





## Chapter 9

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# Towards Solutions: Strategies and Policies

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DOI: [10.70020/BI.20240801.9](https://doi.org/10.70020/BI.20240801.9)

### Abstract

This chapter evaluates substance abuse and addiction among young individuals in Northern Cyprus, focusing on the socio-economic consequences, risk factors, preventative measures and intervention techniques. The health and social issues caused by drug use and the need of effective strategies and policies to combat substance abuse is covered in this chapter. Additionally, this chapter examines specific presentation strategies, policy suggestions and implementation models, emphasising the importance of tailored interventions that addresses demographic disparities. The cruciality of stakeholder engagement and cross-border collaboration as an important component of effective drug control strategies have been highlighted. On the other hand, the challenges and limitations faced with when implementing interventions suggest that there is a need of comprehensive approaches that involve various stakeholders. The conclusion section highlights the need for customized intervention programs especially for affected groups and the cruciality of continuous data analysis and monitoring to adapt useful strategies to evolving societal needs.

*Keywords: Substance use, addiction, prevention strategies, policy recommendations, stakeholder engagement*

## 9.1. Introduction

This chapter builds on the previously explored issues of substance use and addiction among the youth in Northern Cyprus, delving into the socio-economic impacts, risk factors, preventive strategies, and intervention methods. It also addresses the health and social problems caused by narcotics use both among young people and adults. The comprehensive analysis lays the groundwork for formulating effective strategies and policies to combat substance use and addiction in Northern Cyprus. The aim of this chapter is to present specific strategies and policies for preventing substance use, treating addiction, and enhancing the community's capacity to deal with these issues. These strategies offer a targeted approach to addressing the challenges associated with narcotics use, proposing a comprehensive intervention plan for Northern Cyprus.

## 9.2. Summary

Substance abuse and addiction exert a substantial influence on public health and social welfare (Dick et al., 2009), particularly among the youth of Northern Cyprus. The addictive properties of narcotics and their detrimental health consequences are noteworthy (Koob & Volkow, 2016). Currently employed intervention techniques fail to adequately account for demographic disparities and substance use trends, underscoring the need for targeted approaches. The strategies and policies outlined in this chapter seek to address these gaps and provide effective solutions to the problem of substance abuse.

## 9.3. Main Themes

### 9.3.1. Prevention Strategies

The findings from Northern Cyprus indicate that young adults and males are more prone to engaging in drug use. Hence, it is suggested that tailored intervention programs be designed to target this demographic.

Educational institutions should implement informative programs highlighting the risks associated with drug use. By doing so, these initiatives can help prevent drug use and facilitate early intervention (Webster et al., 2014).

### 9.3.2. Policy Recommendations

Developing policies and programs aimed at combating drug use and addiction is crucial for achieving effective outcomes (Faggiano et al., 2014). The government of Northern Cyprus and relevant institutions should utilize the findings from the research to create effective strategies against drug use. Additionally, increasing accessibility to the probation program and developing special support mechanisms for women who struggle with addiction are vital steps that should be taken (Guydish et al., 2008).

### 9.3.3. Implementation Models

Community involvement and instruction are vital for preventing drug misuse emergencies (Spoth et al., 2011). The Anti-Drug Commission (ADC), educational institutions, neighbourhood organizations, and healthcare providers should collaborate to provide comprehensive awareness and instruction programs about the negative consequences of drug misuse. These programs can significantly contribute to early intervention and the prevention of substance abuse and addiction (Mears & Knight, 2007).

These recommendations present a comprehensive strategy for combatting substance use and addiction in Northern Cyprus. Through continuous data analysis and monitoring, and the implementation of effective interventions and strategies, it is possible to achieve more successful outcomes in the fight against substance addiction (Breslin et al., 2002).

## 9.4. Data and Case Studies

### 9.3.4. Specific Actions

Education and awareness programs that are comprehensive in nature should be created, and they should provide tailored interventions for drug use. These programs should educate young people on the risks associated with substance use, and they should establish early intervention mechanisms for individuals who are at risk (Mears & Knight, 2007).

### 9.3.5. Roles and Responsibilities

The government, educational institutions, healthcare providers should jointly adopt a comprehensive approach that involves active participation in combating substance use and addiction. Each entity should fulfil its particular responsibilities in this extensive battle (Faggiano et al., 2008).

### 9.3.6. Timeline and Success Metrics

Long-term, medium-term, and short-term objectives ought to be established, employing quantifiable criteria to gauge the efficacy of programs and measures in accomplishing these objectives. These standards are indispensable for tracking the progress of initiatives throughout time and making requisite modifications.

These recommendations seek to establish a robust structure for tackling substance use and addiction in Northern Cyprus, concentrating on stakeholder participation, surmounting obstacles, and devising success measures. The cooperation among several entities, including governmental organizations, academic institutions, healthcare providers, and non-profit organizations, is indispensable in this endeavour (Stevenson & Mitchell, 2003).

## 9.5. Stakeholder Engagement

The significance of stakeholders in the policy-making process and their integral roles in implementing strategies are essential for enhancing the efficacy of drug control strategies in the Northern Cyprus (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus) (Aven & Renn, 2010). This necessitates bolstering investigation and prosecution procedures, as well as implementing preventive measures. To achieve this, targeted education programs (Mears & Knight, 2007), awareness campaigns (Malick, 2018), and community-based interventions (Castillo et al., 2019) can be effective. These recommendations emphasize the need for a holistic approach to drug control (Wright et al., 2011) and the active involvement of various stakeholders in this endeavour.

Cross-border collaboration is essential in combatting drug trafficking, given its international nature (Segrave, 2016) as drug crimes are not just a local problem, but also a global one, as evidenced by the variations in citizenship status. As such, effective information sharing and cooperation between countries are vital for curbing drug trafficking and bringing perpetrators to justice (Naayif, 2023).

The development of gender-sensitive interventions and support mechanisms is crucial for gender-focused approaches (Pan et al., 2016). This involves creating prevention and rehabilitation programs, as well as promoting social integration for women who are involved in criminal activities. The rising number of female suspects underscores the importance of designing interventions and support mechanisms that address gender-specific needs, particularly in cases involving drug crimes (Schinke & Schwinn, 2005). It is important to ensure that these interventions and support mechanisms take into consideration the unique needs and challenges that women face in order to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Putting these suggestions into practice will improve the efficiency and inclusivity of drug control tactics in the Northern Cyprus. The engagement of stakeholders in the policy-making process and their roles in implementing strategies will be crucial to the success of the fight. To achieve this goal, it is

essential to foster collaboration among different entities, such as government agencies, educational institutions, healthcare providers, and community organizations.

## 9.6. Challenges and Limitations

Recognizing the potential obstacles and limitations in the implementation of intervention strategies in the fight against substance use and addiction in the Northern Cyprus necessitates adopting comprehensive approaches to address these issues. The critical problems and themes highlighted in the first nine chapters also encompass potential obstacles and limitations that may arise during the execution of these strategies. These challenges comprise resource constraints, inadequate social acceptance and involvement, deficiencies in legal and regulatory frameworks, and diversity in the needs and expectations of the target audience.

To develop effective intervention strategies and policies, it is essential to provide detailed recommendations for specific actions, roles and responsibilities, and timelines and success metrics. Such actions should include the implementation of comprehensive education and awareness programs aimed at combating substance use and addiction, as well as interventions specific to narcotic use. These programs are critical for raising awareness among the target audience and creating opportunities for early intervention (Malick, 2018).

When it comes to addressing substance use and addiction, it is important to take a multi-layered approach that involves various stakeholders such as the government, educational institutions, health service providers, and civil society organizations (Loudenbourg & Leonardson, 2003). Stakeholders should jointly define their individual responsibilities in this encompassing struggle and must collaborate through coordination and teamwork. It looks important to establish specific schedules and measurable success indicators to set realistic, measurable, achievable short, medium and long-term objectives. With these objectives it would be easy to evaluate the efficiency of programs

and policies. Such indicators are crucial for monitoring the development of policies and interventions over time and making necessary changes.

By implementing these suggestions, great success in the battle against substance abuse and addiction in Northern Cyprus can be achieved. The involvement of stakeholders in the policy-making process and their roles in executing strategies will be critical in determining the success of the struggle. Developing solutions to conquer the challenges and limitations encountered during this process is key to achieving lasting improvements in the fight against substance addiction (Aven & Renn, 2010).

## 9.7. Conclusion and Call to Action

An important aspect of this endeavour involves summarizing the proposed solutions and anticipated outcomes while simultaneously conveying a clear call to action. In the course of the first nine chapters, a comprehensive examination was conducted on various demographic variables associated with substance use and addiction in Northern Cyprus. This analysis encompassed aspects such as gender, age, educational attainment, and nationality. Notably, young adults and males are disproportionately affected by substance use, emphasizing the urgency of devising tailored intervention programs for these groups.

The development of specific intervention programs for young adults and males is crucial, as indicated by both Intervention Programs and Educational Institutions. Additionally, it is suggested that educational institutions implement informative programs to educate individuals on the harmful effects of drug use (Botvin & Griffin, 2007). In the Research and Data Collection section, conducting comprehensive studies on broader sample groups with the use of more objective data collection methods is recommended. This will allow for a detailed examination of the factors that contribute to drug use.

The need for the Northern Cyprus government and relevant institutions to use the findings in policy and program development for combating drug use is emphasized in Policy and Program Development. Social Awareness

highlights the significance of increasing awareness about drug use and addiction among all segments of society, with media, civil society organizations, and educators playing a crucial role (Malick, 2018).

The Supervised Probation Process recommends expanding the accessibility of the probation program and creating special support systems for women, while simultaneously monitoring the monthly distribution of program participation and implementing special measures during the year-end periods.

Undertaking these recommendations can contribute to achieving more fruitful outcomes in the struggle against substance use and addiction. Ongoing data analysis and monitoring can facilitate the development of interventions and strategies over time, culminating in more successful results in the battle against substance addiction. This procedure is essential for enhancing existing services and devising new strategies and interventions to accommodate the evolving needs of society.

In conclusion, recommendations for Northern Cyprus can be listed as follows:

1. Scientific based studies need to provide the basis for strategy formulation and policy direction to fight against drugs. In this respect, alcohol, tobacco and drug use which may be interdependent should be investigated. To this end, four studies are needed to form the baseline.
  - a. General population survey among population between 15 and 64 is needed, as for the drug, tobacco and alcohol use in last 12 months and lifetime experience.
  - b. Detection of emerging patterns of drug use via waste water monitoring.
  - c. PET analysis to detect alcohol use in the general population.
  - d. Illegal substance profiling and country of origin examination is needed to be used for route of drug smuggling.



2. The traffic accident cases and other criminal cases related to alcohol and drug use need to be analysed to detect risks.
3. Regarding the probation system, training of personnel is needed.
4. Crime prevention strategies need to be embedded in place to support the decrease the supply of drugs to strengthen the fight with drugs.
5. Instead of traditional training programs more up-to-date programs with specific focus on target groups need to be designed.
6. Rehabilitation processes and social cohesion programs specific to adults and children should be planned in place in line with the needs and prevalence detected through general population surveys and waste water analysis and expert reports.
7. Regarding training in schools, families should also be targeted.
8. Collaboration activities need to be increased with universities.
9. A robust strategy and Action Plan for Fight Against Drugs is needed.
10. Better coordination among Ministries and other public institutions, private organisations and CSOs is needed.
11. Probation system's capacity will be enhanced for particularly foreigners which have language barrier.

More inclusive programs with the support of active CSOs will enhance the system.

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