

Promoting Human Rights, Quality Health and Well-Being for Youth Prison Population

Project in Eswatini

Name:

Promoting Human Rights, Quality Health and Well-Being for Youth Prison Populations

Location:

Correctional facilities in Manzini and Shiselweni, Eswatini as part of a four-country programme in Malawi, Eswatini, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Funded by:

Robert Carr Fund

Dates:

2019-2021

Background

The project was funded by the Robert Carr Fund and was implemented from 2019-2021 in Manzini and Shiselweni. It targeted the Mawelawela female correctional facility, Vulamasango and Malkerns Young Person's Centre. The project's primary target were peer educators, support groups and previously incarcerated persons, networks, SANOP Members, SANOP Staff, SANOP Board members, and SANOP committees.

Objectives

The primary objective was improved availability and access to HIV services and programs for prisoners (including people living with HIV, the disabled, LGBTIA+, former prisoners, women and youth) in Malawi, eSwatini (Swaziland), Zambia and Zimbabwe, by 2021. Its outcome areas were:

- i. Improved governance, leadership, and technical capacity of ISP/Civil Society organizations to advocate for prison HIV service provision
- ii. Improved evidence-based decision making on HIV and health related issues by networks, civil society and governments
- iii. Increased influence of networks on access of prison populations to accessible and appropriate quality better HIV services and programs.

Key approaches used

The approach in Eswatini prison health project was to target both prisons and surrounding communities. The project mainstreamed the Social Accountability approach which strengthened the programme for both prisons and the community health facilities. Citizen Led Monitoring (CLM) tools were administered in the juvenile and female facilities and duty bearers were pushed to improve the hygiene conditions of the facilities.



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Prisoners participate in a peer education session.

Key results

The prison health work reached 183 females and 1,360 males

Improved community attitudes, knowledge, practice, and behaviour

1. Capacity building of community volunteers facilitated the continuity of VSO work when the national volunteers had departed, attesting to the benefits of the relational model and great potential of continuity after the project ends.

Adolescents and Youth able to demand for their (SMNRCAHR) health rights

1. At community level, youth peer educators managed to encourage facilities to develop charters of service and include some youths in their monthly planning meetings.

Increased capacity of the health workforce to deliver on inclusive health

1. Psychosocial support and youth friendly trainings for Officers were conducted because of the CLM feedback.
2. The partnership with REPSSI also yielded good results as VSO was able to train correction officers on psychosocial support (PSS), which was requested

by the HMCS Commissioner General after the CLM interface feedback.

3. The partnership with HMCS not only enabled VSO to programme for vulnerable juveniles but also recognition of VSO programmes.

Establishment and operationalization of the health policies and guidelines

1. Under SANOP a steering committee was elected which comprised of mostly ex-inmates and a few Civil Society partners. The chapter is now pushing for its legally registered to be taken serious by various line ministries. The project has also supported the registration of four ex-inmate associations which will help to ensure they are able to open bank accounts and conduct legal businesses.
2. The contribution of Ministry of Health to the Regional Peer Education Manual was really a great success as it showed by-in into VSOs Prison work.

Key partners

