

UNODC helps countries and its people to reduce illegal drugs and crime throughout the world and to address justice and human security. It helps Member States with technical assistance, legal advice and research within the framework of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three Protocols, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the three United Nations Conventions on Drugs.

UNODC South Asia is present in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka: Improving the participation of women to strengthen democracy and governance



A community awareness programme to discuss and debate principles of democracy and good governance was held in Galle in the Southern Province of Sri Lanka, which brought together community leaders, government officials, representatives from private organizations and the media. The event was organised by the Saviya Development Foundation (SDF), an NGO on 16th June 2011 in association with UNODC as part of the 'Civil society empowerment project to enhance democracy', supported by the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF). 'A democratic initiative for women' - a Sinhalese gender manual published by SDF was disseminated among the participants during the programme. The manual was developed to educate women about their role in strengthening democracy and good governance. Through the project, SDF has been working with rural communities in three districts of Sri Lanka's Southern Province to increase their participation in the development process, in order to reduce corruption and improve governance. A significant achievement of the project has been the empowerment of women, who have become more aware of the law and their rights and are becoming agents of change in their community, as a result of the various information and communication initiatives of the project.

India: Doctor's Day celebrated in Central Jail, Mizoram



The Indian Medical Association (IMA), Mizoram branch, celebrated July 1 – National Doctor's Day at the Central Jail in Aizawl, Mizoram, North East India by giving free health services to the inmates within the prison premises. This was done in partnership with the prison authorities and SHALOM, an NGO working in the Central Jail on HIV prevention amongst inmates, in collaboration with UNODC. Mr.K.Lawmthanga, Spl.Suptd, Central Jail, Mizoram chaired the inaugural function where Dr.Z.R.Thiamsanga, IMA Team Leader, explained the significance of Doctor's Day. A medical team consisting of a gynaecologist, ENT specialist and ophthalmologist examined 139 inmates and provided them free medicines. This was the first time that a medical body like the IMA visited the jail to provide health services. The gesture was greatly appreciated by the prison authorities and the inmates, more so due to limited medical facilities available in the prison. This initiative was possible due to the efforts of SHALOM who apprised the IMA about the health requirements of the inmates and garnered their support for this cause. UNODC extends its sincere thanks to the IMA and SHALOM for this thoughtful initiative.

UNODC trainings in South Asia

Bhutan: The Bhutan Youth Development Fund (YDF) in association with UNODC held a training programme on 'Drug Use Prevention Treatment & Rehabilitation' from 4-8 July 2011 for peer counsellors and outreach workers from various drop in centres (DICs) run by Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency (BNCA) and YDF. YDF also held a training on relapse prevention and risk education for rehab counsellors from 9-10 July. Both trainings were supported by the Japanese Drug Abuse Prevention Center (JDAPC) Grants initiative.

Nepal: The Narcotics Drug Control Law Enforcement Unit, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of Nepal in association with UNODC held a national "Narcotic Control Orientation Program" in Kathmandu, Nepal from 22-24 June 2011. The program was designed to provide drug law enforcement personnel with basic knowledge and skills regarding identification of drugs, interdiction and investigation techniques and information on legal issues pertaining drug law enforcement.

Nepal: Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT) study tour held for Indian stakeholders

To prevent HIV among injecting drug users (IDUs), the National AIDS Control Organisation, Government of India is supporting Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST) in the country using Buprenorphine. To study the possibility of using Methadone (another OST medication) in India, UNODC is carrying out a feasibility study together with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. As part of this, UNODC in collaboration with GIZ, organised a study tour for stakeholders from India to Nepal, which has been implementing Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT) programmes since 1994. From 13 – 15 June, nine doctors from different Government-run medical institutions in India travelled to Kathmandu, Nepal's capital, where they visited 2 MMT sites and medical institutes and interacted with doctors, nurses and other implementing staff, to learn about the various aspects of using methadone for treatment of opioid dependence. They also met representatives from the health and home ministries/departments and funding partners to understand the role of MMT in drug use treatment and prevention of HIV among IDUs. At the end of the tour, UNODC, AIIMS and other participants discussed the next steps for initiating MMT in India.

UNODC participates in the 'CNN Freedom Project' on anti – human trafficking



'Nepal's Stolen Children' – a documentary film about survivors of human trafficking from Nepal was made under CNN's ongoing global anti-human trafficking campaign called the 'CNN Freedom Project – Ending modern day slavery'. The film was released in India on 23rd June 2011 at the American Centre in Mumbai. Ms Cristina Albertin, UNODC Representative for South Asia participated as a panelist in the discussion that followed the film screening. She was joined by Ms Anuradha Koirala, Founder – Maiti Nepal and CNN Hero of the year 2010, Mrs. Triveni Acharya, President of Rescue Foundation, India and Ms Nirja Mattoo, Board Member, PLAN India.

India: UNODC participates in the UNDAF Process

In May 2011, the UN in India together with the Planning Commission, Government of India commenced the process of designing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) - the UN's inter-agency plan for development cooperation (2013-2018) to support India's XII Five Year Plan. Seven working groups have been set up, based on the priority areas identified by the Government and the UN. Based on its mandates, UNODC is contributing to three working groups: a) Insufficient good governance/decentralization/accountability b) Gender inequality/insufficient empowerment c) Uneven quality, unequal access to social services (health care, education, social protection, sanitation, HIV). A process of planning and dialogue is now underway to identify areas for joint programming within each working group.

UNODC INTERNAL NEWS CORNER

We bid farewell to two of our colleagues, Latha Mani and Mozammel Hoque. We also welcome Hassan Bokhari, who has joined as an intern at our Office in the Maldives.



Latha joined UNODC in North East India in January 2010. She was the project coordinator for UNODC's part in the HIV/AIDS Joint UN programme in four North Eastern states of India.



Mozammel joined UNODC in Bangladesh in October 2007. As the HIV AIDS advisor, he provided policy and technical advice on HIV/AIDS and drug use related issues.



Hassan is a first year law student from Pakistan. He is assisting the Office with research on human trafficking and also other project activities related to drug use prevention.