

UNODC'S EFFORT ON IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF MOST FORGOTTEN CITIZENS IN MYANMAR - THE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES ON HEALTH CARE IN PRISONS

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Background:

Myanmar has 45 prisons and 48 camps with 60,000 to 85,000 prisoners, including 10-12% women. Enforcement heavy approach in drug control causes overcrowding in prisons. 48% of inmates are detained for drug-related offenses, with some prisons having rates as high as 70-80%. Health services are limited for prisoners, with no written policies or procedures in place. This results in inconsistent quality and timeliness of healthcare in Myanmar's prisons, further worsening the vulnerabilities and marginalization resulting in poorer health outcomes.

Description of model of care/intervention:

To address health care disparities in prisons, Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) on health care in prisons were developed with leadership from the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Prisons Department, and launched in August 2018. These SOPs provide guiding principles for health services in prisons, with a focus on communicable and non-communicable diseases, maternal and child health, mental health, infection control procedures, and referral mechanisms for use by prison health staff.

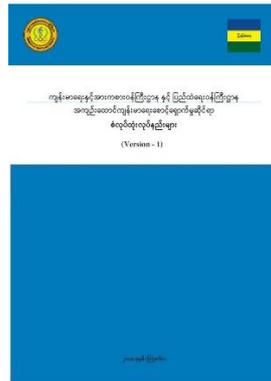


Photo: Booklet of Standard Operation Procedures on health care in prisons

Effectiveness:

Designed to align with both international standards for prison health care and Myanmar's national guidelines for health care for the general population, these SOPs have served as basic framework for the delivery of health care to prisoners in the Myanmar prison system by outlining the essential components of a prison health care program. By providing consistent guidance on essential health care services, the SOPs help ensure that prisoners receive appropriate and timely medical attention, in accordance with established standards of care

Conclusion and next steps:

To make the SOPs into practice, UNODC provides continuous support for the introduction of SOPs to prison health staff and prison admin staff, in order for them to be able to provide the necessary health services in line with the SOPs as the persons responsible for prison management and health care.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The conference collaborators recognize the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. I also recognize the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in publications and presentations.