

Drugs Control Strategy, 2010

1. Introduction:

Drugs use, a universal problem, has emerged as a problem in Nepal as well. In Nepal, consumption of liquor, tobacco-related substances, cannabis and hemp is on the rise. Use of drugs such as heroin and opium has further aggravated this problem. Use of drugs through injection is also increasing. The problem is getting further complicated with the use of injecting drugs and synthesized chemicals as narcotic drugs.

According to a survey, the number of hard drugs users in Nepal is estimated to be more than forty six thousand, the largest numbers being in *Kathmandu* Valley, followed by *Pokhara* and *Jhapa*. There is also a gradual increase in the number of such drugs users in other city areas such as *Biratnagar*, *Birgunj*, *Dharan*, *Butwal*, *Nepalgunj* and other town areas and the urbanizing areas of the country.

Use of drugs is especially more common amongst adolescents. According to the available statistics, three fourth of total drug users belong to the age group of less than 20 years of age. Similarly, it has been found that about 61 percent of them inject drugs out of whom, 29 percent consume such drugs through the needle exchange. The study suggests the possibility of transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B, C, and other diseases transmitted through blood. In addition to this, the study has shown that unsafe sexual relationship by drug users has also contributed in further spread of these diseases.

Illicit trafficking and dealing of drugs is regarded to be the second largest organized crime after the trafficking of weapons. Though the law enforcement agencies have been engaged in controlling the illicit trafficking and dealing, its prevention and control is challenging due to the involvement of internationally organized and active criminal

syndicate. Since Nepal is close to the golden triangle and golden crescent for producing and trafficking in drugs, the land of Nepal is being used as an easy route for its trafficking and dealing.

The government policy is to rehabilitate the drug users in society having provided them necessary treatment so that they are not placed in further risks. To achieve this, there is a need of drastic change in the existing societal psyche and attitude of perceiving drug users as addicts. Humane treatment to drug users and respect of their human rights are also equally essential. In addition, it is equally necessary to take their treatment as a public health concern and to increase the access of drug users to quality and reliable treatment and rehabilitation services. For this, there is a need of a separate mechanism and service operation to provide basic medical services to the drug users.

The National Policy for Drugs Control, 2006 has come into force for making the society healthy, prosperous and free of drugs abuse. It is equally important is to launch preventive programmes to strictly control the supply side of drugs- its illicit trafficking, dealing and supply so as to bringing down the drugs-related offences. Launching of various pressure-creating programmes to discourage illicit production and trafficking of drugs and awareness conducting programmes also equally necessary in this regard.

It is necessary to make the campaign of reduction of drugs demand more effective by identifying the drug users risk groups and launching various community-based programmes to such target groups. It is also equally necessary to launch community-based programmes for harm reduction of drug users in collaboration with various NGOs. It seems that there would be significant contribution in reduction of demand of drugs if intensive treatment and rehabilitation programmes could be launched, especially targeting women and adolescent who are at the risks of drugs use.

The issue of prevention and control of drugs use is one of the cross-cutting issues. It is difficult to appropriately address such issue only from the efforts of the state. For this, cooperation and collaboration is necessary among governmental and non-governmental agencies, civil society, private sector, experts, users and external development partners. On the basis of this very conviction, this strategy has been prepared after a series of discussion meetings, workshops, and consultation with the said agencies and upon intensive exercise at the Ministry of Home Affairs. It is expected that implementation of this strategy would help to attain the objectives set out by the National Policy for Drugs Control, 2006.

2. Vision of the Strategy:

The long term vision of this Strategy shall be “Attainment of healthy and prosperous society free from drugs” as visualized by the National Policy for Drugs Control, 2006.

3. Mission of the Strategy:

For “Attainment of healthy and prosperous society free from drugs addiction,” the long term mission of this Strategy shall be to create a society free of drug abuse having conducted multi-faceted programmes in social, economical and cultural aspects.

4. Objectives of the Strategy:

- 1) To control illicit farming, production, trafficking and dealing of drugs and to bring down the offences relating thereto;
- 2) To minimize incidence of drug abuse among risk groups;
- 3) To increase easy and simple access of drug users in quality, reliable and confidential treatment and rehabilitation services;

- 4) To minimize infection of HIV, hepatitis B and C and sexual diseases among drug users, their family-members and community;
- 5) To harmonize various policies that are directly or indirectly related to prevention and control of drugs and to promote collaboration and partnership among various agencies;
- 6) To carry out basic and periodic surveys on the number, feature and effects of drug users.

5. Functional objectives and programmes:

Objective 1:

Controlling illicit farming, production, trafficking and dealing of drugs and bringing down the offences relating thereto

Programmes:

- 1.1 To identify the places of natural production and illicit farming of cannabis and opium and to collect statistics conducting survey about its extended areas and average annual production;
- 1.2 To launch awareness programmes to discourage trafficking of drugs and its illicit farming;
- 1.3 To launch programmes of alternative farming and other programmes of income generation in the affected areas for replacement of farming of cannabis and opium;
- 1.4 To adopt necessary legal measures to control farming of drugs such as cannabis and opium and production, trafficking, and storage of drugs such as heroin, hashish, smack etc;
- 1.5 To destroy drugs that regenerate naturally in collaboration with government, community, and stakeholders;
- 1.6 To effectively enforce regional and international conventions adopted for control of drugs;

- 1.7 To enter into bilateral and multilateral agreements for legal assistance, collaboration and exchange of information for expanding assistance at regional and international level for effective control of illicit trafficking and production of drugs;
- 1.8 To effectively control precursor chemicals;
- 1.9 To form pressure groups at local level to exert pressure for assisting in control of activities such as illicit farming, production, trafficking and dealing of drugs;
- 1.10 To create mechanism for regular monitoring of implementation of the aforementioned activities;
- 1.11 To maintain political commitment to make overall activities of drugs control effective.

Objective 2: Minimizing incidence of drug abuse among risk groups

Programmes:

- 2.1 **To identify youths and other communities those are in risks due to drugs abuse**
 - 2.1.1 To identify whether or not drugs had been consumed by school and college students, people belonging to various communities such as woman sex workers, labourers, street children, persons in custody, prisoners, displaced peoples, migrant and young persons at risk groups by conducting voluntary medical check ups; to make provision of necessary infrastructure for this;
 - 2.1.2 To motivate schools and parents to monitor conduct and behaviour of students;
 - 2.1.3 To prepare directives so as to use the progress report of academic and other activities of students at schools as a basis of risk identification;

2.1.4 To mobilize the community-based organizations to identify risks among adolescents in communities.

2.2: To launch school-based sensitivity and awareness rising programmes:

2.2.1 To impart trainings to school-teachers to bring awareness and sensitivity against drugs among students;

2.2.2 To include subject of drugs in the school curricula above grade six;

2.2.3 To massively launch programmes such as modern information technology, dramas cinemas, and orientation programmes;

2.2.4 To increase sensitivity and awareness among students by introducing popular celebrity as role model;

2.2.5 To enhance capacity of students having launched various sports and other extra-activities and to increase self confidence to remain far from the use of drugs;

2.2.6 To form children clubs and to engage such clubs in campaign against drugs by developing information network through it. To engage students with initiation of school administration in campaign against drugs;

2.2.7 To launch awareness programmes by mobilizing umbrella organizations of students, parents associations and organizations associated with community schools;

2.2.8 To launch consultation classes about drugs among students;

2.2.9 To launch sensitization programmes for parents.

2.3: To launch community-based programmes for reducing demand for drugs

- 2.3.1 To launch sensitization programmes on drugs targeting women, parents and youths;
- 2.3.2 To launch sensitization programmes against drugs by mobilizing mothers groups, girls groups, children clubs, youth clubs, pressure groups and other social organizations;
- 2.3.3 To directly involve various professional groups in sensitization programmes;
- 2.3.4 To organize sensitization programmes at work places of various communities in coordination with the concerned organizations;
- 2.3.5 To operate drop-in centres and outreach programmes in collaboration and cooperation with communities;
- 2.3.6 To launch sensitization programmes against drugs through peer education;
- 2.3.7 To conduct necessary orientation/training programmes for communities and law enforcement agencies in order to bring changes in their attitude towards drug users;
- 2.3.8 To launch awareness programmes against drugs among children outside schools.

2.4 To launch targeted programmes for women at risks of drugs use

- 2.4.1 To launch women-targeted awareness raising programmes in collaboration and cooperation with various organizations, associations and groups;
- 2.4.2 To launch various awareness raising programmes on health targeting to women sex-workers and to launch

consultation and rehabilitation programmes as may be necessary;

2.4.3 To launch various collaborative programmes for elimination of violence and discrimination against women;

2.4.4 To conduct orientation and impart trainings for enhancing gender skills of community-based organizations.

2.5 To launch prison-targeted programmes

2.5.1 To treat prisons in Nepal as reform houses and to launch various programmes relating to drugs use within prison settings;

2.5.2 To launch sensitization programmes for inmates/prisoners in various prisons in Nepal against drugs and its bad effects;

2.5.3 To launch various programmes to bring in positive change in psycho-social attitude of inmates/prisoners by conducting various yoga, meditation courses and health camps;

2.5.4 To diversify income generating activities in prisons by conducting various skill oriented programmes and income generating activities;

2.5.5 To conduct various sports and activities leading to developing creativity for physical and mental development of inmates/prisoners;

2.6 To launch street-children-targeted programmes

- 2.6.1 To launch awareness-raising programmes for street children through the mediums of street drama, handbills, pamphlets, song and music;
- 2.6.2 To launch activities to assist street children in their integration into society in collaboration with NGOs;
- 2.6.3 To encourage various individuals and organizations in providing guardianship to street children.

2.7 To engage mass communication media against drugs use and intensify information dissemination

- 2.7.1 To orient mass media in raising awareness against drugs;
- 2.7.2 To promote research-oriented/investigation journalism on drugs;
- 2.7.3 To mobilize communication media to flow information relating to drugs;
- 2.7.4 To promote and assist different persons and organizations in producing awareness materials on drugs;
- 2.7.5 To utilize cine artists to flow information in raising awareness about communities that are at or likely to be at risks of drugs through cinema and to change their behaviour;
- 2.7.6 To award prizes or incentives to the literature, music, audio-visual aids, artists media persons and media that make outstanding contribution in the campaigns against drugs.

Objective: 3 To increase access of drug users to quality, reliable and trustworthy treatment and rehabilitation services

Programmes

3.1 Making access of drug users in quality treatment easy and simplified

- 3.1.1 To create separate mechanism at hospitals as may be necessary with representation from former drug users in order to make available basic health services to drug users;
- 3.1.2 To make provision of a separate detoxification unit in various hospitals;
- 3.1.3 To make provision of separate beds in hospitals for treatment of drug users as may be necessary

3.2 *Operating rehabilitation centres*

- 3.2.1 To gradually establish government rehabilitation centres as a model treatment and rehabilitation centre in each development region;
- 3.2.2 To operate rehabilitation centres in collaboration with government or NGOs;
- 3.2.3 To encourage NGOs and CBOs (Community Based Organizations) for operating rehabilitation centres;
- 3.2.4 To fix necessary criteria for operation of rehabilitation centres;
- 3.2.5 To notify general public about the services of rehabilitation centres and services centres;
- 3.2.6 To accord high priority to monitoring and evaluation of rehabilitation centres;
- 3.2.7 To specially encourage rehabilitation centres that are being operated effectively according to the prescribed criteria;
- 3.2.8 To try to change mentality of former drug users by conducting various yoga and meditation camps within rehabilitation centres;

- 3.2.9 To conduct national and international trainings as may be necessary in order to provide quality services at rehabilitation centres;
- 3.2.10 Create networks of rehabilitation centres;
- 3.2.11 To make effective the role of local administration in regular monitoring and supervision of activities of rehabilitation and treatment centres;

3.3 Operating social integration programmes

- 3.3.1 To conduct livelihood-supporting programmes in order to minimize relapse and to develop skills, income generation and entrepreneurship;
- 3.3.2 To make efforts to minimize relapse through meeting, discussion, and mutual relationship having established networks between parents and former drug users;
- 3.3.3 To conduct awareness programmes in participation with families and communities against social discrimination to be perpetrated against drug users and former drug users.

Objective: 4: To minimize infection of HIV, hepatitis B and C and sexual diseases among drug users, their family-members and community

Programmes:

4.1 Oral substitution method

- 4.1.1 To enhance capacity of oral substitution treatment methods such as methadone, buprenorphin and expand its coverage as may be necessary and to expand such programmes to prisons as well if necessary;
- 4.1.2 To launch oral substitution treatment methods through competent government hospitals and private hospitals and

NGOs which are so approved by the Government of Nepal;
and to make provision of necessary psycho social support
program in order to make this programmes more effective;

4.1.3 To conduct quality management and monitoring of the
medicines to be used in oral substitution treatment
programmes in collaboration with Department of Drugs
Administration;

4.1.4 To make provision of trained human resources, minimum
physical and technical facilities for oral substitution
treatment methods;

4.1.5 To make provision of appropriate control to prevent illicit
dealing of the medicines to be used in oral substitution
treatment programmes, in collaboration with Ministry of
Health and Population and law enforcement agencies;

4.2 *Conducting other harm reduction programmes*

4.2.1 To manage for materials such as safe syringe, condoms
through community-based comprehensive outreach
programmes and to destroy such materials in safe manner
after the use;

4.2.2 To establish drop-in centres having minimum criteria in
collaboration with community as may be necessary. To
expand such centres inside prisons as may be necessary;

4.2.3 To emphasize on professional development of counsellor
to be deputed at drop-in centres;

4.2.4 To emphasize on establishment of voluntary counselling
and testing (VCT) in coordination with Ministry of Health
and Population and NCASC;

- 4.2.5 To make provision of monitoring and evaluation with the involvement of stakeholders to enhance effectiveness of programmes and to avoid duplication;
- 4.2.6 To make available opportunities for trainings and capacity enhancement to the persons involved for sustainability of the programmes;
- 4.2.7 To prepare necessary guidelines and action plans for the oral substitution treatment programmes;
- 4.2.8 To launch other programmes relating to harm reduction in coordination with Ministry of Health and Population.

4.3 *Conducting special programmes for women drug users*

- 4.3.1 To conduct awareness programmes for women oral or injecting drugs users;
- 4.3.2 To accord special priority to health problems of women drug users;
- 4.3.3 To raise awareness about use of safe syringe and safe sex;
- 4.3.4 To launch special programmes for livelihood support of women drug users;
- 4.3.5 To give special emphasis on social reintegration of communities and families of woman drug users.

Objective 5: To harmonize various policies which are directly or indirectly related to prevention and control of drugs and to promote collaboration and partnership among various agencies

Programmes:

5.1 Emphasis on collaboration

- 5.1.1 To launch sensitivity programmes for policy makers, agencies involved in law enforcement and communities to remove their negative attitude to bring effectiveness in risks and harm reduction programmes;
- 5.1.2 To involve former drug users, drug users and stakeholders right from the formulation of programmes to ensure access of the target groups by expanding the risks and harm reduction programmes;
- 5.1.3 To mobilize the technical and financial assistance received from various donor agencies on the basis of needs. To make provision of technical working groups and task forces as may be necessary for operation of such programme;
- 5.1.4 To give emphasis on collaboration of the concerned governmental and non-governmental organizations for human resources development;
- 5.1.5 To move forward in collaboration with various governmental and non-governmental organizations in research and development.

5.2 *Establishment of Drugs Control Bureau*

- 5.2.1 To prepare concept papers for establishment of drugs control bureau;
- 5.2.2 To have discussion on the said concept papers with various stakeholders and to establish drugs control bureau on the basis of the suggestions received there from;
- 5.2.3 To make the drugs control bureau full of means and resources;

5.2.4 To launch special programmes for capacity enhancement of staff engaged in drugs control bureau having operated their services in a specialized manner;

5.3 *Strengthening and capacity enhancement of drugs control program*

5.3.1 The existing organizational structure of drugs control program has to be restructured upon necessary studies and consultation;

5.3.2 To make provisions of necessary trainings within the country and in abroad for capacity development of staff;

5.3.3 To carry out monitoring and supervision of drugs control programmes being launched by governmental and non-governmental organizations and to carry out monitoring and supervision accordingly;

5.3.4 To establish data base bank having collected various authentic information and statistics relating to drugs control programmes;

5.3.5 To develop drugs control program as an umbrella organization for all NGOs, CBOs and stakeholders engaged in this sector;

5.3.6 The drugs control program has to carry out various programmes relating to drugs control in coordination with the donor agencies;

5.3.7 To create a basket fund for sustainability of the ongoing drugs control programmes. Governmental and non-governmental organizations have to make available money to such fund;

5.3.8 To prepare necessary procedures and criteria for operation of the mentioned fund.

5.4 Collaboration with other agencies

- 5.4.1 To launch various programmes related to drugs control being carried out by governmental and non-governmental organizations in an integrated manner in collaboration with central level stakeholders of Government of Nepal (including National Planning Commission, Ministry of Health and Population; Ministry of Local Development; Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Youths and Sports and Ministry of Finance);
- 5.4.2 To carry out evaluation of conducted programmes having maintained necessary coordination and collaboration among the centre, local bodies and various stakeholders and having organized regular meetings, discussions and exchange of information;
- 5.4.3 To make the monitoring by the law enforcement units effective to prevent dealing of drugs belonging to narcotic and psychotropic substances specified by International Narcotic Control Board (INCB) without a prescription of a recognized medical practitioner;
- 5.4.4 To make provision of obtaining a permission for sale of cigarette, tobacco-related substances and liquors. Prevent selling of those commodities to children below 18 years of age;
- 5.4.5 To introduce topics related to drugs and its use in the school level text-books in collaboration with Ministry of Education, and the Curriculum Development Centre;

- 5.4.6 To carry on special surveillance at air and surface traffic points for controlling drugs, its abuse and for deterring those engaged in drugs deals;
- 5.4.7 To give special attention to law enforcement in order to deter investment of the proceeds of illicit trafficking in and deal of drugs;
- 5.4.8 To consider to provide necessary incentives on the basis of the contribution made by the NGOs in treatment and rehabilitation in controlling drugs abuse;

Objective 6: Carrying out regular studies and researches on problem of drugs abuse since it is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted

Programme:

- 6.1 To carry out periodic and basic surveys for obtaining factual information on features, trends, intensity, types, number and results of drugs abuse;
- 6.2 To study on the procedures being universally accepted and adopted for controlling drugs use and to use appropriate procedures suitable to Nepal;
- 6.3 To create a mechanism also with representation from civil society for monitoring, evaluation and feedbacks of the activities relating to drugs control;
- 6.4 To make provisions of social auditing of the achievements and results of activities concerning drugs control.

7. Miscellaneous arrangements

- 7.1 Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy:

For effective implementation of the Drugs Control Strategy, an action plan shall be prepared upon discussions and interaction with the relevant organizations and stakeholders.

- 7.2 Monitoring and Evaluation: Provisions of necessary monitoring and evaluation shall be made for effective implementation of the Drugs Control Strategy.
- 7.3 Protection of Human Rights: This strategy shall take into account of fundamental principles of universal human rights. Special precaution shall be followed not to undermine norms and values of human rights while implementing the strategy.

Nepal Law Commission