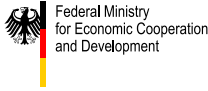


An international research project funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)



TARGETS AND GOALS

SOLID - "Social work and strengthening of NGOs in cooperation for the development of drug addiction treatment" is an international research project funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for the period from 2020 to 2024.

This project consists of educational and research exchange among research institutions from Germany, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the People's Republic of China and is part of the DAAD Excellence Network.

The project, coordinated by the Frankfurt Institute for Drug Addiction Research, aims to bring together six research institutes to fund budding researchers in each country doing social research on illicit drug use.

In addition, the project aims to address one of the most pressing problems in Central Asia and the PRC, namely the underdeveloped role of social work in helping people who use drugs and suffer from related health problems. SOLID includes epidemiological as well as comparative methodological approaches and is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development

CURRENT SITUATION

There are roughly 3.1 million people who inject drugs in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and another 3-5 million in PR China. The region is home to roughly one in four people who inject drugs worldwide. Despite significant progress in many areas – there are still alarming trends in the HIV epidemiology and response in the WHO European Region.

- Eastern Europe and Central Asia is the only region in the world where annual rate of HIV infections continues to rise at a concerning rate, although the prevalence of injecting drug use and HIV infections is declining in Central Asian countries and in PR China in the last years.



- The HIV epidemic has, for the most part, hit people who inject drugs the hardest. Harm reduction service coverage remains low and where it does exist the services offered are often not comprehensive.
- Antiretroviral treatment coverage remains well below the global average at 38%. New infections continue to outpace ART enrolment.
- Conservative legislation around same sex relationships, drug use and sex work continues to fuel stigma, obstructing the HIV response in some countries within the region.

ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK IN CENTRAL ASIA AND CHINA

1. Implementation of case management, depending on the needs of the key groups and their specific needs, a social support program is developed to improve the quality of life of the customers.
2. An interdisciplinary approach and teamwork.
3. The fight against stigma. Social workers can play an important role in changing public opinion.
4. Protection of the rights and interests of those affected and the citizens: policy development, lobbying, public awareness, public education, campaigning, alliances, etc.
5. Provision of social services and humanitarian aid.

SITUATION OF SOCIAL WORK IN CENTRAL ASIA AND CHINA

Even if the position of a social worker in a medical facility is free, the functions of social work are not transparent, they are often performed by specialists with medical training. Therefore, the medical aspect of the work predominates

Another factor is the threat to the profession due to its young history.

The third factor, one of the most serious obstacles, is the low salary of social workers who work in government institutions for social support.

REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH-QUALITY TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORK WITH ADDICTS

- Training programs for social work with addicts; Outreach training opportunities for social workers as being only responsible for the distribution of condoms, syringes and HIV tests.
- Development of advanced training programs at post-graduate level (after the bachelor's degree) and for para-specialists who perform the functions of a social worker in a non-governmental organization;
- Support for social work in the form of job descriptions, training in health care and in prison.

SOLID PROJECT EVENTS

Specialist events and lectures on the role of social work in drug addiction aid in the broadest sense are carried out at the participating universities.

These events are designed in a professional manner and address key issues such as Infectious diseases and intravenous drug use, drug addiction in prisons, gender aspects of drug addiction and therapy / counseling, role and strengthening of NGOs, poverty and health.



STRUCTURE OF THE SOLID PROJECT

14 young researchers (up to 3 in each country) are funded, who in their dissertation explain the role of social work/social medicine in drug aid in their country of origin (**Germany, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, PR China**). **Tajikistan** also joined the project in 2021.

In addition, one post-doctoral position is to be created in each participating country (total of 5), which will deal with in-depth curricular topics in the context of "social work and drug addiction / therapy"

PROJECT AREAS

14 doctoral and 5 postdoctoral students have been selected and funded to develop their independent research programs in three key research areas:

1. Social work, drug dependence treatment with a particular focus on opioid substitution therapy, including psychosocial support and counseling.
2. Social work and infectious diseases, including HIV / AIDS, tuberculosis, hepatitis C, COVID-19.
3. Social work in prisons and with people who have survived imprisonment due to the use, sale or possession of illegal drugs.



Partner Universities



Bishkek
State University
www.bhu.kg



Eurasian National
University Nur Sultan
www.enu.kz



Bukhara State
Medical Institute
bsmi.uz



上海交通大学医学院
Shanghai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine
en.sjtu.edu.cn



上海市精神卫生中心
SHANGHAI MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE
www.smhc.org.cn



Russian-Tajik Slavonic
University
www.rtsu.tj