HIV & Injecting Drug Use in
the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan:
Results of a Mapping and Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Study

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## OBJECTIVES

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<th>Mapping Study</th>
<th>Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice</th>
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<td>To identify geographical distribution of:</td>
<td>Conducted among population groups considered at high risk:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• HIV occurrence</td>
<td>• Injecting drug users</td>
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<td>• High risk practices and groups including injecting drug use, commercial sex work, migration</td>
<td>• Sex workers</td>
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<td>• Structural factors that may increase risk of HIV among general public and high risk groups</td>
<td>• Prisoners</td>
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<td>• Main routes and distribution points for trade, drug trafficking and economic migration</td>
<td>• Youth</td>
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<td>• Location of drug abuse and HIV interventions</td>
<td>3 main cities in each country</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Kyrgyzstan: Bishkek, Jalalabad, Osh</td>
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<td>– Uzbekistan: Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara</td>
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<td>– Tajikistan: Dushanbe, Kulyab, Khujand</td>
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Drug trafficking routes and seizures
Geographical distribution of new HIV cases
Prevalence of IDU and HIV dynamics

Rate of registered drug abusers in 1996-2005 (per 100,000 population)

HIV/AIDS Rate per 100,000 population
MODE OF HIV TRANSMISSION

Kyrgyzstan

- Heterosexual contact: 177 (21%)
- Other / Unknown: 10 (1%)
- Injecting drug use (parenteral): 639 (78%)

Uzbekistan

- Other / Unknown: 1,994 (26%)
- Sexual contact: 1,090 (14%)
- Injecting drug use (parenteral), 5,748, 60%

Tajikistan

- Other / Unknown: 74 (15%)
- Sexual contact: 70 (14%)
- Injecting drug use (parenteral): 362 (71%)
KAP Study Findings

Injecting Drug Users

Profile:
- Mainly injecting heroin, opium and other opiates;
- Injecting on average for:
  - Kyrgyzstan: more than 9 years
  - Uzbekistan: more than 7 years
  - Tajikistan: more than 5 years
- Considerable indirect sharing on injecting equipment: using pre-filled syringes, squirting drugs from or into other syringes, common pool of drugs for injecting
- Unsafe cleaning, i.e., cleaning syringes with water.
Injecting Drug Users

**Awareness of STI and HIV/AIDS:**
- High general awareness of STI and HIV/AIDS
- Significant knowledge gaps observed
- High stigma towards people living with HIV
- Overall, awareness does not necessarily translate into safer injecting or sexual behaviors
- Perception of self efficacy and risk for HIV
- Sources of information include health workers, mass media and friends

**Sexual Behavior:**
- Multiple sex partners
- Irregular condom use
- Majority of female injecting drug users had received money or drugs to have sex
**Injecting Drug Users**

**HIV Testing:**
- Drug users considered it possible to get confidential HIV testing
- Up to half had been tested for HIV
  - Kyrgyzstan: up to 3% reported tested positive
  - Uzbekistan: up to 8% reported tested positive
  - Tajikistan: up to 10% reported tested positive
- Many injecting drug users reportedly did not receive their test results
  - 19 percent in Tajikistan
  - 17 percent in Kyrgyzstan

**Utilization of services**
- Utilization of services at Trust points varies
- Less than half of injecting drug users had been treated for drug dependence – mostly detoxification
- Pharmacies as main outlet for needles and syringes as well as for treatment of common illnesses
Commercial Sex Workers

Profile:
• Generally in their twenties
• Mostly completed up to high school
• Doing sex work to supplement their incomes
• High level of mobility
• Drug use varies among sex workers
  - Kyrgyzstan: 6 percent reported ever using drugs – heroin, opium or cannabis
  - Tajikistan: 5 percent reported ever using drugs – heroin, opium or cannabis
  - Uzbekistan: 7 percent reported using heroin in their lifetime

Awareness of STI and HIV/AIDS:
• High general awareness of STI and HIV/AIDS
• Significant knowledge gaps observed
• High stigma towards people living with HIV
• Overall, awareness does not necessarily translate into safer sexual behaviors
• Perception of self efficacy and risk for HIV
• Sources of information include mass media and friends
Commercial Sex Workers

HIV Testing:

- Low awareness of HIV testing facilities and services for HIV prevention, treatment and care
- HIV Testing:

  **Kyrgyzstan:**
  - 40 percent had been tested for HIV
  - 5 percent reported being HIV positive

  **Tajikistan**
  - One third had been tested for HIV
  - 6 percent reported being HIV positive

  **Uzbekistan**
  - Half of sex workers had been tested for HIV
Commercial Sex Workers

**Sexual Behavior:**
- Multiple sex partners
- Irregular condom use

**Services:**
- Low awareness of HIV testing facilities and services for HIV prevention, treatment and care
- Self medication for STI, or seeking assistance from pharmacies
Prisoners

Profile:
- Mostly in their thirties: average age 36 years for males / 35 years for females
- Opiate use:
  - *Kyrgyzstan*: 25 percent male and 50 percent female;
  - *Tajikistan*: 30 percent of the males and 43 percent of the females;
  - *Uzbekistan*: 50 percent male and 33 percent female had injected opiates in their lifetime

Injecting, sexual and other risk behaviors:
- Unsafe injecting behaviors
- Most had easy access to needles and syringes
- Tattooing a common practice in prisons with un-sterile needles
- Sexual activity also reported
- Reports that IDU is started in prisons
Prisoners

HIV Awareness and Testing:
• High level of awareness on HIV (90 percent)
• Dichotomies observed in their responses
• Most had been tested in prison or detention centers
• Many reportedly did not receive or could not remember test results
• HIV status:
  - **Kyrgyzstan**: 8 percent of male and 17 percent of male
  - **Uzbekistan**: Only 8 percent of male
  - **Tajikistan**: 1 tested positive for HIV

• Self-efficacy and perception of risk for HIV

Sources of information on HIV:
• Many received information on HIV from prison clinics
• Most relied of fellow prisoners for information
Prisoners

**Need for Services:**
- More openness in the prison system
- Strengthening peer support networks
- Improved delivery of HIV services for prevention, treatment and care
- Increase knowledge of clinic staff
- Improved services for treatment of drug dependence in prison
Youth

450 youth in 15 – 17; 18 – 20 and 21 – 24 years age interviewed

• Among older groups majority had sexual debut
• Many reported condom use but not regular

• Among 21 to 24 years
  • 3 - 5 percent reported using drugs (opiates)

• High awareness on HIV
• HIV Testing
  
  Kyrgyzstan: 8 percent tested for HIV
  Tajikistan: 4 percent
  Uzbekistan: 18 percent

  (Many did not receive their test results)

• Perceptions of self efficacy and risk
Conclusions and Recommendations

• Information gaps on CSW, prisoners, STI and Hepatitis C infection
• Improve the environment for data collection, analysis and dissemination;
• Develop monitoring and evaluation indicators and mechanisms, particularly service and coverage indicators;
• Human security threat viewed as interconnected;
• Improved data collection and environment of sharing of information;
• Quality, efficiency and efficacy of various interventions need to be reviewed and monitored;
• More user friendly services, meeting diverse needs;
• Prison settings are an area that need more openness and interventions; particularly improved drug dependence treatment in prison, knowledge of clinical staff