

Zambia: Supporting prisons in the response to HIV and AIDS

Objective

UNAIDS in Zambia provides technical assistance to policy and action plan, coordination of partners and resource mobilization for HIV and AIDS activities in prisons.

Partners involved

- Ministry of Home Affairs
- Prisons NGOs
- Prisons Service
- Bilateral representatives
- UN agencies

Overview of the situation in Zambian Prisons

The situation with regard to HIV and AIDS is grave in the Zambian prisons. Although there are no current statistics available on prevalence rates, it is very reasonable to report that the prevalence rates are considerably higher than the national average of 16%.

Congestion, poor hygiene and poor diet contribute to an environment where opportunistic diseases are rife. TB is a major problem, along with skin diseases and other illnesses. All of this is closely interlinked with HIV.

Prisons Service is very aware of the problems, and is with little means through NGOs attempting to address the issues through sensitization, trainings, and provision of ART etc.

The Zambian office of UNAIDS initiated the work with prisons in April 2005. The work until now has centered on information gathering, support to mobilization of NGO partners and other stakeholders as well as advocacy activities directed at Ministry of Home Affairs and others.

Deliverables

A Prisons AIDS Advisory Committee has been set up tasked with the responsibility of supporting the finalization of the draft prisons policy on HIV and AIDS, the development of an action plan for prisons, resource mobilization, advocacy activities and finally the setting up of long term structures such as an umbrella organization for prisons NGOs.

UNAIDS in Zambia aims to develop a policy and action plan document, the setting up of a prisons NGO umbrella structure and resource mobilization for increased activities with relation to HIV and AIDS.

Next steps

UNAIDS will continue to support prisons policy and action plan development, resource mobilisation, advocacy, coordination of partners, including support to civil society mobilisation.

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