This new programme places Tunisia as the first country in the region to develop and implement CBT programs in prison as a strategy to facilitate rehabilitation and behaviour change among vulnerable detainees, and so contribute to reducing recidivism. This innovative project pulls together national institutions, UN agencies, civil society organizations and academic institutes, if it will be further supported, other prisons in Tunisia and beyond could benefit from it.

WHAT IS CBT

• CBT is a short therapy, suitable for hard-to-mobilize inmates and timely for the follow-up and reintegration of released prisoners.

• CBT works on the “here and now” and has proven its effectiveness with prisoners during detention and after their release.

• It is based on a therapy plan, session agendas, and exercises focusing on modifying behaviors, cognitions and emotions at the source of problems.

• It raises the inmate’s awareness and helps structure his or her thinking and personality.

CBT IN TUNISIA

• The project, developed by Tunisia with the support of UNODC’s technical expertise, is the first of its kind.

• Following request of the General Committee of Prisons and Rehabilitation (GCPR), an innovative project that introduces CBT into mental health services in prisons was launched in 3 pilot sites in 2020 with a focus on prisoners with substance-use disorders and issues of anger and violence.

• The project implements activities tailored to the specificities, needs and gender of Tunisian prisoners and prison staff to better prevent violent behaviour both in prison and after prisoners’ release, as well as aims to support the improvement of prison facilities and the working environment of prison staff.

WHERE

3 Pilot Prisons for CBT in Tunisia

"This new programme places Tunisia as the first country in the region to develop and implement CBT programs in prison as a strategy to facilitate rehabilitation and behaviour change among vulnerable detainees, and so contribute to reducing recidivism. This innovative project pulls together national institutions, UN agencies, civil society organizations and academic institutes, if it will be further supported, other prisons in Tunisia and beyond could benefit from it."
CBT Project in Tunisia

PROJECT DURATION (PHASE I): OCTOBER 2020 - JUNE 2024

3 PILOT PRISONS: FEMALE PRISON OF MANOUBA, MALE PRISONS OF BORJ EL AMRI, AND BORJERROUMI

TUNISIAN PARTNERS:
- MINISTRY OF JUSTICE
- GENERAL COMMITTEE OF PRISONS AND REHABILITATION (GCPR)
- FACULTY OF MEDICINE OF TUNIS
- CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN TUNISIA

DONOR AND PARTNER:
BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRES (INL) – UNITED STATES

IMPLEMENTATION:
THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME (UNODC)

TOTAL BUDGET: 1,992,022.00 USD

DESIRED IMPACT: PROMOTE THE CAPACITY OF THE TUNISIAN AUTHORITIES TO IMPLEMENT CBT PROGRAMMES IN PRISONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

GENERAL OBJECTIVE: DEVELOP AND INTRODUCE COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT) PROGRAMMES FOR INMATES WITH AGGRESSIVE/CHOLERIC BEHAVIOUR, SEXUAL DEVIANCY AND DRUG USE DISORDERS, TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO REDUCE RECIDIVISM AND IMPROVING REHABILITATION EFFORTS

IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY WITH STAKEHOLDERS:
- Support to General Committee of Prisons and Rehabilitation (GCPR) in the development of CBT programmes adapted to the Tunisian prison context and specific needs of prisoners in partnership with CSOs;
- Roundtables with implementing partners to discuss possibilities for promoting continuity of care and establishing systematic orientation mechanisms upon release;

PROVISION OF BASIC, ADVANCED AND TRAIN-THE-TRAINER COURSES:
- Awareness-raising workshops at pilot sites for prison staff on the benefits of comprehensive CBT programmes and how to maximize their effectiveness, in collaboration with Psychologues du Monde Tunisie (PDMT);
- Basic trainings for prison health care staff on quality mental health services, rehabilitation, drug-use disorders and the impact of infectious diseases on mental health;
- Tailored in-depth training on mother and child health;
- Training of Trainers programmes for prison health staff on psychological support, drugs use, reproductive health issues and sexually transmitted diseases;
- Sessions of basic training for prison agents on the implementation of CBT programmes for violent offenders and persons with substance use disorders;
- Creation of the first Master Class on CBT tailored for close setting within the partnership with the Faculty of Medicine of Tunis;

SUPPORT TO PRISON FACILITIES AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT:
- Improvement of the working environment of prison staff involved in the implementation of CBT programmes.
PLANNED CBT ACTIVITIES

DISCUSS OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE CONTINUITY OF CARE:

- Organize a round table and meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Justice, the prison administration, Ministry of Social Affairs, rehabilitation services and mental health experts to review the results of the impact study and develop actionable recommendations;
- Develop a follow-up system for beneficiaries of the CBT programme with care procedures for released detainees;
- Conduct an impact survey of the CBT project.

AWARENESS RAISING EFFORTS:

- Two video spots by UNODC and the audiovisual team of the Mahdia Prison;
- Procedure manuals in Arabic and French;
- A study on the cost of implementing and maintaining CBT in prisons in Tunisia;

PROVIDE FURTHER PRACTICAL GUIDANCE AND TRAININGS:

- Organize training sessions for psychologists and doctors on the implementation of CBT programmes for violent offenders and persons with substance use disorders;
- Provide mentorship in the application of CBT in the field and practical trainings for GCPR staff by UNODC consultants and experts;
- Organize a study tour for psychologists from the pilot sites to deepen their knowledge of implementing CBT programmes in prisons, in line with international standards;
- Organize training for judges in charge of enforcing sentences, as well as juvenile court judges, to highlight the contribution of CBT programmes in prisons and the importance of including them in alternative sentences.

OTHER UNODC PROJECTS IN TUNISIAN PRISONS

- The TAWASSOL Programme, which is managed in partnership with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Tunis and the GCPR, contributes to the family, social and economic reintegration of prisoners involved in terrorism cases from the communication, de-radicalization and prevention of violent extremism.

- The Programme “Supporting the management of violent extremist prisoners and the prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons” (2018-2023), aims to strengthen the resilience of societies against violent extremism and radicalization to violence while respecting human rights standards by increasing the capacity of Member States to effectively manage violent extremist prisoners (VEPs) and prevent radicalization to violence in their prison systems.

- In future phases, UNODC aims to support the prison administration of the Ministry of Justice with the implementation of HIV prevention, treatment and care services, including voluntary counseling and testing services, procurement of medical items and capacity building.

- Rehabilitation for children and youth from the age of 13 in detention sites and reintegration after their release.
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) in Tunisian Prisons

CBT in Numbers (Midterm Review)

- **7 Tunisian Prisons with a Focus on 3 Pilot Prisons**
- **266 People Benefited from CBT Trainings, Workshops and Master Classes**
- **37.2% Female Participants**
- **87 Days Dedicated to Training, Education and Engagement with Partners**
- **2 Roundtables with Local CSOs and the Ministry of Health to Discuss Experiences in Mental and Prison Health, and Study Synergies Between the Public Health Sector and Prison Health**
- **2 Master Class Sessions on CBT for the Prison Environment with the Faculty of Medicine of Tunis**
- **10 UNODC Experts Mobilized**
- **ICT Equipment, Office Automation, Household Appliances, Medical, and Sport Equipment, Musical Instruments, Hygiene Equipment, and Equipment for Children**
- **21 Women and 45 Men Received CBT Treatment in 7 Tunisian Prisons. In the 3 Pilot Sites: 20 Women in Manouba, 16 Men in Borje El Amri Prison, and 14 Men in Borjerroumi Prison**