

# Seminar on Strengthening Health Promoting School

June 12-13, 2019  
MICC2, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

## Organizers



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**Ministry of Education**

# **Prevention Against The Danger of Narcotic Drugs In Schools and Universities**

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# 1. Introduction

- Drug abuse is a menace to the peaceful development and functioning of many societies across the globe inflicting significant harm to public health and safety. Finding ways to reduce the risk of drug abuse is now a key issue in the policy agendas in both developed and developing countries.
  - According to the World Drug Report 2017, about 275million people, that is 5.6% of persons aged 15-64 in the world, consumed drugs at least once in 2016 and some 31 million suffer from drug use disorders requiring treatment.
  - It was shown in the World Drug Report 2017 that premature deaths caused from the overdose of narcotic drug are increasing year by year and outbreaks of HIV disease, Hepatitis B and C diseases, and TB disease is uprising.
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- ❖ The United Nations Conventions on Narcotic Drugs;
    - The 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs,
    - The 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances
    - The 1988 Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances
  - The main objectives of these conventions are to protect the health and welfare human being.

# The aspect to tackling the drug problem

It would be required three aspects;

- Review on circumstances behind the drug problem
- Review on prevention and suppression of the matters relating to drug-trafficking, production and cultivation
- Review on consequences came out from the drug problem

## 2. Myanmar context

- Situated in Southeast Asia's 'Golden Triangle', Myanmar is the world's second-largest opium producer after Afghanistan.
- Opium cultivated in Myanmar is locally consumed, especially in the mountainous ethnic regions where it also has traditional and medicinal uses.
- However, a large amount of opium is turned into a more dangerous form—heroin—for the local market as well as for export, mostly to countries in the region, especially China.
- Myanmar is also South East Asia's largest producer of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS). These are widely used in Myanmar and South East Asia particularly among youth. Myanmar is now under international surveillance because of its production and export of ATS.

# Young People and Students Context

- The use of illicit drugs in Myanmar is a serious problem and there is concern it may be on the rise among young people or even university students.
- In particular the increased consumption of methamphetamines or 'yaba' as commonly referred is cause for worry due to its widespread availability and low price.
- (Cachia and Lwin, 2019)

# Young People and University Context

- Data on illicit drug consumption for university students in Myanmar is not generally available given that possession of the substance is illegal.
- Police data and media reports remain the main source of information on illicit drug use.
- A recent cross country survey of ASEAN undergraduates found that in Myanmar about 12.2% of student consumed illicit drugs infrequently( that is 1 to 9 times during the preceding 12 months and 2.5% consumed them frequently, that is 10 or more times during the 12month period, but 85.3% of Myanmar student sample never used illicit drugs.
- The study did not differentiate between methamphetamines and opiates. (Yi et al.,2017).



# Drug use in Myanmar

Drugs are chemicals that affect the body and brain. Different drugs can have different effects. Some effects of drugs include health consequences that are long-lasting and permanent. They can even continue after a person has stopped taking the substance.

There are a few ways a person can take drugs, including injection, inhalation and ingestion. The effects of the drug on the body can depend on how the drug is delivered.

The injection of drugs directly into the bloodstream has an immediate impact, while ingestion has a delayed effect. But all misused drugs affect the brain.

They cause large amounts of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that helps regulate our emotions, motivation and feelings of pleasure, to flood the brain and produce a “high.”

# Effects of Drug Use

- 1. Economic Impact
- 2. Impact on Health
- 3. Impact on public safety
- 4. Impact on the environment
- 5. Impact on labour productivity
- 6. Impact on governance
- 7. Impact on population



## Environmental Factors Leading to Addiction



## THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ADDICTION



Cost Of Addiction



Cost Of Treatment



Legal Ramifications



Medical Expenses



Wages & Job

The damage goes well beyond the person suffering from the addiction

## 4.National drug policy in Myanmar

In an effort to rebalance the approach to drug challenges in Myanmar, the Government of Myanmar and UNODC announced a National Drug Control Policy in February, 2018.

The overall aim is to contribute to safe, secure and healthy communities through a policy that addresses all aspects of the drug problem, focusing on the unique needs of the country.

# National drug policy in Myanmar

As a national expression of the 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS) outcome, the policy signals a significant shift in approach towards an evidence-based and more people and health-focused approach.

It also advocates for practical strategies to reduce the negative effects of drug production, trafficking and use.

## 5. An effective counter-narcotics strategy

A. Reducing demand (Preventing, and Treating)

B. Restricting supply ( Cultivation, Production, Trade)

- The term supply and demand comes from the world of economics.
- Supply is how much of something you produce.
- Demand is how much of something people want.

# The Report of the International Narcotics Control Board (2004)

- Counter-narcotic strategies will only be effective if demand and supply are tackled together:
- Illicit drug supply and demand are, in fact, inextricably linked components of a single phenomenon.
- The demand for drugs stimulates the supply; the availability of drugs, in turn, creates demand as more people become dependent on drugs.

# A. REDUCING DEMAND

## (1) Prevention

- The UN defines the primary objective of drug prevention as being, ‘to help people, particularly but not exclusively young people, to avoid or delay initiation into the use of drugs, or, if they have started already, to avoid developing disorders (e.g. dependence).
- Effective drug prevention contributes significantly to the positive engagement of children, young people and adults with their families, schools, workplace and community.

# Type of prevention

- Universal prevention
- Selective prevention
- Indicated prevention
- Health promotion strategies.
- Environmental prevention approaches



## (2). Treatment

- Drug treatment is the term used for clinical interventions designed to help people recover from their dependence on drugs.
- By definition, treatment becomes necessary where prevention has failed.

## (B)RESTRICTING SUPPLY

- International illicit cultivation,
  - Production and
  - Trade in narcotic substances.
- 
- It is widely understood that this is a global business controlled by organized criminals.
  - It relates to the whole of the narcotics supply chain, from cultivation to street-level supply to the drug user.

# 6. EVIDENCE OF WHAT WORKS TO

## (A) REDUCE DEMAND

### (1) PREVENTION

- Interventions targeting pregnant women with substance abuse disorders
- Family-based universal programs
- Policies that increase the attendance of children in school
- Policies that alter the school environment to increase commitment to school, positive participation, and social relationships
- Multi-sectoral programs with multiple components (including schools, families, law enforcement and community) can reduce substance abuse.

# (A) REDUCE DEMAND

## (2) Treatment

- International evidence consistently show that drug treatment—covering different types of drug problems, using different treatment interventions, and in different treatment settings—impacts positively on levels of drug use, offending, overdose risk and the spread of blood-borne viruse.
- Drug treatment is not an event, but a process, usually involving engagement with different drug treatment services, perhaps over many years.

# (A) REDUCE DEMAND

## (2) Treatment

- Research indicates that entry into treatment has an immediate positive impact on drug use and crime, particularly for someone prescribed substitute medication.
- It also requires a concerted effort on behalf of the treatment provider to enable all of the clients' needs to be met, not just their drug treatment needs.

# EVIDENCE OF WHAT WORKS TO (B)RESTRICT SUPPLY

- 1.The cultivation of drug crops in Myanmar;
- 2. Drug-dealing and illicit drug use in local drug markets; and
- 3. Corruption

# 1. Tackling the Cultivation of Drug Crops in Myanmar

- **Alternative development**, in the form of improvement in infrastructure and services, can help to reduce the costs of living in opium poppy villages, and therefore decrease the dependency of those communities on opium poppy income.  
( Evidence produced by the UNODC research)
- Myanmar's drug policies should **shift focus and prioritize alternative livelihoods** in opium-growing communities and the provision of services for drug users.

## 2. Tackling Drug Dealing and Illicit Drug Use in Local Drug Markets

- By removing regular customers from the market,
  - To delay or disrupt the buying process using tactics such as the stop and search of buyers and sellers.
- Such measures **do little to deter problematic users**, the idea is that casual and novice users will be discouraged from buying, therefore constricting the market.
- **Some low-level enforcement activities** can contribute to the disruption of drug markets at all levels, thus reducing crime and improving health outcomes, but the effects tend to be short-lived.



## 2. Tackling Drug Dealing and Illicit Drug Use in Local Drug Markets

- One situational **crime prevention** method that could be used is to increase the amount of surveillance at the sites, either informal or formal.
- Another situational method is **to reduce the amenity of drug markets** to buyers and sellers.

# 3. Corruption

## ☐ At the production level,

- Farmers may bribe eradication teams,
- Producers may bribe judges and police officers, and
- Manufacturers may exploit workers in chemical companies in order to get hold of precursor chemicals.
- Traffickers bribe customs officials and take advantage of weaknesses in transport firms.

## ☐ At the consumer level,

- Users can get drugs through corrupt doctors and pharmacists.

# 7. Activities of Students and Youths

## Education Sectors

- The Ministry of Education is educating students and youths to have better knowledge of the risks for drug abuse and psychoactive substances **as the Committee of Educating Students and Youths.**
- Knowledge of the risks of drug abuse and psychoactive substances are included as **a particular lesson in Life Skills for Basic Education students and for out of school children, in Non Formal Primary Education and Non Formal Middle Education programs.**
- To improve awareness on the risk of drug abuse and psychoactive substances, educative talks, discussion groups, exhibitions and literature and arts competition on drugs and substance use were **held on the commemorative days and prizes were awarded to the winners** from the competitions.

# Objectives

- Objectives are to promote awareness that “Prevention is better than Cure,” to distribute knowledge of the risks of drugs and substance abuse through Life Skills at Basic Education level, and to equip students with knowledge on drugs and substance use for real life situations.

## 6. Activities in Education Sector

- Drug Abuse Prevention Curriculum
  - School Based Activities
  - Community Based Activities
  - Non Formal Primary Education (NFPE) Activities
  - Non Formal Middle Education (NFME) Activities
  - Training of Myanmar National Trainers on the Universal Prevention Curriculum (UPC)
  - Drug Abuse Victim Elimination Activities
  - Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking Prevention Activities
- The Ministry of Education is carrying out educating services hand in hand with the entire people, NGOs and INGOs.

# Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking Prevention Activities

No.	Name	Number	Number of Participants			Budget
			Students	Teachers	People	Kyats
1	Universities and Colleges	28	20513	1720	<b>375</b>	482100
2	Technological Universities and Computer Universities	38	12538	1630	<b>749</b>	1658350
3	Education Colleges	22	17876	1450	<b>424</b>	738800
4	Technical and Vocational Schools	33	8489	1283	<b>150</b>	386500
5	Basic Education Schools	15325	1358266	70101	<b>95608</b>	107402020

Source: Myanmar Narcotics Control Annual Report 2017 (CCDAC)

## Drug use in Universities

Among the youth in Myanmar, the use of drugs has been on the rise. Myanmar's university students are not an exception to this trend.

Data on consumption for university students is not available given that possession of the substance is illegal. Police data and news data remain the main source of information for its use.

## 8. What are the main factors spurring the increasing use of drugs?

1. Taking drugs at the university level is social activity, with students attracted to getting a 'high' or some euphoric state of mind. Peer pressure in a social setting often leads students to try the drug and set them on a slippery slope.
2. Intense competitive pressures can push students to search for ways to stay awake and alert long hours which taking the 'yaba' tablets can provide.
3. Students often need to cope with numerous emotional and psychological situations for which the 'yaba' pills falsely and temporarily provide by provoking altered states of mind.



## **8.Main factors spurring the increasing use of drugs**

- 4.Students away from familiar family settings and support systems can feel alone and alienated in a highly competitive environment. They may also experience pressure to perform well from family who might be making major sacrifices for them to attend university.
- 5.Lack of knowledge on the effects and consequences of taking drugs in the short and long run. This lack of information on the risks of drug addiction for health as well as legal consequences.
- 6.Lack of adequate counselling services and mental health programs for students also contribute to their emotional fragility and allow them easily to succumb to peer pressure and intense social pressures.

## 9. What can the university do to curb the rise in drug consumption and addiction?

(Education is its strongest asset)

Provide Education services and programmes for drugs (abuse) within the university a sort of 'Drug Watch' that contains

1. Warnings on methamphetamines and new drugs such as 'ice' that are coming on the market.
2. Information on the physical and mental effects and consequences of taking these in the short and long run.

# Solutions to the drug problem

Recognizing that information may not be sufficient to counteract the attraction of drugs and in particular when students are experiencing difficulties. The university needs to take a more holistic approach to the problem:

A counselling office or centre which can provide

1. **Training** in how to deal with social pressures when drug use is involved.
2. **Improve counselling services** at the university level so students can be helped to resolve problems before they think of turning to drugs
3. **Improve mental health services** –clinics are already available through the Universities
4. **Distribute appropriate materials and invite public health officials and law enforcement agents to make presentations**

## 10. Best practices to reduce the economic consequences of drug abuse

Since drug abuse places such a costly burden upon society. These costs can be reduced.

**(a) Drug prevention is cost-effective.** Prevention programmes are aimed at building strong communities and families, mostly seeking to provide young people with the skills to make healthy choices and decisions. Specific and targeted prevention must also be an aim of the government.

## 10. Best practices to reduce the economic consequences of drug abuse

(b) For those who have initiated drug abuse, **brief interventions and referral to treatment mechanisms may be appropriate.** Such services include an initial assessment by general primary care physicians or counselors to identify at-risk persons, brief advice and, if necessary, referral to treatment;

(c) For individuals with addiction, drug treatment, **with behavioral and/or medical interventions,** are effective. Treatment should be given in the context of rehabilitation and social reintegration.

## 10. Best practices to reduce the economic consequences of drug abuse

- (d) Recovery from drug addiction requires support from family and the community. It should also include education and job training, housing, childcare, transportation to and from treatment and work, case management and spiritual support, family education, peer-to-peer services and coaching, self-help and support group services.
- (e) A more efficient justice system can deter drug abuse and offer alternatives to imprisonment. •

## 10. Best practices to reduce the economic consequences of drug abuse

(f) A wide variety of social programmes like vocational training programmes can be targeted so as to reach young people particularly at risk of becoming drug sellers, and interventions can target those vulnerable to homelessness, social deprivation, unemployment and exclusion from educational opportunities.

(g) Policies and initiatives against drug trafficking must be integrated into development programmes in Myanmar, keeping in mind the key goal of strengthening institutions and shared responsibility at all levels of government.

# 11. Situational Analysis(SWOT)

## STRENGTHS

- ❖ Establishment of the National Drug Control Policy in Myanmar
- ❖ Strong government commitment and dedication
- ❖ Increased public awareness of the negative consequences of drugs
- ❖ Involvement of Government, community and NGOs
- ❖ Strong media involvement

## Weaknesses

- Lack of information and data on drug use in Myanmar
- Poor stakeholders' involvement in prevention of drug control
- Weaknesses of law enforcement leading to imprisonment of drug sellers and users
- Limited information on drugs
- Lack of knowledge on the negative consequences

## Opportunities

- Spread of increased knowledge and training for drug control
- Likelihood of improved counseling services throughout Myanmar
- More involvement of stakeholders in the future
- Development partners

## Threats

- ❖ The probable increase of the drug market
- ❖ The stretch of more drug sellers and users
- ❖ Amplified drug trade in the borders neighboring China, Thailand and Bangladesh
- ❖ Corruption of government officials in the prevention of domestic drug trade
- ❖ Easy access to raw materials to produce drug



# 12. Conclusion

- In addition to efforts at drug prevention and treatment, eradication of the narcotic drug threat requires a stable and peaceful environment in the regions where production and trade occur.
- The efforts of law enforcement agencies, the judicial system and policy actions of the State can only be successful when the local population willingly cooperates with and supports them.
- Deliver a supportive policy and legal framework;
- Disseminate scientific evidence and research
- Coordinate activities and programmes among multiple sectors and levels (national, sub-national and municipal/local) involved in drug prevention and treatment;
- Train policymakers and practitioners;
- Commitment to provide adequate resources and to sustain the programmes in the long term
- Strengthen the participation of the entire population;
- Encourage the public to cooperate, to participate and to assist in eradicating the production, distribution and use of illicit drugs. Underline that such behaviour is their national duty.



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# Thank you very much

