



Jamaica's National Drug Observatory

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Jamaica's NDO's

- ❖ Significant gratitude to OAS/CICAD for the ongoing efforts to build NDOs in the region and partnership to conduct studies
- ❖ Several studies conducted by Jamaica's NDO since 2001 to present
- ❖ NDO consulted on an ongoing basis to inform national/international discourse on the drug situation in Jamaica
- ❖ Evidence from the successive studies conducted by NDO have been the basis of national prevention plans, programs & advocacy for policy shifts

NDO's Role in Programming & Decision Making

Recent examples:

- ❖ 2013 NSS data on association between substance use and family environment (parenting) led to development of Family-based prevention programme – “Lighthouse” which was tested, standardized (manual developed) and is being implemented islandwide through NCDA network and incorporated into National Parenting Commission’s training agenda for annual programmes and other national community based initiatives
- ❖ 2014 Prison survey findings led to MNS/DCS/NCDA partnership to provide training for probation officers to address drug use among inmates – manual developed and 1st cohort trained/utilizing methodology

NDO's Role in Programming & Decision Making

Recent examples:

2016 NHS data

- ❖ Used as basis to lobby for National Public Education campaigns on ganja
- ❖ Alcohol & tobacco data used to inform PAHO's agenda for 2018/19 technical support to Jamaica
- ❖ Data on lack of awareness on e-cigarettes informed decision to scale up public education on this issue
- ❖ NDO qualitative study informed the content and methodology for the Talk-di-Truth peer-led intervention and other programme components that were youth-friendly

Areas of Study

- ❖ Jamaica's NDO is a repository for drug prevalence data on various target populations
 - ❖ Secondary School (NSS/GSHS)
 - ❖ General population (NHS)
 - ❖ Decision Makers (RSA)
 - ❖ Drug Users (Treatment Data)
 - ❖ Homeless population (MOH/NCDA/Global Fund)
 - ❖ Prison
- ❖ Plans underway by UTECH to conduct a drug prevalence survey in selected tertiary institutions
- ❖ Preliminary discussions with WHO re marijuana study

Additional Information Needs

- ❖ Recommendations from the 2017 RSA indicated the need to move beyond prevalence to use research methods to evaluate policy
- ❖ **Other areas of interest include:**
 - ❖ Drug use during pregnancy
 - ❖ The economic cost of substance use
 - ❖ GIS mapping of Substance Use (further exploration of the NHS data to map hotspot areas across the island that go beyond parish prevalence comparisons)
 - ❖ Determining abuse of prescription medication
 - ❖ Use of energy drinks (common practice of mixing with alcohol)
 - ❖ More qualitative studies to understand contextual issues

Strengthening Caribbean Observatories

- ❖ Capacity building for developing communication plans for the dissemination of research – beyond an event that disseminates to stakeholders
- ❖ Capacity building to translate evidence into policy – developing policy briefs, simplifying findings to communicate with decision makers
- ❖ Increased exposure to international best practices, methodologies, terminology (eg. Updates on international jargon related to substance use – is abuse outdated? Is misuse the politically correct term?)
- ❖ Increased partnership with academia so our studies can be comprehensively analyzed and widely published
- ❖ Short-term capacity building opportunities – fellowships, professional exchange visits