persistent, severe, and resistant to treatment compared with patients who have either disorder alone.

The high prevalence of comorbidity between substance use disorders and other mental illnesses does not necessarily mean that one caused the other, even if one appeared first. Establishing causality or directionality is difficult for several reasons. For example, behavioral or emotional problems may not be severe enough for a diagnosis (called subclinical symptoms), but subclinical mental health issues may prompt drug use. Also, people’s recollections of when drug use or addiction started may be imperfect, making it difficult to determine whether the substance use or mental health issues came first. Factors contributing to the comorbidity include common risk factors, which contribute to both illnesses as well as each of the mental health and substance use disorder contributing to the other. The high rate of comorbidity between drug use disorders and other mental illnesses highlights the need for an integrated approach to intervention that identifies and evaluates each disorder concurrently and provides treatment as appropriate for each patient’s particular constellation of disorders.

Integrated Treatment programmes offering mental health and substance abuse treatment are integrated to meet the needs of people with these co-occurring disorders, so that people with concomitant drug use and mental disorders do not drop-out, are not excluded, or are not confused going back and forth between different mental health and substance abuse programmes.

#### **Iran Context**

With estimated 2.8 million people with drug use problems, Iran has one of the highest opiate use prevalence’s worldwide. Over a million people in different stages of recovery and about 100,000 people are receiving harm reduction services. A recent household epidemiological survey in the country estimates the life-time prevalence of drug use among the women aged 15-64 years at

about 1.5%. Some studies suggest that 9.6% of Iranian addicts are women. Also, according to the Iranian Ministry of Health and Medical Education, the male/female ratio of substance use disorder is 8:1. Studies have revealed that the percentage of women who use drugs in addiction treatment is very low. Women often encounter various personal, social, cultural, and structural barriers to entering treatment, such as a lack of treatment for pregnant women, low level of education, psychiatric disorders, history of trauma, stigma, discrimination, shame, poverty, child care duties, low social support, lack of services in accordance with women's needs, high treatment cost, and rigid treatment schedules. Treatment of concomitant substance use and mental disorders lack integrated character and are provided only sporadically and not in a programmatic manner. This shortcoming hampers treatment of drug use disorders especially among women, who are exposed additionally, to gender-specific risk factors, including having experienced interpersonal trauma and violence emphasising the need for tailored interventions for women in addiction treatment programmes even more.

The activity designed to conduct a qualitative assessment and develop a model for integrated treatment of comorbidity of substance use disorders and mental illness among women. It is expected that it would provide comprehensive support to the efforts of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in strengthening of drug demand reduction programmes among women, expand and enhance the initiatives and programmes required by the IRI and UNODC to tackle the problem of women drug users, and contribute to closing the gap in the responses to women with drug use disorders.

### **Duration of work**

The work will be accomplished between 19<sup>th</sup> July to 31 December 2021.

### **Location:**

The work will be conducted in Tehran, Iran.

### **Tasks**

It is expected that the contracted institution develops concrete model as a holistic approach to the treatment interventions required for integrated treatment of drug use and mental health disorders among women following a need assessment for piloting in next stages.

### **Activities/Responsibilities**

It is expected that the contracted institution puts together the following:

- I. Conducts a literature review and need assessment among women with substance use and mental disorders which,***
  1. Commences with a comprehensive review of literature and good practices in treatment of concomitant drug use and mental health especially for women drug users.
  2. Contains a section depicting the methodology:
    - a. Defines the goals and purpose of the assessment
    - b. Determines how data will be collected and used
    - c. Determines the timeline for the process
    - d. Determines the approach of strategic use of the findings



3. Covers existing responses and gaps (considering staffing, training and capacity development) in following areas using both information collected from the target populations as well as from providers:
    - a. Common risk factors that contribute to both mental illness and substance use and addiction.
    - b. Mental illness that may contribute to substance use and addiction.
    - c. Substance use and addiction that contribute to the development of mental illness
    - d. Existing public, governmental or civil-society run services providing treatment services to women with substance use and mental disorders in the city of Tehran.
- II. A model for the integrated treatment of concomitant substance use and mental health disorders among women is designed, comprising of following components:**
1. Treatment standards (for the various stages of: engagement and persuasion (MI); active treatment; relapse prevention; progressing towards and sustaining full recovery)
    - a. Intake procedures including screening and diagnosis;
    - b. Referrals
    - c. Patients progress records' requirements;
    - d. Programme organization and communication;
    - e. Core service components;
    - f. Assessment and treatment planning;
    - g. Monitoring treatment progress of all clients on a periodical basis
    - h. Identifying and helping non-responders to treatment
    - i. Supervision and audit of the programme.
  2. Minimum requirements for participating treatment centres and recommendations for suitable service types for participating the programme.
  3. Staffing (minimum team members template for job description of each team member; training materials for staff)
  4. Financial perspectives, viability and sustainability of the programme for at least in one centre in Tehran
  5. Monitoring of fidelity and treatment outcomes

### **Outputs/Deliverables**

<b><u>No</u></b>	<b><u>Output/deliverable</u></b>	<b><u>Due Date</u></b>	<b><u>Fraction of work</u></b>
1	Literature review and needs assessment as stipulated above in English	30 August 2021	25%
2	Designed model for integrated treatment of substance use and mental disorders among women as stipulated above in English	31 December 2021	75%
Total			100%

### **Verification**

The final report should be verified/ endorsed by UNODC based on the final terms of reference.

## **Organisation/Institution Eligibility Criteria**

Applying institutions should fulfil following criteria:

1. Have at least 5 years of experience of work in the field of drug dependence and treatment
2. Have proven experience of research and/or implementation of pilot activities
3. Have outpatient treatment programme(s) for women with drug use disorders at least for 2 years
4. Have psychiatrist(s) and psychologist(s) as member of the team of treatment of women with drug use disorders; preferably women
5. Can introduce a head consultant, who is willing and available for the duration of the contract to lead accomplishing the tasks and commitments and is eligible as stipulated in the following section (Please see under: Head Consultant Required Skills and Experience).
6. Have a functional financial system in place with a bank account under the name of the institution
7. Have sufficient fluid financial resources available

## **Head Consultant Required Skills and Experience**

### **Education**

- Holds relevant higher university degree like in medicine, psychology or social work, sociology or public health or other similar fields

### **Experience**

- Has proven expertise and experience in the treatment of women with drug use disorders
- Has proven expertise and experience in treatment of mental health disorders among women
- Has experience in working with families from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Has knowledge on working with women who have experience(s) of trauma
- Has thorough knowledge on social and psychological issues of women affected by drugs
- Had thorough knowledge on case management
- Has thorough knowledge on motivational enhancing interventions
- Has thorough knowledge on psychosocial interventions among women
- Has through knowledge of gender-sensitive programme design
- Has proven experience in carrying out needs and situation assessments
- Has proven experience in conducting scientific and operational research
- Has proven experience in drafting reports/studies in English

### **Languages**

- Is in full command of spoken and written Farsi.
- Displays full command in English scientific/academic reading and writing.



## **Submission**

Interested institutions/organisations are encouraged to submit their proposals in **two separate documents for technical and financial**, to the email address: [unode-iran.procurement@un.org](mailto:unode-iran.procurement@un.org)  
State the title of the call as the subject of your email.

**Subject Email: Technical and Financial proposal for “Assess needs and develop a model for integrated treatment of substance use and mental health disorders among women” – IRN/Z78-1**

Containing a cover email and four attachments:

1. Brief Proposal
2. CV of the Institution/organisation
3. CV of the Head Consultant
4. Budget table in IRR

### **Application deadline**

10 July 2021

