



“Multi-Agency Cooperation to Enhance Services to Drug Users in Delhi”

Funding Source: GTZ
Term: 2003-2005

Project

The GTZ financed project “Multi-agency cooperation to enhance services to drug users in Delhi” aims to develop an integrated approach to preventing and reducing substance abuse through enhancing services and their accessibility for drug users in Delhi. The long-term objective of the project is to create healthier communities. It was initiated and is being carried out by three local NGOs: Navjyoti Delhi Police Foundation, Sharan and Sahara. GTZ supports these experienced NGOs in innovative drug abuse treatment and training measures. Prior to the project, Navjyoti Delhi Police Foundation, Sharan and Sahara had already been providing a wide range of services to drug users, from homeopathy and yoga to outreach and harm reduction.

Multi-stakeholder round table on drug related issues

One objective of the project is to establish a round table for enhancing multi-agency cooperation at city level, bringing together and improving coordination among stakeholders from various sectors that are addressing the drug problem in the community.

To achieve this objective, the project makes use of the GTZ method “Integrated local drug policy”. As no single organisation or agency on its own can meet all the demands in a community, a regular forum was established to bring together politicians, members of the administration and judiciary institutions, law enforcement agencies, NGOs, medical personnel and user-groups. These stakeholders meet regularly to learn from each other and tackle the problem according to the needs, capacity and resources available in Delhi.

This multi-disciplinary and intersectoral approach assembles all relevant actors and allows them to harmonise and coordinate their

Drug situation in Delhi

- 140,000 people officially use drugs illicitly (unofficial numbers are likely to be higher)
- More than 30% of people living on the streets use illicit drugs
- Injecting drug use (IDU) has in recent years become increasingly prevalent and led to an alarming rise in the number of HIV infections
- The main substance injected is not heroin but a cocktail of buprenorphine, a synthetic opiate, benzodiazepam, and avil (an anti-histamine)

efforts in a joint community-based response. Together with the Indian partners, GTZ established the Delhi Round Table on drug-related issues as the first pilot initiative of its kind in Asia.

Training in prevention, treatment and harm reduction

The second objective is to support training in prevention, treatment and harm reduction to demonstrate the effectiveness of different methods and enhance capacity building.

Activities supported under this objective are:

- training courses in homeopathy and yoga to service providers (Navjyoti)
- awareness-raising courses for the police (Navjyoti)
- vocational training for drug users (Sahara / Sharan)
- establishment of a “job-shop” database for ex drug users (Sahara)
- trial with sublingual buprenorphine substitution (Sharan)
- outreach project for extremely marginalised eunuchs and transgender “hijras” who are drug users (Sahara)

commissioned by:



Impact

The multi-stakeholder round table on drug-related issues is the first of its kind in South Asia, and its meetings focus alternately on political and technical issues. The Delhi Round Table has been very well accepted by the relevant stakeholders, including the international community. The first results clearly confirm the necessity of such a forum. The close collaboration with the three partner NGOs has proven to be very fruitful also in identifying key figures for participation in the network.

One of the major outcomes has been the commitment to develop a City Action Plan on Drugs, which could become the forerunner for an innovative approach to managing drug-related issues in cities in Asia and other regions.

Transgender/hijra project (Sahara)

The Sahara transgender outreach project aims at reducing the impact of HIV/AIDS and at creating a more accepting environment for this highly marginalised group. It provides primary health care, treatment of STIs (sexually transmitted infections), peer educator training in HIV/AIDS and STI awareness, and activities to enhance access to health and social services for transgender persons.

In one initiative, people from the transgender community took photos of their daily lives. These photos have been put together for an exhibition accompanied by a publication to be shown in Delhi and Germany to raise awareness about their lives and needs in India.

Imprint

Published by:
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Trial with sublingual buprenorphine substitution (Sharan)

A sublingual buprenorphine substitution project was set up to assess clients for behaviour change and to reduce the harm directly or indirectly connected with drug use, especially the spread of HIV/AIDS and other blood-borne infections among drug users and their partners. The drug is given as a substitute enabling people to move away from injecting drugs.

The buprenorphine trial proved to be very successful: of the 150 clients only 2 experienced a relapse. The others either stabilised and drastically reduced their drug consumption or became abstinent. The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine (USA) subsequently funded the continuation and expansion of this project.

Navjyoti Delhi Police Foundation – Training Centre

In 2003, Navjyoti built a new “Drug Demand Reduction Training Institute” in Delhi with funding from the Japanese Embassy and KK Shah Charitable Trust. At the new premises, detoxification and treatment as well as training (funded by GTZ) and research activities are combined under one roof. The participants of the training work shops and seminars are mostly social workers, doctors and other people working with drug users.

Lessons learned:

- integrated local drug policy is an effective and useful approach at community or city level and makes decision-making more transparent
- the Round Table is an effective method to facilitate the development of an integrated local strategy through all relevant stakeholders
- local policy development that is based on consensus at community level can have a positive impact on national policy.

Design by: Medienbüro Profil, © 2006
Photos: © GTZ
Printed on 100% recycled paper

Status: 02/2006

