

Press release

12 November 2015

UNODC joins forces with VSO to promote access to health services in prisons in Southern Africa

On 12 November 2015, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) launched a Joint Regional Programme entitled: *Promoting Human Rights and Access to Health Services in Prisons in Southern Africa*.

Southern Africa remains the epicenter of the global HIV and tuberculosis (TB) epidemics. Though the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) constitutes much less than 5% of the global population, it is home to about 20% of the people living with HIV (PLHIV) in the world. As prison populations globally tend to have a higher HIV prevalence than the general population, reducing transmission and improving treatment, care and support in prisons is an integral part of reducing the spread of infection in the broader society.

This programme is designed around the understanding of the need to improve the situation at both policy and service delivery levels to contribute to more effective and sustainable improvement of health and realisation of rights of prison populations in the target countries: Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

In close cooperation with the Member States the Regional Programme will provide technical assistance for data collection and monitoring, advocacy, policy development, capacity building, coordination, health service delivery and rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-prisoners.

The Regional Programme builds on and compliments the ongoing successful implementation of HIV in Prisons Programmes both by UNODC and VSO in Sub-Saharan Africa and will benefit from the joint experience and expertise.

This Regional Programme is made possible by the financial support from the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Swedish International Development Agency and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.

MAKING THE WORLD SAFER FROM DRUGS, CRIME AND TERRORISM

UNODC Southern Africa

1059 Francis Baard Street, 1st Floor | P.O. Box 12673, Hatfield 0028, Pretoria, South Africa

Tel: +27 12 432 0820 | Fax: +27 12 342 2356

Email: fo.southafrica@unodc.org | Web: <http://www.unodc.org/southernafrica>

* * * * *

For more information please contact:
Mr Andreas Zeidler, Programme Oversight Associate – HIV in Prisons
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
Regional Office for Southern Africa
Email: [Andreas.zeidler\[at\]unodc.org](mailto:Andreas.zeidler[at]unodc.org) | Tel.: (+27) 012 432 0832 |
Cell: (+27) 082 414 7106

Read the UNODC Comprehensive Package of Interventions on HIV and AIDS in Prison Settings here: http://www.unodc.org/documents/hiv-aids/HIV_comprehensive_package_prison_2013_eBook.pdf

For further reading on UNODC and the global response to HIV see:
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/hiv-aids/new/index.html>

MAKING THE WORLD SAFER FROM DRUGS, CRIME AND TERRORISM

UNODC Southern Africa
1059 Francis Baard Street, 2nd Floor | P.O. Box 12673, Hatfield 0028, Pretoria, South Africa
Tel: +27 12 432 0820 | Fax: +27 12 342 2356
Email: fo.southafrica@unodc.org | Web: <http://www.unodc.org/southernafrica>