

Third Annual Conference of the International Consortium for Drug Demand Reduction (ICUDDR),
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GROUP DISCUSSIONS – June 4, 2018

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What are key issues in your region related to training in addiction studies?

- Lack of awareness about the problem
- Limited and insufficient offer of training programs.
- Limited demand for training programs due to the lack of awareness about the magnitude and impact of drug use related problems, as well as potential career prospects.
- Discrimination and stigma towards programs and service providers working in the field of addictions
- Lack of coordination between the information system and the labor market. People do the training programs but that does not guarantee their insertion into the labor market.
- Lack of planning and coordination linking professionals' training needs and offer of programs
- Absence of specialized programs. Most likely the addiction studies are inserted into other careers, not as a discipline itself, like psychology, medicine, nursery, social work, etc.
- Addiction medicine is not a bounded field and recognized as such in most countries in the region.
- Centralization, limited access to training programs due to imbalanced development. Training programs are usually concentrated in main cities, without proper offer and opportunities in the regions.

Strategies/Next steps to address these issues?

- Design clear public policies addressing drug use related issues that can be translated into training strategies that serve the specific needs of each country.
- Promote an inter-sectorial and coordinated approach involving various stakeholders and organizations
- Persuade national and academic authorities about the importance of addressing the drug use related problems and their impact on health, crime, productivity and development. It is necessary to promote research, M&E of programs, as well as reliable data collection systems to show the results/impact of investing in this field in terms of public health, reduced incarceration rates, reduced crime, increased productivity, etc.

Strategies/Next steps to address these issues?

Cont....

- Advocacy to policy makers at various government levels (central, regional, local).
- Sustainability and adaptability of policies based on research based evidence
- Monitoring and Evaluation to enhance the reach out of programs and impact different sectors
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation of training programs for feedback and policy redesign
- Advocacy to academic authorities on the drug use related problems and their involvement at various levels of the decision making process
- Increased financial resources to all drug related fields (academia, health sector, education, justice, criminal justice, etc.)

How can ICUDDR assist in your region?

- Establish or at least think about incentives for universities to commit to participate and develop programs related to drug related problems, in particular engaging public universities in each country
- Establish an appeal for States (rather than Governments) to work with the universities in the field of drug use disorders
- Sharing experiences and lessons learned at regional level (South-South)
- Promote exchange of strategies, modalities, teachers, researchers
- Establish ICU-DDR regional chapters, which would strengthen the regional institutions and promote inter-consortium relations

Gracias.

