

## قرار

### Resolution

**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE  
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

**EM/RC66/R.7  
October 2019**

**Sixty-sixth Session  
Agenda item 3(f)**

### **Regional framework for action to strengthen the public health response to substance use**

The Regional Committee,

Having reviewed the technical paper presenting a draft regional framework for action to strengthen the public health response to substance use;<sup>1</sup>

Recalling Resolution A/RES/S-30/1 “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem”, adopted by the 2016 United Nations General Assembly in its special session (UNGASS) on the world drug problem;

Taking into account Target 3.5 of SDG 3: “strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol”;<sup>2</sup>

Recognizing that substance use poses a large and growing challenge to public health and economic development in all parts of the world, including the Eastern Mediterranean Region;

Mindful that a number of countries in the Region face complex emergencies which render their populations – especially adolescents, women and young adults – particularly vulnerable to substance use problems;

Noting that although cost-effective and evidence-based interventions are available, only one person in every 13 with a substance use disorder in the Region receives treatment;

Recognizing that there is a need for a framework to operationalize the recommendations made in the UNGASS 2016 outcome document to strengthen the public health response to substance use;

- 1. ENDORSES** the regional framework for action to strengthen the public health response to substance use (which is annexed to this resolution);
- 2. URGES** Member States to implement the strategic interventions identified in the regional framework with special emphasis on:

<sup>1</sup> EM/RC66/8.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations General Assembly resolution 66/288.

- 2.1 Developing, reviewing and updating national policies and legislation through a multisectoral approach, to minimize the adverse public health and social consequences of substance use;
  - 2.2 Enhancing the availability, coverage and quality of prevention measures and tools, based on scientific evidence, that target relevant age and risk groups in multiple settings;
  - 2.3 Scaling up coverage through effective drug treatment, care, rehabilitation, recovery and social reintegration programmes, giving special attention to those in vulnerable situations;
  - 2.4 Developing and strengthening the capacity of health and social care professionals to provide interventions based on scientific evidence, including appropriate medication-assisted therapy programmes and other relevant interventions;
  - 2.5 Integrating the core set of indicators within their national health information systems to enable reporting on the relevant SDG indicator(s);
- 3. REQUESTS** the Regional Director to:
- 3.1 Provide technical support to Member States to implement and monitor the strategic actions listed in the regional framework;
  - 3.2 Support Member States to enhance their capacity to undertake and utilize operational research and generate reliable and comparable data;
  - 3.3 Facilitate the development of regional networks for the regular exchange of information, good practice and lessons learned among Member States;
  - 3.4 Report on progress made in implementing the regional framework to the 68th and 70th sessions of the Regional Committee, with a final report to the 72nd session.

**Annex 1. Regional framework for action to strengthen the public health response to substance use**

Domain	Strategic interventions	Indicators
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include evidence-based, cost-effective interventions in the universal health coverage priority benefit package</li> <li>• Develop/update evidence-informed national substance use policies with a strong public health component, in consultation with stakeholders from the public, private and civil society sectors</li> <li>• Develop/update substance use-related legislation(s) in line with international covenants, treaties and conventions, in consultation with stakeholders from the public, private and civil society sectors</li> <li>• Set up an intersectoral coordination mechanism to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of evidence-based substance use policies and legislation</li> <li>• Allocate specific budget allocations within the health and welfare sectors to address the prevention, management, rehabilitation, recovery, and monitoring and evaluation of substance use disorders</li> <li>• Develop programmes offering alternatives to incarceration for drug offenders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational multisectoral public health-oriented substance use policies are endorsed and published</li> <li>• Relevant national legislation(s) is updated in line with international covenants, treaties and conventions</li> <li>• Intersectoral (inter-ministerial) coordinating mechanism is in place reflecting public health leadership</li> <li>• Specified budgetary allocations are in place to cover the prevention, treatment, care and rehabilitation of substance use disorders</li> <li>• Depenalization/decriminalization of drug use, and drug courts are available in major cities</li> <li>• Treatment services for substance use disorders and related health problems are available for incarcerated populations across the continuum of care</li> </ul>
<b>Health sector response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate screening and brief interventions for substance use disorders and management of overdose within primary health care and emergency rooms (intervention packages)</li> <li>• Develop/strengthen specialized services for the holistic and integrated management of substance use disorders, including pharmacological and psychosocial interventions</li> <li>• Introduce and/or rapidly scale up the comprehensive package of services for harm reduction (needle and syringe exchange schemes, opioid substitution treatment, voluntary counselling and testing for HIV/hepatitis C, hepatitis B vaccination, antiretroviral therapy, tuberculosis care and treatment, sexually transmitted infection diagnosis and management, and overdose prevention and management)</li> <li>• Ensure that essential medicines for the management of substance use disorders are available</li> <li>• Develop the capacity of health and social welfare personnel in substance use prevention, treatment, care and rehabilitation by integrating it into pre- and in-service teaching/training and as a part of continuing professional education/recertification processes</li> <li>• Facilitate and promote the establishment of self-help and mutual aid groups</li> <li>• Develop/strengthen capacity to conduct and utilize implementation research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary health care and emergency services staff are trained to deliver screening and brief interventions for substance use disorders and to manage opioid overdose</li> <li>• Multidisciplinary specialist teams are available for out- and inpatient treatment and care of substance use disorders, including the provision of pharmacological and psychosocial interventions</li> <li>• Referral guidelines and pathways between primary and specialist services are in place</li> <li>• United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)/WHO treatment standards for ensuring quality are adopted/adapted</li> <li>• A comprehensive package of services for harm reduction is in place</li> <li>• Methadone, buprenorphine, naloxone and other medications for detoxification and maintenance treatment are available as a part of a comprehensive package for the management of substance use disorders</li> <li>• A substance use component is integrated into pre- and in-service education/training programmes for health and social welfare professionals and in continuing professional education/recertification programmes</li> <li>• Self-help/mutual aid groups are available</li> <li>• National and regional networks are established to undertake priority implementation research, including a focus on complex emergency situations</li> </ul>
<b>Promotion and prevention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed universal substance use prevention programmes within broader health policies and strategies based on rigorous local needs and resource assessment</li> <li>• Design and implement age-specific substance use prevention programmes in community, education and workplace settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multicomponent community intervention programmes are available, including parenting skills and family strengthening programmes</li> <li>• Life skills education programmes are integrated into school curricula</li> <li>• Workplace education and intervention programmes are in place</li> <li>• Targeted campaigns are developed using multiple media channels to improve literacy about substance use and substance use disorders</li> <li>• Updated UNODC/WHO prevention standards for ensuring quality are adopted/adapted</li> </ul>

Domain	Strategic interventions	Indicators
<b>Monitoring and surveillance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify a standard set of comparable core indicators (guided by the Lisbon consensus)* to monitor the substance use situation, including for inclusion in existing surveys</li><li>• Develop a national substance use monitoring and surveillance system to collect and report on the core set of indicators using standard data collection tools and methodologies</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National monitoring and surveillance systems are in place</li><li>• Regular reports are published and shared with national/international stakeholders and partners using the core set of indicators</li><li>• Monitoring and registration systems are in place for prescription drugs</li></ul>
<b>International cooperation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote the active sharing of information and evidence between professionals and civil society organizations from countries of the Region at national and international policy forums on substance use</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A regional network to coordinate the public health response to substance use is activated and facilitated</li></ul>

\*United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, United Nations Economic and Social Council. Drug information systems: principles, structures and indicators. Vienna: United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs; 2000 (E/CN.7/2000/CRP.3; [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/Drugs/lisbon\\_consensus.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/Drugs/lisbon_consensus.pdf), accessed 14 July 2019).