



DRUG POLICY AND PUBLIC HEALTH INDICATORS



Lowena West, April 24, 2017

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Policy Affiliation - CSB

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Civil Society Bahamas (CSB) is a non-partisan, leading umbrella civil society organization which provides individuals and groups with advocacy, multi-level partnerships, and development. The mission is a Bahamas where civil society is respected and fully engaged in good governance.

-Executive Board Member since 2005

Policy and Public Health Affiliation - BASH

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Bahamas Association for Social Health (BASH) is a civil society organization (CSO) since 1991 and a member of Civil Society Bahamas. The adult male treatment and rehabilitation facility offers intake, screening, treatment planning, a halfway house program, cognitive behavior therapies, interventions, research data in harm reduction and demand reduction.

-Director and Operations Manager since 2001.

Policy and Public Health Affiliation – Columbo Plan

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-Achieved Columbo Plan – International Centre for Credentialing and Education for Addiction Professionals licensing in 2016 (ICAP I).

OLD PARADIGMS

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The International drug control system through the use of law enforcement policies for dealing with drug use has failed. The current approach through punitive regimes works against the aim of public health goals

which aspire to

human-rights-centered approaches to ensuring access to health and well-being for all people. SUDs incarcerated as a drug control measure are prominent for Infectious disease.



Moving Forward

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Opportunities for members states to move towards public health metrics, may consider the uncertainty of drug control of illicit drug markets, an area of social policy (similar view as dangerous food and tobacco) with an aim to reduce potential harms. Scientific evidence often requires public health approaches consistent with human rights norms enshrined with national laws that measures outcomes of illicit drug markets.

Drug Use Vs Drug Misuse

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In recent times, CSOs, governments and international groups (known for treaty based systems) have debated public health issues arising from the fact that not all drug use is dangerous and measured on the basis of prohibition oriented and supply side, dependence, and enforcement-heavy policies. The right to health approach encourages a system-wide education and communications on respect, protect, and partner values to establish public health indicators and policy design guidelines.

Bahamas Drug Control Challenges

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- Stigma of marginalized and vulnerable groups and communities like substance use disorders, indigenous people, women, and youth with other health risks (i.e., HIV, Hepatitis B and C, Tuberculosis, and non-communicable diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, etc.), coupled with co-occurring disorders are tainted with moral stigma.
- More money is spent on law enforcement (i.e., trafficking, violence and crime) and less political attention is spent on public health (policy displacement).
- Misalignment of population data, metrics, and responses can be unreliable.
- Monitoring and evaluation using IT systems.

Why We Need Public Health Indicators

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- Framing public health policy and quality standards of care interventions based on scientific evidence and good practices
- Identifying the importance of public health data gathering and information sharing among Regional, National, and local –level stakeholders
- Review of indicators to determine importance as adaptive public health governance:
 - Integrating research, policy, technology, and community data sets with decision making;
 - Variables can determine better use of funding;
 - Need to understand illicit drug market;
 - Adjusting of monitoring and evaluation; and
 - Tracking public health outcomes.

Public Health Indicator- Defined

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The World Health Organization (WHO) defines an indicator as a variable with characteristics of quality, quantity, and time used to measure, directly or indirectly, changes in health and health-related situations.`

Framework for New Drug Policy

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Example : Substance Use Through Public Health Measures (Outcome Indicators)

GOALS AND TARGETS

Number of drug overdose deaths

Percentage of institutional health budgets and research spent on treatment and prevention of substance use disorder interventions

OBJECTIVES

Create a national strategy for drug treatment

Create national strategy for harm reduction

OUTPUTS

Evidence of national strategy on drug prevention

National spending on harm reduction

Number of harm reduction interventions

(5) Basic Steps: Identifying Indicators

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1. Identify public health policy issue(s)
2. Identify standards
3. Consult with stakeholders to participate in determining indicators pros and cons
4. Identify the importance of public health indicator process
5. Plan for a resource national, regional, and/or international clearinghouse of information and publications for CSOs to access

Indicators as Adaptive Governance

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In The Bahamas- civil society organizations (CSOs) are working with partners to promote public health models for right to health and wellness access for all. In addition, Inter-ministry's have launched a household drug survey aimed at improving a national drug policy initiative.

Ministry of National Security -NADS provides a National Drug Strategy. The Department of Corrections offers prevention treatment services. Drug Courts are given attention to metrics with a narrow focus on arrests and prosecutions.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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Measurements of governance may include:

1. Population (i.e, size, gender, and percentage)
2. Government budget(s)
3. Degree of decentralization in public decision making
4. Stakeholder partnerships (multi-lateral)
5. Civil society participation
6. Academic and expert knowledge



THANK YOU!



BAHAMAS ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL HEALTH



Lowena West
lowena@lowenawest.com