



17th St. & Constitution Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
United States of America

Organization of American States

P. 202.458.3000  
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**INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE  
CONTROL COMMISSION  
CICAD**

Secretariat for Multidimensional Security

**FIFTY-THIRD REGULAR SESSION**  
**May 20 -22, 2013**  
**Washington, D.C.**

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**DRUGS AND PUBLIC HEALTH**  
**DR. MARIA ELENA MEDINA MORA**  
**GENERAL DIRECTOR – NATIONAL PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE “RAMÓN DE LA FUENTE MUÑIZ”, MÉXICO**



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## **Drugs and Public Health**

**INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE CONTROL COMMISSION**  
**CICAD**

## Chapter organization

### ✓ SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION	HSEMISPHERIC SITUATION	POLICIES AND PROGRAMS	RESOURCES TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM
Conceptual Framework	The context	Demand reduction	Available human resources
<i>Public Health</i>	The extent of the problem	Prevention <i>Children and youth</i>	Infrastructure <i>Treatment/ recovery</i>
<i>Social determinants of health</i>	Social factors	<i>Family, school, community and environmental interventions</i>	Capacity for <i>Research and Evaluation</i>
Drug effects	Risk and protective factors	Adaptation and evaluation	<b>ANNEX</b>
<i>How do drugs work?</i>	Impact of Drug Use on Health	Screening and brief intervention	<i>Drugs: classification and effects</i>
<i>The role of adulterants</i>	Impact of Drug Use on Society	Harm reduction	<i>Prevention Programs and Pharmacological treatments</i>
Patterns of use		Treatment <i>Efficacy /programs</i>	<i>Prevention Programs and Resources to address the problem</i>

## Conceptual framework

### • **Public Health** approach

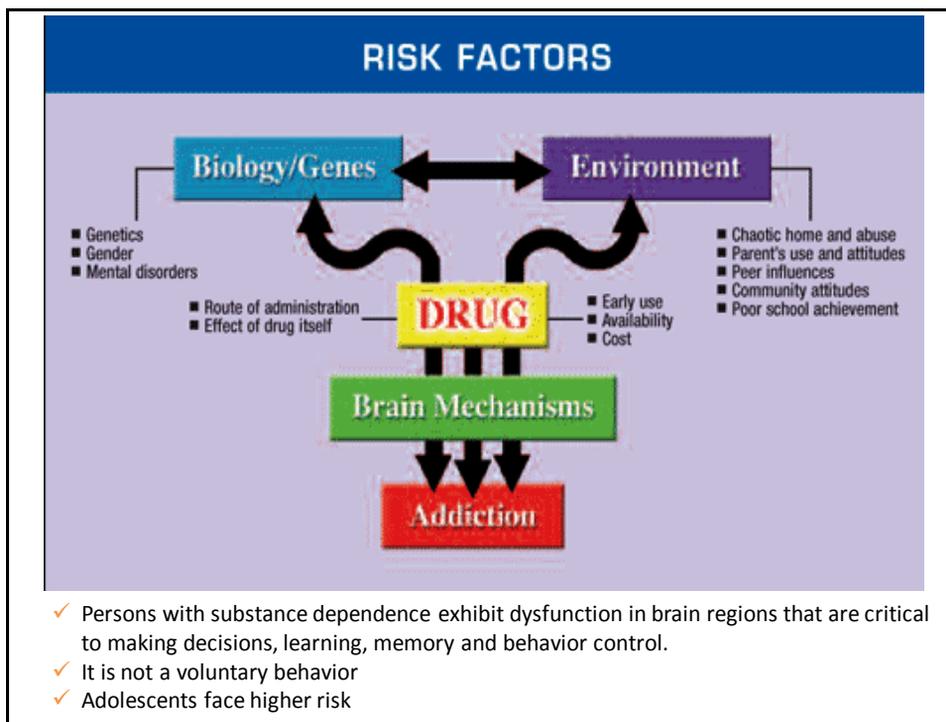
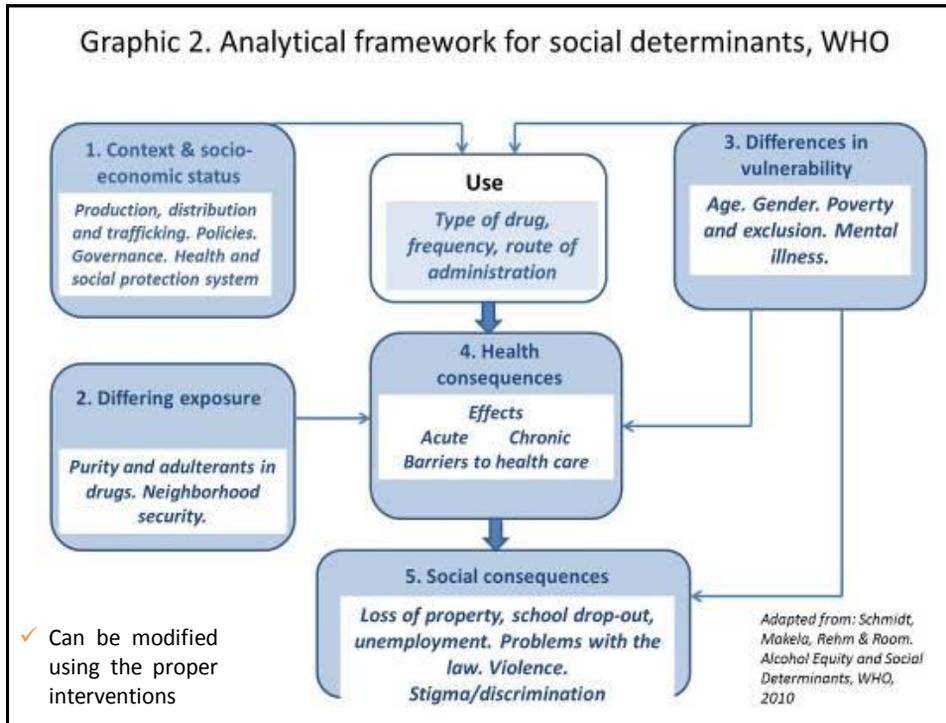
- Broad interventions designed to change both the environment and individual behavior. This is complemented by the concept of human security, which seeks to protect and ensure three basic freedoms for individuals and communities: freedom from fear, freedom to live without unmet needs, and freedom to live in dignity.
- Ensure that **drug control interventions do not cause more harm** than the substances themselves.

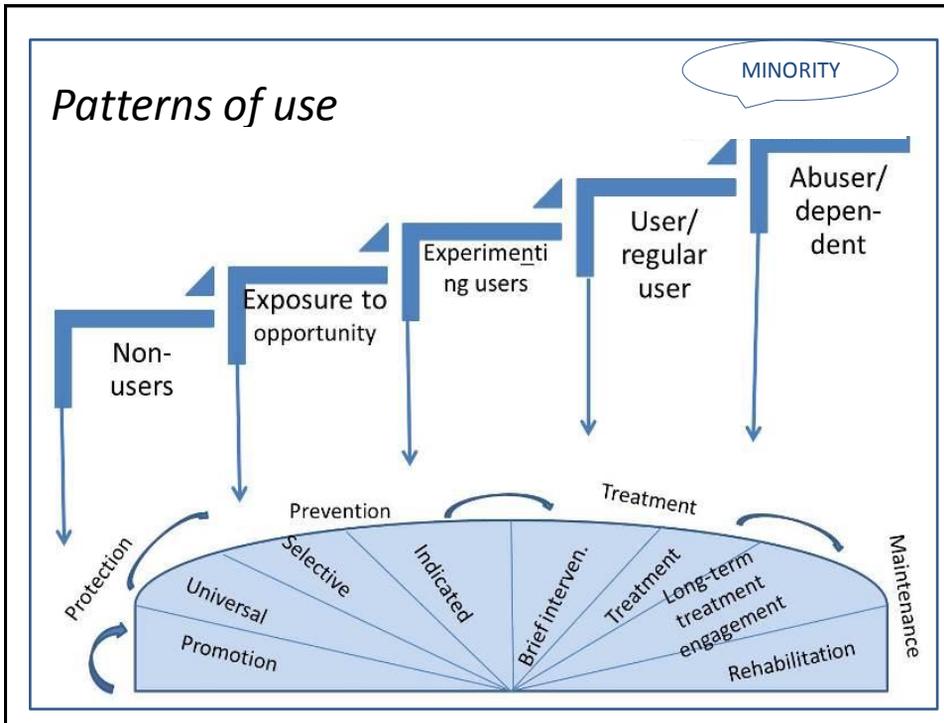
- ✓ Requires **updated information**, in good quantity and quality. Few countries invest enough resources on this.

It is necessary to:

- ✓ **strengthen information systems** in order to allow for proper monitoring
- ✓ **fund research** to address the problem more effectively and
- ✓ **invest in human capital and infrastructure**

Graphic 2. Analytical framework for social determinants, WHO





## Drug use in the hemisphere

Harmful use of **alcohol** is the main problem.

✓ *Underage drinking and consumption among youth (men and women) are the main concerns*

Among illegal drugs, **marijuana** is the most consumed, and consumption is increasing

✓ *Concern about use among teenagers because of brain development process*

**Cocaine** average consumption are similar to Western and Central Europe

✓ *Smokeable forms – growing problem*

**Heroin** consumption is low in the majority of countries, and **methamphetamine** use is more common

✓ *Must be prevented*

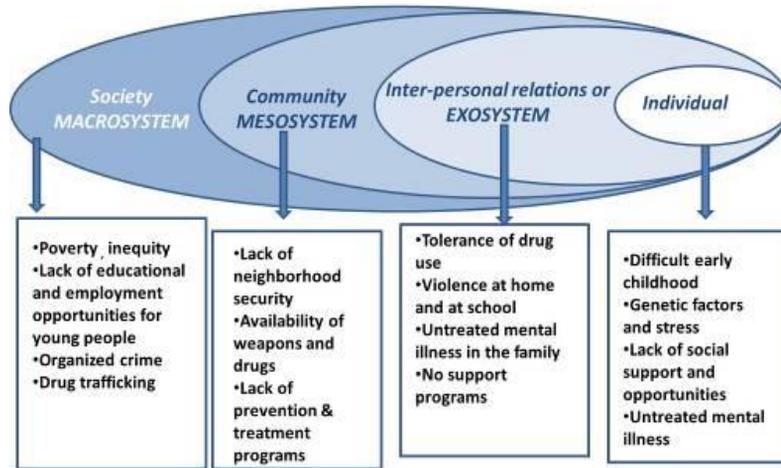
**Pharmaceuticals** abuse is a problem in US; Latin-america and the Caribbean have lower levels.

✓ *More information is needed*

*GBD: The global burden of disease for alcohol and drugs in all regions of the Americas is **above worldwide average.***

✓ **Drug use** is different between countries, both in terms of the magnitude of consumption, and the type of substance – **a single problem/program?**

Graphic 3. Psychosocial factors associated with drug use



Adapted from Bronfenbrenner's model, 1987

- ✓ **Violence** is influenced by factors such as: availability of weapons and drugs, police strategies, lack of educational, work and recreational opportunities, and because of social acceptance of violence to resolve conflicts.
- ✓ There are programs that **can reduce risk** of violence and prevent it.

### Which prevention programs are effective? (example)

Program	Effectiveness	Research that support effectiveness	Countries where research was conducted	Comments
<b>SCHOOL BASED</b>				
Life Skill Program and other school based programs which develop social and life skills	Evidence of: Decrease frequency of alcohol intoxication and "binge drinking"  Decrease use of cannabis and other drugs	1 Meta – analysis alcohol consumption in youth under 18 years old  2 Illicit drug use in youth under 18 years old  ( Babor T, 2010; Faggiano F, 2008; Foxcroft DR, 2011)	Meta-analyses include studies conducted in the US and Canada	Programs based on development of social skills can reduce the likelihood of cannabis use by between 1 and 23% and the likelihood of using other drugs by 34 to 85% (after 5 to 7 years of participation in the program)

- ✓ School-based programs to prevent drug use must go hand in hand with other measures that regulate availability, involve families, and tie in with community policies.
- ✓ This strategy must be prioritized, allocating the necessary resources for proper implementation and evaluation.

***The most successful and well studied interventions will have a limited impact if applied in isolation or for a short period of time.***

### Which treatment options are effective? (example)

Intervention	Research	Results	Evidence	Comment
Treatment with gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB)	Meta – analysis 13 controlled clinical trials (1).	Withdrawal syndrome during detoxification	More effective than naloxone and disulfiram to maintain abstinence. Effective to prevent withdrawal (equivalent to the efficacy of benzodiazepines)	Although is an effective treatment, it is used with caution due to the risk of abuse.

- ✓ We face a chronic disease that should be treated as such, with full commitment of health systems and respect for the rights of patients.

#### **DEMAND REDUCTION PROGRAMS:**

***Political support, a strong legal framework, enough resources and adequate budget to sustain policies are required to reduce social consequences of drug use.***

## Policies and Programs

- **Two thirds** of the **countries** have **official guidelines** for specialized drug abuse treatment centers.
- Quality and effectiveness **evaluation** of treatment is **not common** and healthcare provided is **fragmented**.

- ✓ **Harm reduction models** are useful strategies that seek to minimize or modify the consequences, instead of consumption. This complements prevention and treatment interventions.

#### Guidelines CICAD/OPS/OMS/ONUDD strategies

- ✓ **Integration** of treatment into the general health care system
- ✓ Strengthening of **primary care, brief and community-based interventions**
- ✓ **Effective, evidence-based, and systematically evaluated** treatment protocols
- ✓ Interventions in the framework of human rights protection, and priority access to services for the most **vulnerable** populations
- ✓ Strengthen **human resources**

***Human resources and infrastructure are not enough to address the problem***

**THANK YOU**