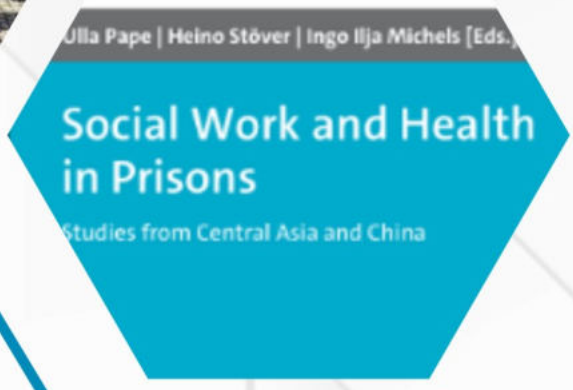
FIVE YEARS OF SOLID PROJECT

SOCIAL WORK AND STRENGTHENING NGOS IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION TO TREAT DRUG ADDICTION







5 years of SOLID project

Content

Introduction....1
5 years of SOLID project – an overview....4
The universities network....5
Description of procedures and processes for steering the exceed network....7
Description of the research agenda and of its implementation....11
Spin-off projects....12
Participation at International Conferences....14
25th International AIDS Conference, Munich, Germany, 22-26 July 2024....14
German Addiction Congress, Berlin, Germany, 18-20 September, 2023....39
10th Novel Psycoactive Substances Conference, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 6-8 November 2023....45
Social Work Innovation: Theory and Practice in the New Development Stage, Beijing, China, 24-25 November 2023....47
Conference Association of School of Social work “Diversity and Social Work Education: Building Bridges for Sustainable Futures”, Porto, Portugal, 20-23 June 2023....49
Lisbon Addiction Conference – European Conference on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies, Lisbon, Portugal, 21-25 November 2022....54
The SOLID summer and winter schools....69
SOLID summer school, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 3-14 July, 2023....69
SOLID summer school, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 27 June-8 July, 2022....72
SOLID winter school, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 22-26 November 2021....74
Summer/autumn school, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 26-30 October, 2020....76
The annual meetings of the SOLID project....79
Shanghai, China, 22-26 April 2024....79
Shanghai, China, City Health Conference, 26 April 2024....83
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 24-26 April 2023....87
City Health Conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 27 April 2023....89
Nur Sultan (Astana), Kazakhstan, 24-25 May 2022....97
International Conference of Social Workers of Kazakhstan “Social work with convicts as ensuring human rights: Issues of interaction between state institutions and civil society” program, Astana, Kazakhstan, 23-27 May 2022....100

Bukhara, Uzbekistan, 5-7 October 2021.....104
SOLID Project publications.....107

Introduction

SOLID – short for ***Social Work and strengthening NGOs in development cooperation to treat drug addiction"*** – is an international research project funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for the period between the years 2020 – 2024. This project consists of educational and research exchange among five research institutions from Germany, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and the Public's Republic China, and is part of the DAAD's Excellence Network. Coordinated from Frankfurt Institute for Addiction Research, the project aims to bring together five research institutes to fund early-career researchers in each country on social studies of illicit drug use. In addition, the project aims to address one of the most pressing issues in Central Asia and PR China, that of the underdeveloped role of social work in helping people who use drugs and suffer from associated health concerns. SOLID comprises epidemiological as well as comparative methodological approaches and follows ***United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals*** *of:*



At the moment, there are 14 doctoral and 5 post-doctoral researchers funded by the project to develop their independent research agendas within three key research areas:

- **Social work, drug treatment with special focus on opioid substitution treatment including psychosocial support and counselling**

- **Social work and infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, hepatitis-C, COVID-19**
- **Social work in prisons and with people with imprisonment experiences due to illicit drug use, sale, or possession**

The SOLID Exceed project offers an opportunity to conduct research and to develop social work on the basis of insights into the local socio-cultural context and the national drug discourses in all partnering countries in Central Asia, China and Germany. We aim to support the selected doctoral students in each step of their academic and vocational training. The Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences has accumulated an impressive body of expertise and competence in the training of social workers at the Department of "Social Work and Health", including the Bachelor course on "Social Work: transnational" and the Master's program on "Addiction Therapy and Social Management in Addiction Help". These experiences will serve as a basis for the further development of social work curricula in all partnering countries through mutual exchange and partnership throughout the entire duration of the project. The central focus of the project is the development of social work services and education in three main directions: social work with regard to drug addiction, with regard to infectious diseases and social work in the prison system. By bringing together such a diverse range of cultural, political, and educational with a contexts specialization represented on drug use by and the drug partner addiction.

Which universities participated in the project?

The Bishkek State University named after K. Karasaev, *in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic* with the following added values:

- Expertise in social work development in Kyrgyzstan
- Teaching experience
- Experience in the supervision of PhD candidates
- Collaboration with state institutions in Kyrgyzstan

- Cooperation with international organizations in Kyrgyzstan, e.g. UN agencies- Cooperation with development and health NGOs.

***The Eurasian National University L.N. Gumilyev**, in Astana, Repblic of Kazkhstan* with the following added values:

- Experience in social work development in Kazakhstan
- Teaching experience in social work
- Experience in the supervision of PhD candidates
- Collaboration with international organizations, e.g. UN agencies and WHO- Collaboration with state agencies in Kazakhstan
- Collaboration with development and health NGOs in Kazakhstan
- Regional networking

***The Shanghai Mental Health Center; Shanghai Jiaotong University School of Medicine**, in Shanghai, Peoples's Republic of China* with the following added values:

- Experience in social work development in China
- Teaching experience in social work
- Experience in the supervision of PhD candidates
- Collaboration with international organizations, e.g. UN agencies
- Collaboration with state agencies in China
- Collaboration with development and health NGOs in China
- Regional networking

***The State Medical Institute Bukhara**, in Bukhara, Repubölic of Uzbekistan* with the following added values:

- Experience in the development of drug treatment in Uzbekistan
- Teaching experience in drug treatment and social work- Experience in the supervision of PhD candidates
- Collaboration with international organizations, e.g. UN agencies

- Collaboration with state agencies in Uzbekistan- Collaboration with development and health NGOs in Uzbekistan
- Regional networking

5 years of SOLID project – an overview

The SOLID exceed network had been established within the project timeframe. In each country, new cooperative relationships were built with partners from the public sector, international organizations, nonprofit organizations and community groups. The SOLID Exceed project offers an opportunity to conduct research and to develop social work on the basis of insights into the local socio-cultural context and the national drug discourses in all partnering countries in Central Asia, China and Germany. We aim to support the selected doctoral students in each step of their academic and vocational training. The Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences has accumulated an impressive body of expertise and competence in the training of social workers at the Department of “Social Work and Health”, including the Bachelor course on “Social Work: transnational” and the Master’s program on “Addiction Therapy and Social Management in Addiction Help”. These experiences will serve as a basis for the further development of social work curricula in all partnering countries through mutual exchange and partnership throughout the entire duration of the project. The central focus of the project is the development of social work services and education in three main directions: social work with regard to drug addiction, with regard to infectious diseases and social work in the prison system. By bringing together such a diverse range of cultural, political, and educational with a contexts specialization represented on drug use by and the drug partner addiction.

The SOLID project team continued its activities on the basis of the three pillars of the SOLID project: social work and drug dependency, social work and infectious diseases and social work and prison. The PhD students continued their individual research projects. As all PhD students are currently in their final year, the focus of their activities are on the publication of papers, the preparation of conference presentations and the preparation of the PhD thesis. All PhD students participated in international and national conferences. In September 2023, the Frankfurt University

of Applied Sciences organized a one-week intensive PhD colloquium to support the finalization of the PhD projects. The PhD colloquium focused on methods, academic writing and publication strategies for PhD students.

The SOLID project team continued its activities based on the goals of the project: to address one of the most pressing problems in Central Asia and the PRC, namely the underdeveloped role of social work in helping people who use drugs and suffer from related health problems. SOLID includes epidemiological as well as comparative methodological approaches and is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The cooperation in the university network had been intensified in the 5-years period of the project. In May 2023, the annual project meeting was organized in Bishkek. For the first time, the partners from Shanghai Medical Centre were able to join a project meeting in person (in the years before the COVID pandemic did not allow it). The meeting was combined with the international "City Health Conference" with approximately 100 participants. This combination allowed the project partners to broaden their network with valuable contacts in the region of Central Asia and China. New contacts were established. The City Health Conference also provided the project team with the opportunity to present ongoing research to a broader audience. Furthermore, the joint book publication "Social Work and Health in Central Asia and China" was launched at the conference. This had been continued in 2024 in a meeting in Shanghai (see the reports on the Annual Meetings from page 79ff.).

The universities network

The universities worked together on at least 3 research projects and also provide additional research capacity. A joint research list had developed in the first year (2020) and implemented from the 2nd year (2021) with reference to the role of social work with drug users/dependents, infectious diseases and prisons, including socio-economic, legal and cultural country contexts.

The SOLID network contributes to the development of social work as an academic profession in the partner countries. To this end, the individual scientific projects of the participants (PhD students and postdocs) are supported by means of regular

academic exchange, workshops, trainings, discussions as well as preparation of (joint) publications and conference presentations. In 2022, we facilitated the active presentation of our group at Lisbon Addiction Conference, in 2023 at the German Addiction Conference in Berlin and in 2024 at the Munich International AIDS Conference. Our partners presented oral presentations and posters during these conferences and used the opportunity for professional networking. The roles within the SOLID network are defined by function: the scientific coordinators manage the project at the national level and supervise the scientific development of the PhD students. The postdocs work on their individual projects, assist in the development of the PhD students and organize trainings and workshops. The overall project management lies with the project leadership team at the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences. The strategies of the network are discussed and agreed on in monthly meetings with the whole group of scientific coordinators from all countries (the SC meetings), in which also the financial and operative sustainability of the network is discussed and agreed on. Central for network sustainability is the identification of core topics that are interesting and relevant for all partner universities.

We continued the development of e-learning courses which will make a sustainable impact on social work training at the partner universities. The e-learning courses and associated teaching materials are meant to be used in different teaching contexts, including courses on drug dependence and social work, nonprofit seminars and advocacy activities with regard to the development of social work in the partner countries. In this way, the steering procedures and processes in the SOLID network are jointly developed with the participating partners. Since its inception in 2019, the SOLID project has succeeded in building an expert network on the thematic issues of drug addiction, infectious diseases and social work in the prisons. The network is continuously expanded with conferences, meetings and summer schools for students who will in the future take up roles as social workers and researchers. The SOLID cooperates with a broad range of nonprofit organizations, professional associations and expert networks in the partner countries. This cooperation enables the development of social work services and education in the partner countries.

The partner countries belong to the group of developing countries in the South. The SOLID project activities facilitate cooperation with all partner universities of the

network. The most important South-South cooperation in the SOLID project are the cooperation among the countries of Central Asia and China. Partner universities can learn from each other through the adoption of best practices. To facilitate this cooperation, the SOLID project supports the participation in regional conferences and network meetings as well as professional field visits in the region.

Description of procedures and processes for steering the exceed network

There had monthly virtual meetings of the Frankfurt SOLID team with the scientific coordinators of the project, as well as monthly meetings of the postdocs and PhDs of the project under the guidance of the Frankfurt PostDocs in order to strengthen the coordination of the research and learning activities of the network of participating universities. Each year, the network convenes in person for an annual meeting. The meetings included workshops and discussion on academic writing and publication strategies. Furthermore, the PhD students had the opportunity to present their projects at conferences and workshops. Next to the central steering of the SOLID network which is coordinated by the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, all partner countries contribute to the development of the network in their countries. All partner institutions have established contacts with relevant partners from the public sector and nonprofit sector in their countries.

Within the SOLID network, knowledge transfer is realized through various channels. The first one is the scientific exchange between researchers and PhD students. This takes place in the monthly journal clubs where PhD students discuss literature that is relevant to their project and work in progress, for example articles that they intend to submit to a scientific journal. The scientific exchange is also realized in methods workshops during the project meetings and colloquia. In addition, all researches are in a constant exchange on articles and book publications. In the preparation of a NOMOS books series (named Drug Use in History and Society), the SOLID network organized a regular exchange on the progress of individual chapters on a peer-to-peer basis. The same is done for the preparation of scientific articles. The researchers of the SOLID network use the SOLID website for their internal and external knowledge transfer. For example, information on relevant conferences and

journals is stored on the website. The SOLID network also uses a Telegram channel for exchanging information on publications, conferences and other project-related activities. The second area of knowledge transfer is the theory-practice transfer which is realized at different levels within the SOLID project. During the summer schools, an exchange with service providers had been organized. This allows the Summer School participants to learn more about social work practices in the three topic areas. The theory-practice transfer is also utilized for the preparation of publications and presentations. PhD students collected data with the help of service providers such as NGOs. PhD students also published findings in collaborations with partners from nonprofit organizations. The third form of knowledge transfer takes places within the partner institutions of the SOLID network. Partner institutions exchange information on project management techniques. Another area of knowledge transfer is the development of content-related networks in the partner countries. Each project partner collaborates with a variety of partner from the public sector and the nonprofit sector. The network centre around relevant topics such as drug treatment, social work in prisons etc. Over the course of the project realization, each partner university has managed to build up a vital network in its country. Last but not least, the SOLID network also entails a transnational knowledge transfer that goes beyond the bilateral relations between Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences and the respective partner institutions. Among the partners, new connections have been developed that facilitate the knowledge transfer in the region.

The SOLID network aims at the development of educational courses in the field of drug treatment and social work. We are in constant contact with our project partners and discuss the development and implementation of teaching activities (courses, labs, workshop and trainings) at the partner universities. Thanks to the experience gained during the implementation of the SOLID project, a doctoral program has been opened at the Department of Social Work and Practical Psychology at Bishkek State University in the Kyrgyz Republic. Since January 2023, the curriculum, educational program, educational and methodological complexes and licensing documents have been prepared for the opening of a PHD doctoral program in Psychology at the Department of Social Work and Practical Psychology of Bishkek State University. Students were enrolled in the field of Psychology. The course “Methodology of dissertation research” and “Academic writing” had been taught by the Scientific

Coordinator of SOLID in the Kyrgyz Republic. The educational program of the Department of Social Work and Practical Psychology of BSU for the preparation of bachelors and masters “Social Work” passed an external, international examination to establish compliance of the educational program (cluster of programs) with accreditation standards established in accordance with the responsible agencies of the Kyrgyz Republic, European quality assurance standards ESG-ENQA1, the requirements of professional standards and the labour market. In Kazakhstan, a training seminar of the SOLID Scientific Coordinator from the L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Astana, Kazakhstan) was held on organizing early detection of tuberculosis and increasing patient adherence to treatment among key groups to strengthen the capacity of social work specialists in the health system in order to create an effective multidisciplinary team. Further trainings by PhDs of the SOLID project in Kazakhstan could conducted on Familiarization with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, or on the application of case management methodology and a training for narcologists on new psychoactive substances/stimulants organized by UNODC (Kazakhstan Office) together with SOLID PostDoc for drug treatment practitioners from 20 Kazakhstan clinics could be organized. Furthermore, a SOLID PhD student developed and implemented a workshop on the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners for penitentiary officers in Arshaly prison in Akmola region in Kazakhstan. Another PhD of SOLID gave a workshop on case management for social workers, psychologists, medical doctors and nurses of medical organizations in Saryagash in Turkestan region. The PostDoc of the project in Kazakhstan provided a workshop on training for narcologists on new psychoactive substances and stimulants organized by UNODC Kazakhstan and a course for populations with special clinical needs at the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre of Mental Health in Kazakhstan. In Uzbekistan, several new courses were implemented at Bukhara State Medical Institute (BSMI; the SOLID partner in Uzbekistan). During the reporting period, the SOLID PostDoc has developed and taught a course on Community Health for international BA-level students at BSMI. He has also organized a number of workshops on academic writing at the BSMI. The workshops were attended by master-level and doctoral-level students. The Scientific Coordinator of the SOLID Project in Uzbekistan collaborated with the staff of the Department of Psychiatry, Narcology and Medical Psychology of BSMI on integration of the ISSUP UTC and

WHO training materials. In China, training courses of the SOLID PhDs at the Shanghai Mental Health Centre, Jiaotong University, School of Medicine, had been organized on Community Drug Rehabilitation Standardized Psychological Correction Services The primary audience for this course had been social workers and community police officers. The main format consists of 7 group lectures and 4 mindfulness experiential sessions. After the completion of the course, the effectiveness of the program had been evaluated, and the standardized guidelines manual had been revised and finalized. A PhD from SOLID, recorded a video course on skills training for social worker psychotherapy for drug users, including 9 theoretical courses, once a week, with 45 minutes each time. Currently, 85 social workers from across the country have been recruited online and are undergoing training. The SOLID Scientific Coordinator hold a 2-day training program, to introduce the neural regulation therapy in the field of drug abuse treatment. 70 participants, including social workers, medical staff, compulsory drug abuse treatment staff, and medical students, joined this training.

External actors have been involved in the development of the curricula and of the specific courses on drug treatment and social work. The WHO and UNODC International Standards of the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders have been used as a guideline for developing of training courses for students of medicine and social work. The SOLID network aims to strengthen the implementation of international standards in the region. According to an UN resolution, states are required to implement these international standards. Furthermore, the Competency Profile for Social Work with People with Substance Use Disorders (SUD), developed by the German National Association of Social Work with SUD (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziale Arbeit in der Suchthilfe - DG-SAS), are promoted by the Solid network. The Solid network translated the competency profile from German into English, Russian and Mandarin and published the material on the project website.

With regard to the participants of the 2022 and 2023 summer school, we keep contact with the alumni through meetings at the partner universities and through information exchange through the SOLID project website. All alumni of the summer school have access to the Solid project website and can use material from the website. Several of the SOLID summer school alumni stayed involved in the SOLID

project through the writing of joint articles and through participation in project activities at the partner institutions. The summer schools had been concluded by an evaluation. The contact with the alumni is maintained through the national scientific coordinators who have a position at the partner universities. The former participants are informed about the ongoing activities of the SOLID project and invited to participate in online and on-site events in their countries.

Description of the research agenda and of its implementation

The research in the Solid project takes place in three priority areas:

(1) social work and drug treatment,
(2) social work and infectious diseases, and
(3) social work and prison.

All PhD and postdocs are working in one of the three priority areas (project pillars) and regularly meet with their working groups. In all priority areas, book publications and articles had been developed. There are monthly peer-group meetings with all 5 postdoctoral research associates who are working on building overarching research questions to encompass the entirety of the project's scope and design an overall comparative analysis. The postdoctoral research associates have created a systematic literature review to identify the gaps in the existing research and defined themes and formed the guiding research questions. The first topic in this work had been to identify the process of enrolment to treatment and the intermediary role of social workers in referring people in need of professional intervention to primary treatment care – often, detoxification. For this research topic, the group has studied the historical and cultural context of the involved countries to identify the development of drug treatment and its current position within each country's overall healthcare system. This way, the group identified the challenges and achievements of the treatment policy and systematically examined the role of social workers in getting involved into the provision of treatment. This project, which is also the first overarching research question of the overall SOLID project, follows a 'spiral continuum' model to design the encompassing comparative study on the relation to

treatment. The spiral continuum model reflects three stages of entering treatment: referral – enrolment – retention, and offers a comprehensive view, of the operating treatment system and the specificities of the social work profession in providing first aid to people whose drug use becomes problematic. As a result of this research process, two book publications were published with the renown German publisher NOMOS on the topic of “Drug treatment cultures and policy in Germany, Central Asia and China”.

Central Asia (CA) and China are key regions in terms of international efforts to tackle illicit drug trafficking and the problems related to it such as addiction. Modern and effective approaches to treating drug use disorders, according to the UN/WHO International Treatment Standards, exist in all countries but lack institutionalisation and require further expansion and harmonisation. NGOs, an important part of efficient and sustainable drug policies, are weak in all countries and lack a working basis. Of increasing importance is the promotion of social work trainings in Central Asian countries and China, which in Europe and especially in Germany plays a central role in the prevention and treatment of drug dependence and its health and social consequences. But social work as a means of reducing these problems is still in its infancy in both Central Asia and China. A third book on Social Work and Health in Prisons deals with the development of social work and health in prisons in Central Asia and China. The focus on social work in prison might seem odd at first sight. The topic is difficult, as the relations between the profession of social work and the management of correctional institutions are fraught with tension and conflict. Whereas prison institutions operate on the logics of correction and control, social work and health services in these institutions are geared (or should be geared) towards providing assistance and acceptable minimum standards of health to the prison population. The book Social Work and Health in Prisons was published in April 2023 and launched at the *City Health Conference* in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The books are part of the newly established series “Drug use in history and society”. In 2023, a working group on topic 2 “Infectious diseases among drug using population” prepared a book publication “HIV/AIDS and HCV in Central Asia and China” which had been published in April 2024. This book contains contributions by SOLID researchers. It has been presented at the International Aids Conference in July 2024.

Spin-off projects

In Kyrgyzstan, the concept of tobacco harm reduction has never been the object of research. Along with this, the situation with smoking in the country remains extremely difficult. Every year, about 70 % of deaths are caused by cardiovascular diseases, cancer and respiratory diseases. Within the framework of the project, new methods as interview and survey were used. Interviews were conducted with medical professionals, sellers of electronic cigarettes, heated tobacco products and consumers of cigarettes, electronic cigarettes and heated tobacco products.

Additionally, it has been planned to write a training manual for social workers and psychologists of the penitentiary service of the Kyrgyz Republic. This issue was discussed the issues with the department of Educational, Social and Psychological work of the Penitentiary Service of the Ministry of Justice and the Department of educational social work. The project “Mamandygym-bolashagym” (trans. “My profession is my future”) was used for a practical workshop on the preparation of the analytical section of the project within the framework of the Comprehensive Plan “program for increasing population incomes until 2025” organized by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. An application was submitted by a SOLID PhD for a grant funding for postdoctoral studies under the “Zhas Galym” (Young Researcher) program for 2024-2026. on the topic: Prospects and strategies for the development of the Institute of Social Work in Kazakhstan.

The Scientific Coordinator of SOLID in Kazakhstan organized Self-help groups. It is a form of support and experience sharing in which people facing common problems or challenges in life come together to provide mutual support and share resources. Meetings are held in online and offline format, once a week. Each session focuses on the ethical model of reading a specially selected work. Live broadcasts on advocacy of rights and psycho-emotional support had been conducted.

The Uzbek PostDoc of SOLID (he fled after the Russian invasion in the Ukraine from Belarus where he was involved in the Methadone Treatment program for drug users) launched together with the Association of positive Ukrainians in Germany consultations and mental health support for refugees from Ukraine and other PLHIV migrants from EECA countries in 2024. In collaboration with the *Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin* and the *German Mental Health Center Elaboration* it was

agreed to join forces for capacity building and academic exchange in the area of mental health between Germany and Uzbekistan. The Uzbek partner considered to apply for European funding to support this collaboration. BSMI and *Bukhara Regional Department of Health* signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Berlin-based MIND Foundation to foster research in psychedelic therapy for mental disorders and suicide prevention.

Participation at International Conferences

25th International AIDS Conference, Munich, Germany, 22-26 July 2024

The 25th International AIDS Conference took place in Munich, Germany from 22 to 26 July 2024. An estimated 10,000 participants from around the world attended AIDS 2024. At the International AIDS Conference from 22nd to 26th July in Munich also a delegation from SOLID Scientific Coordinators, Postdocs and PhDs attended. The group included scientists from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, China and Germany attended. At the German Booth booth of the Federal Ministries (*Federal Ministry of Health – BMG* and *Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development – BMZ*), the *German Society for International Cooperation – GIZ*, the F*ederal Centre for Health Education –BZGA*, *German AIDS Help* (*Deutsche AIDS Hilfe*). Among other issues, they presented on Tuesday 23rd of July the HIV/AIDS situation in Central Asia and China.

Here you'll find the presentations of the group:


SOLID
Social work and strengthening NGOs in development cooperation to treat drug addiction
DAAD
Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
HIV and Hepatitis C in Central Asia and China
Responding to infectious diseases as part of the SDGs
German Booth at the International AIDS Conference in Munich
Joint presentation by Ingo Ilja Michels (Germany), Hang Su (China), Dinara Yesimova (Kazakhstan), Nurgul Musaeva (Kyrgyzstan), Amir Rashidov (Uzbekistan), and Mykyta Trofymenko (Tajikistan)
Project partners
EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main

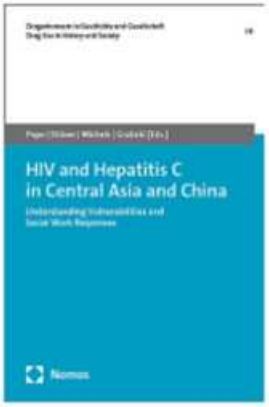

The SOLID Project
• SOLID (*"Social work and strengthening NGOs in development cooperation to treat drug addiction)* is an international research project funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)
• This project consists of educational and research exchange among China, Germany, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and is part of the DAAD's Excellence Network
• The project supports early-career researchers who study drug use, infectious diseases and social work in prisons
• SOLID addresses the underdeveloped role of social work in helping people who use drugs and suffer from associated health concerns
Project partners
EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main

SOLID Social work and strengthening NGOs in development cooperation to treat drug addiction

FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

HIV and Hepatitis C in Central Asia & China

- Country Case Studies:
  - HIV and Hepatitis C in China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan
- Additional Case Studies and Cross-Cutting Issues
  - Stigma, vulnerable groups, HIV and migration
- Publication is available open access
- doi.org/10.5771/9783748920021



Project partners

EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

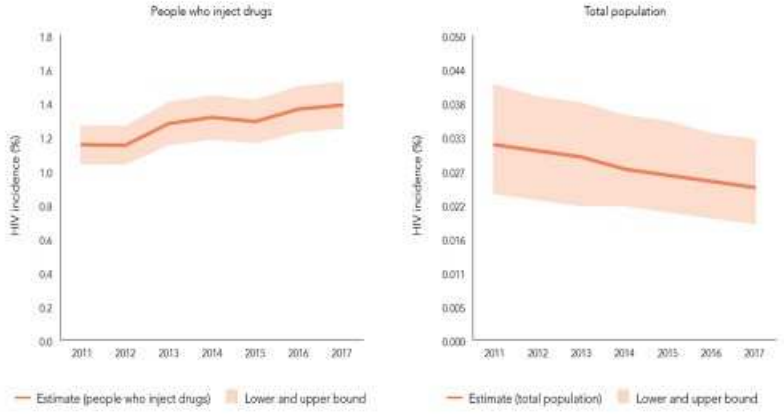
ISFF Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main

SOLID Social work and strengthening NGOs in development cooperation to treat drug addiction

FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

HIV infections among people who inject drugs appear to be rising

Comparison of incidence of HIV, people who inject drugs and total population (all ages), global, 2011–2017



Note: The scales of the vertical axes in each graph are different. HIV incidence is considerably higher among people who inject drugs compared to the general population.
Plausibility bounds for incidence among people who inject drugs are adopted from the new infections' calculated bounds rather than directly estimated.
Source: UNAIDS 2018 estimates.

SOLID
Social work and strengthening NGOs in development cooperation to treat drug addiction

FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Drugs and AIDS Situation in Central Asia 2018 (CADAP 6)
http://cadap-eu.org/ru/publications/situation-reports





Project partners

EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main

SOLID
Social work and strengthening NGOs in development cooperation to treat drug addiction

FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Drugs and AIDS situation in China - China is situated at "Golden Triangle" and "Golden Crescent"



Wang Hesheng, Minister of China's National Disease Control and Prevention Administration and Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS signed an agreement to deepen their collaboration to reach the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals through China's Global Development Initiative and the Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing, 10 July 2024.

- **It's still a large number of drug users in CHINA although the growth rate has slowed down. The major abused drugs are Methamphetamine, Heroin and Ketamine.**
- **The abuse of synthetic drugs such as Methamphetamine continues to increase, with 80% of newly discovered users abusing synthetic drugs.**
- **Among traditional drugs, Heroin abuse increase is slowing.**
- **People under 35 is the main abusing group. Wide distribution, especially some stars.**

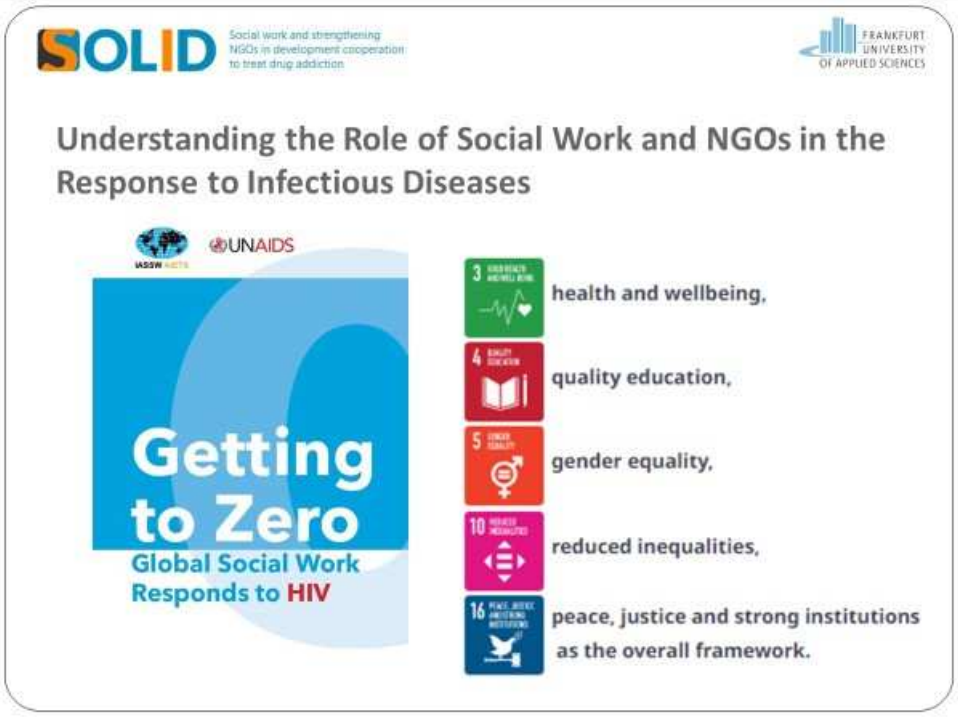
2.4 million

Drug users until the end of 2018

Project partners

EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main

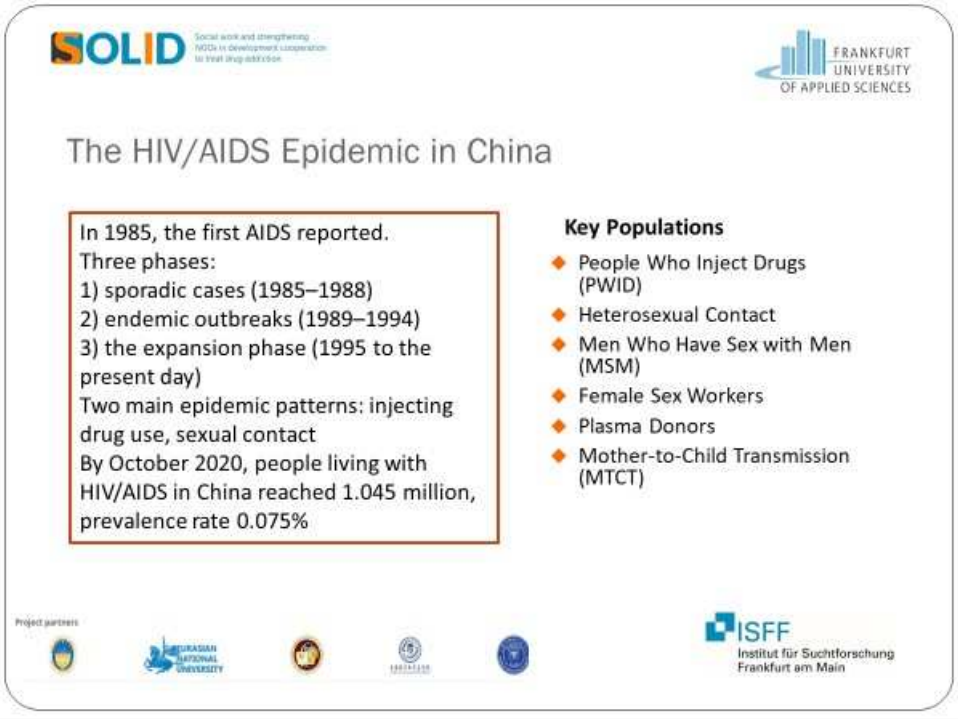




Dr. Ingo Ilja Michels, the International Scientific Coordinator of the SOLID project presented an overview on the Drugs and AIDS situation in Central Asia and China.

2. HIV/Aids and Hepatitis C in China (Hang Su, Shanghai Mental Health Centre, China)

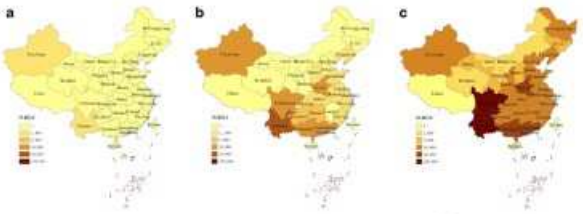

SOLID
DAAD
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
HIV and Hepatitis C in China
International AIDS Conference 2024
Hang Su
Shanghai Mental Health Center
Shanghai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine
Project partners
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main


SOLID
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
The HIV/AIDS Epidemic in China
In 1985, the first AIDS reported.
Three phases:
1) sporadic cases (1985–1988)
2) endemic outbreaks (1989–1994)
3) the expansion phase (1995 to the present day)
Two main epidemic patterns: injecting drug use, sexual contact
By October 2020, people living with HIV/AIDS in China reached 1.045 million, prevalence rate 0.075%
Key Populations
People Who Inject Drugs (PWID)
Heterosexual Contact
Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)
Female Sex Workers
Plasma Donors
Mother-to-Child Transmission (MTCT)
Project partners
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main

SOLID

FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Regional spread of HIV in China

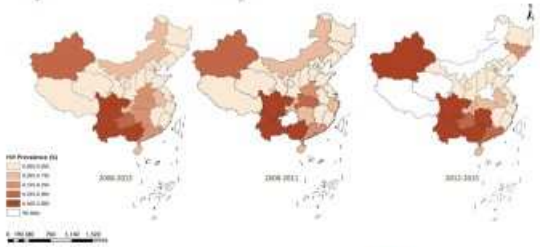


Geographic distribution of PLWH in China in 1998,2008,2018

Wu et al. 2019

Median HIV prevalence among FSWs in China by province

Zhang et al. 2020



Project partners

ISFF Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main

SOLID

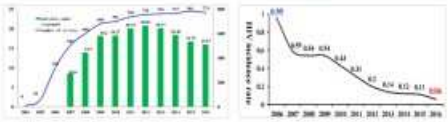
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

HIV/AIDS treatment in China

HIV/AIDS prevention in China



Effectiveness of MMT in HIV prevention



- **The rate of HIV infection in MMT patients: 0.06%; 0.03% in 2018**
- **Prevention of 17,000 new HIV infections**
- **Reduction of 130 tons of Heroin**
- **Prevention of $123 billion drug trafficking**

Project partners

ISFF Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main

Access to treatment in China

	Care Delivery Responsibilities	Budgetary Responsibilities
National level	• Supervision of NFATP • ART drug distribution • Development of guidelines • Training and technical guidance • Patient data collection	• ART drug procurement • Equipment and reagents for CD4 and VL testing • Health provider training • Drug resistance surveillance • NFATP management

Provincial level	• Provincial treatment coordination
	• Appointment of referral hospitals
		• All the other costs
		  • OI treatment
		  • Other lab testing
		  • Hospitalization
		  • Routine care

County level	• ART provision • Treatment of serious OIs, adverse reactions and other complications	
Village or township level	• Routine follow-up and monitoring	

The structure of care delivery and budgetary responsibilities at different administrative levels of the National Free Antiretroviral Therapy Program

Cao et al. 2020

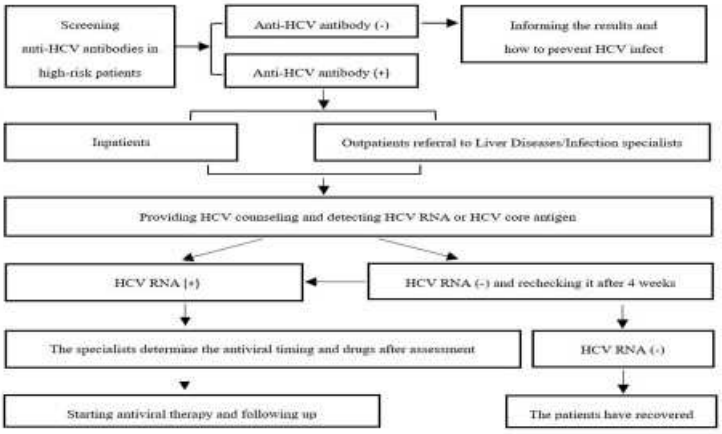
Hepatitis C Epidemic in China

- In China, approximately 200,000 new cases of hepatitis C arise annually, resulting in 360,000 liver cancer-related deaths.
- Hepatitis C is responsible for 37.48% of liver cancer cases in China, contributing to at least 133,000 fatalities each year.

Key Populations

- Mother-to-infant transmission
- Female Sex Workers
- The use of infected syringes
- Blood transmission
- Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)

Access to treatment in China



Flow chart for the process of in-hospital screening for hepatitis C in China Mei/Lu 2021

NGOs in HIV/HCV in China

- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have played an invaluable and irreplaceable role in HIV/AIDS prevention and control efforts in China.
- These organisations serve as essential service providers and are actively engaged in various aspects of HIV/AIDS initiatives, including education, service delivery, and the provision of other critical services.



Dr. Hang Su, PostDoc from Shanghai Mental Health Centre presented an overview on the Drug and AIDS situation in the PR of China

3. HIV/Aids and Hepatitis C in Kyrgyzstan (Nurgul Musaeva, Bishkek State University, Kyrgyzstan)

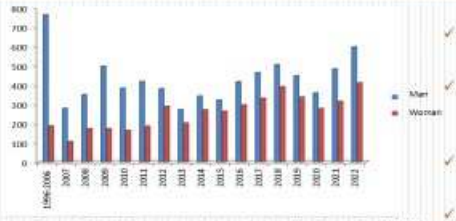


SOLID

DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst German Academic Exchange Service

FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

HIV in Kyrgyzstan



Dynamics of HIV infection registration by gender in the Kyrgyz Republic in 1996-2022.

- ✓ Increase in the number of people living with HIV infection among its general population
- ✓ The fact of an increase in the number of cases of HIV infection through sexual contact, an increase in the proportion of women living with HIV
- ✓ Stigmatization and discrimination towards PLHIV and key populations
- ✓ HIV coverage in all regions of the country

Project partners

ISFF Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main

SOLID

FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Epidemiological situation of HIV in Kyrgyzstan 01.01.2024 (cumulatively)

HIV positive 13256

Kyrgyz citizens 11527

Women 4278

Men 7249

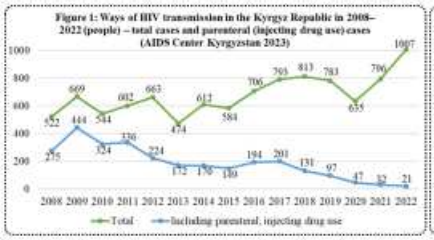
A total of 3089 PLHIV died, 792 of them at the AIDS stage

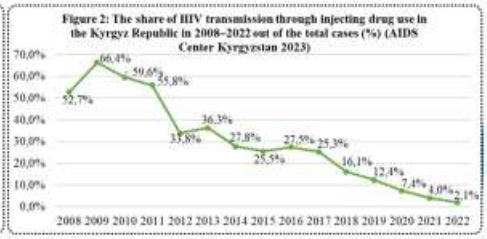
Project partners

ISFF Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main

Harm Reduction Programs in Kyrgyzstan

- Harm reduction programmes in the field of HIV prevention among PWID play an important role in maintaining health and reducing the risk of infection in Kyrgyzstan.
- Over the past 15 years, Kyrgyzstan has managed to significantly reduce the parenteral pathway of HIV transmission (Figure 1). Between 2008 and 2022, new HIV cases among PWID through injecting drug use significantly decreased in (Figure 2).





SOLID Social work and strengthening NGOs in development cooperation to treat drug addiction

DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst German Academic Exchange Service

FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Epidemiological situation of Hepatitis B and C

- About 150 thousand people infected with hepatitis B have been infected in Kyrgyzstan
- Since March 2023, about 28 thousand hepatitis patients have been identified
- 7,537 patients with viral hepatitis B and C
- Since December 2022, free vaccination against hepatitis B was started
- A large-scale national study of the prevalence of hepatitis B, C and HIV among children aged 5 to 17 years and people aged 18 years and older is being launched

ISFF Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main

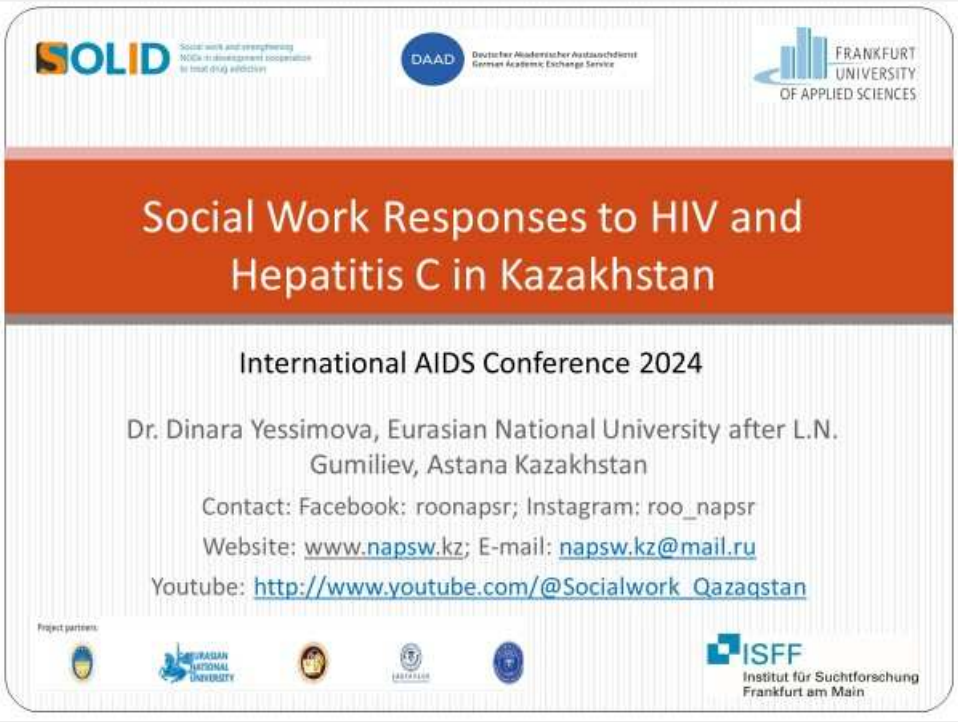

SOLID
DAAD
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
Challenges and opportunities
Socio-psychological work with PLWH and their families is at an early stage of development
The level of state regulation is insufficient
Prejudices and stereotypes regarding HIV and HCV exist even among professionals providing social, psychological and legal services
Social workers working with key populations need professional training and qualifications
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main

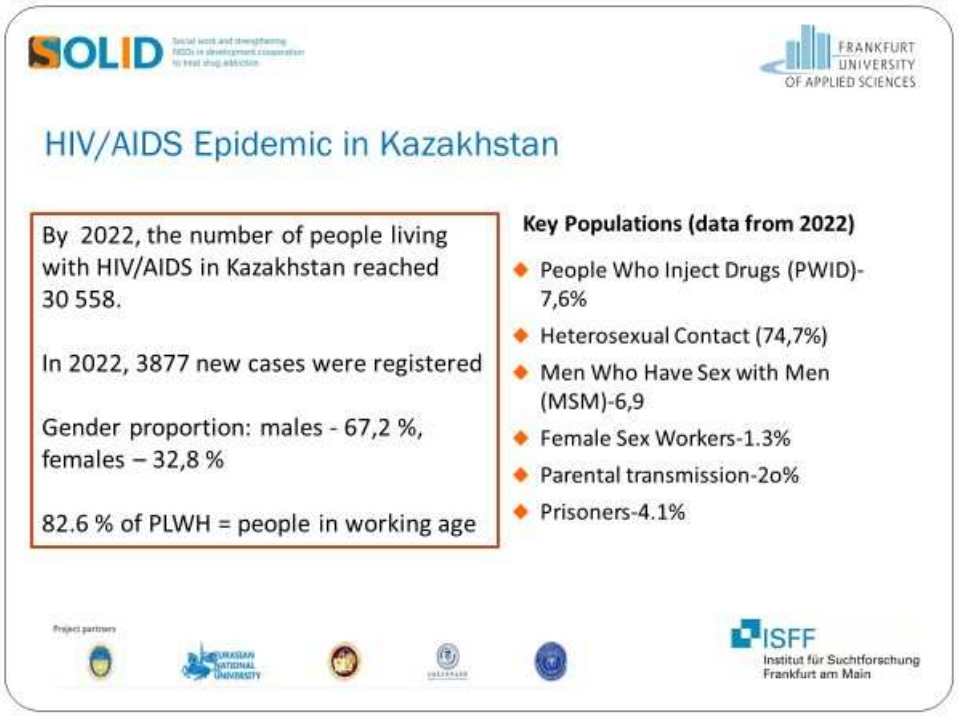

SOLID
DAAD
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
Challenges and opportunities
Socio-psychological work with PLWH and their families is at an early stage of development
The level of state regulation is insufficient
Prejudices and stereotypes regarding HIV and HCV exist even among professionals providing social, psychological and legal services
Social workers working with key populations need professional training and qualifications
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main

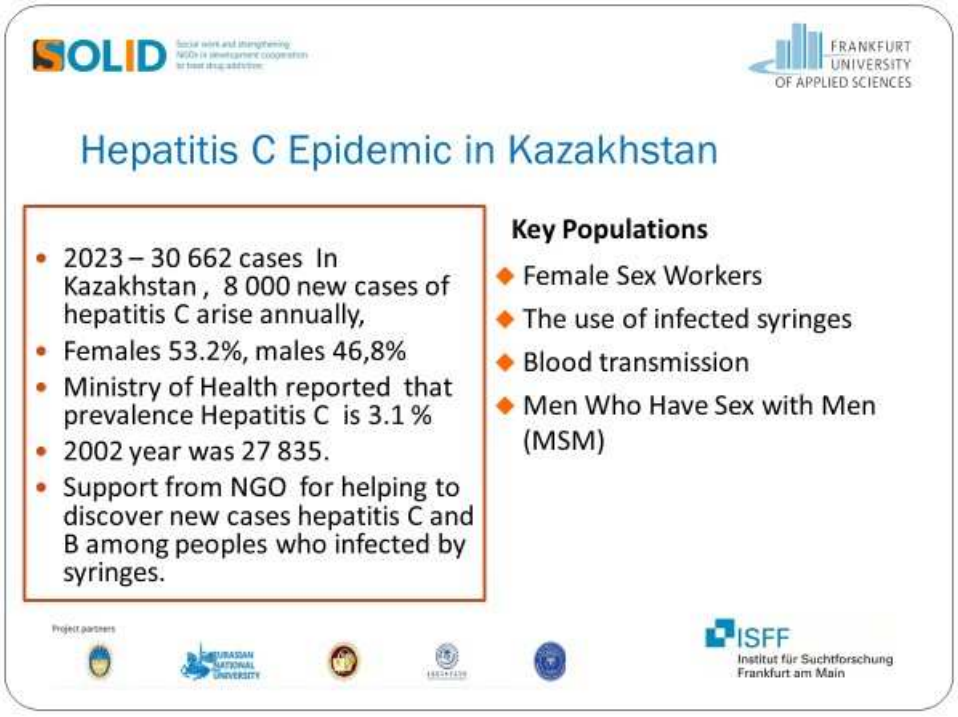


Dr. Nurgul Musaeva, Scientific Coordinator of SOLID, presented an overview on the Drugs and AIDS situation in the Kyrgyz Republic.

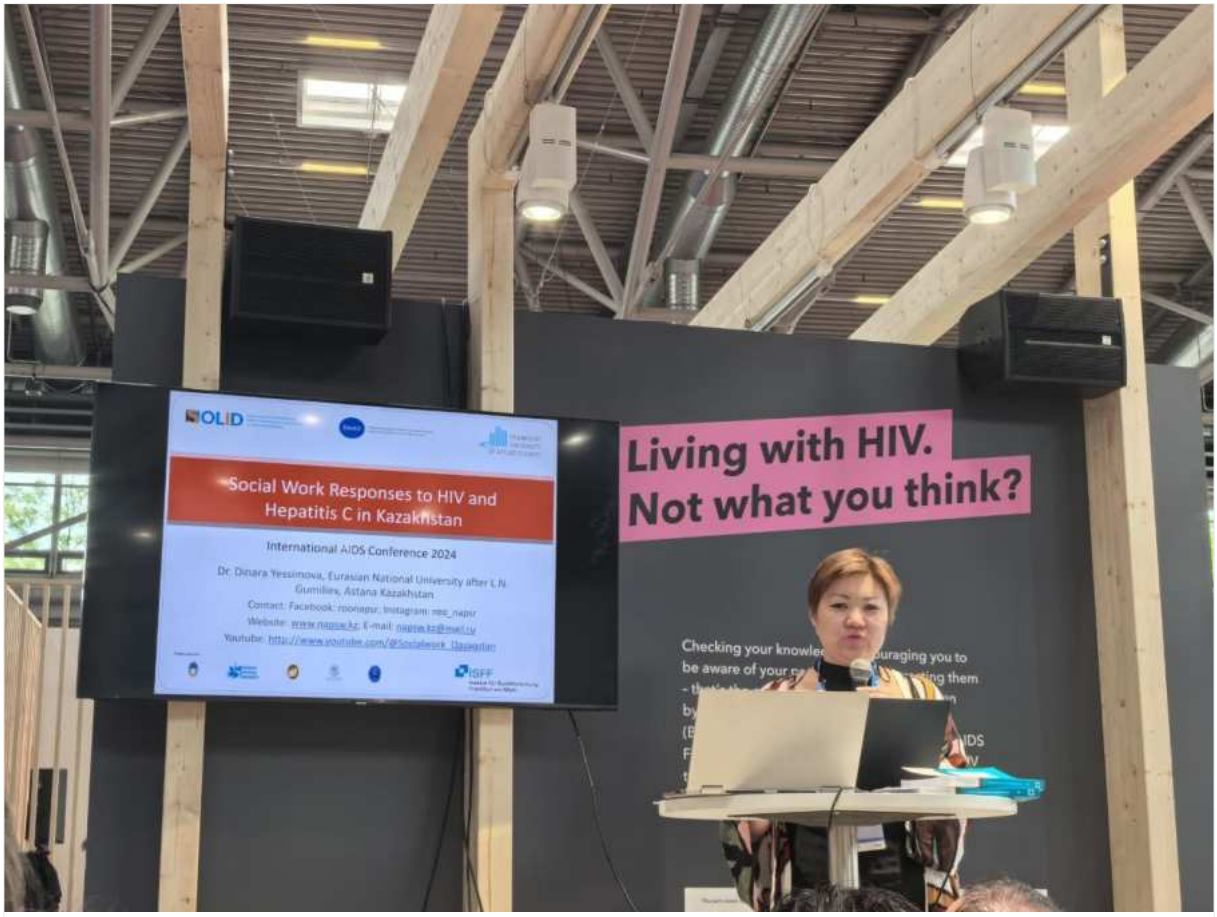
4. Social Work Responses to HIV/Aids and Hepatitis C in Kazakhstan (Dinara Yessimova, Eurasian National University Astana, Kazakhstan)




SOLID
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Kazakhstan
By 2022, the number of people living with HIV/AIDS in Kazakhstan reached 30 558.
In 2022, 3877 new cases were registered
Gender proportion: males - 67,2 %, females – 32,8 %
82.6 % of PLWH = people in working age
Key Populations (data from 2022)
People Who Inject Drugs (PWID)-7,6%
Heterosexual Contact (74,7%)
Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)-6,9
Female Sex Workers-1.3%
Parental transmission-2o%
Prisoners-4.1%
Project partners
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main


SOLID
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
Hepatitis C Epidemic in Kazakhstan
2023 – 30 662 cases In Kazakhstan , 8 000 new cases of hepatitis C arise annually,
Females 53.2%, males 46,8%
Ministry of Health reported that prevalence Hepatitis C is 3.1 %
2002 year was 27 835.
Support from NGO for helping to discover new cases hepatitis C and B among peoples who infected by syringes.
Key Populations
Female Sex Workers
The use of infected syringes
Blood transmission
Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)
Project partners
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung Frankfurt am Main


SOLID
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
Social work response to HIV and HCV
NGOs have played an important role in HIV prevention and control
NGOs provide HIV testing, prevention and assistance to PLWH
The National Association of Social workers (established in 2019) promotes the development of social work in providing services to PLWH through case-management and supervision
National standards promoting case management for multi-teams at regional AIDS centers.
Discussion on competence profiles for social workers
Developed in-service trainings programs for Republican AIDS center and service-NGOs
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main



Dr. Dinara Yessimova, Scientific Coordinator of SOLID, presented an overview on the Drugs and AIDS situation in Kazakhstan

5. HIV/Aids and HCV in Uzbekistan (Amir Rashidov, Bukhara State Medical Institute, Uzbekistan)

HIV and Hepatitis C in Uzbekistan

International AIDS Conference 2024

Amir Rashidov
Bukhara State Medical Institute
July 2024

Current HIV situation in Uzbekistan

Shifts in Transmission Patterns

- Transition from predominantly injection drug use to heterosexual contacts.

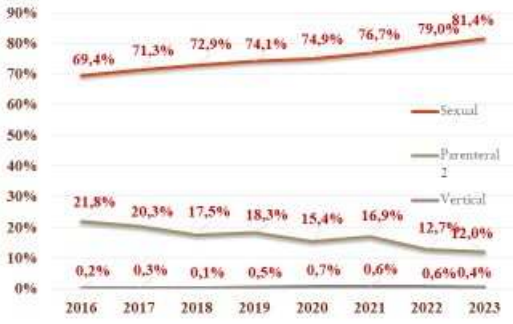
Trends Among Key Populations

- Stability among MSM, fluctuations among sex workers, and decline among people who inject drugs (PWID).
- High-risk Behaviors and Migration:

Genetic Diversity of HIV

- Presence of multiple HIV-1 subtypes, including CRF02 AG and A6, indicating varied transmission networks and the impact of migration.

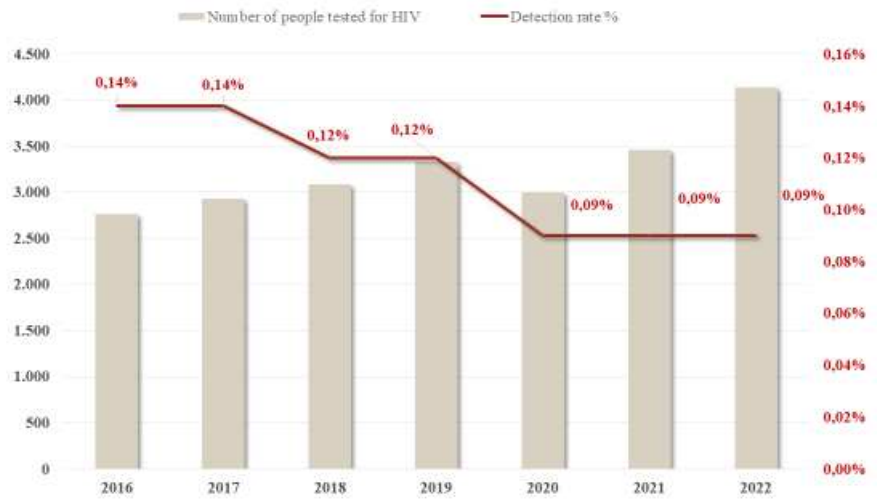
Socio-economic and Legal Factors

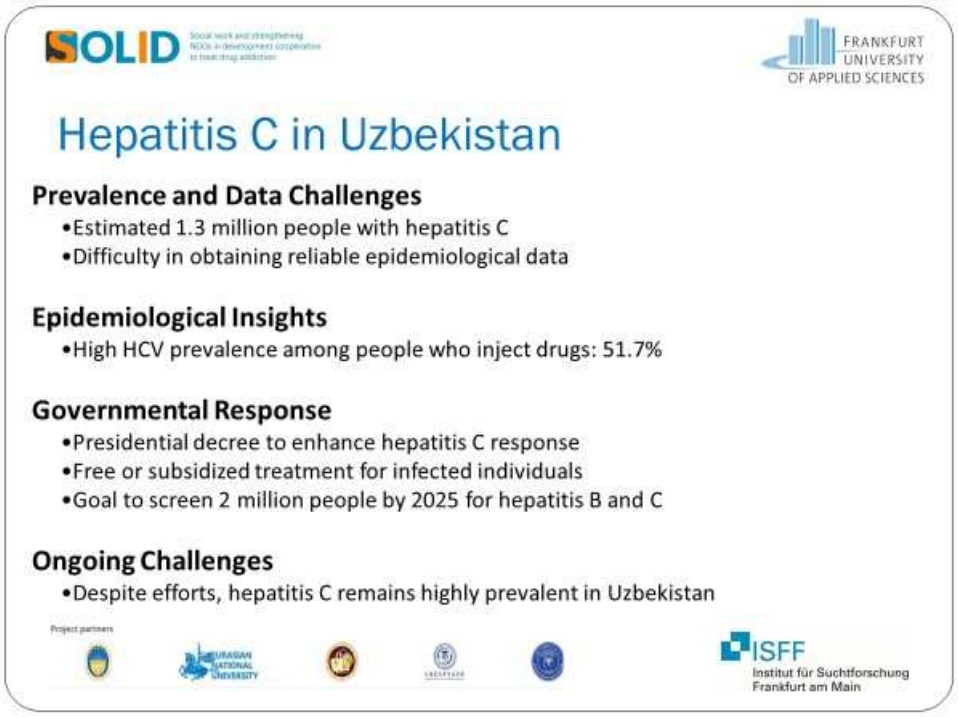


Government Response to HIV/AIDS in Uzbekistan

1. **Strategic Plans**
   Presidential Decree No. 14 for comprehensive HIV action
2. **Testing and Treatment**
   Increased testing from 2.5 million in 2013 to over 4.1 million in 2022
   Enhanced accessibility and quality of treatment
3. **Addressing Challenges**
   Reforming laws to support HIV prevention and care
4. **International Support**
   Collaboration with Global Fund, UNAIDS, and local NGOs
5. **Testing and Treatment Gaps**
   Complex testing procedures & efforts to meet treatment targets

HIV testing in Uzbekistan

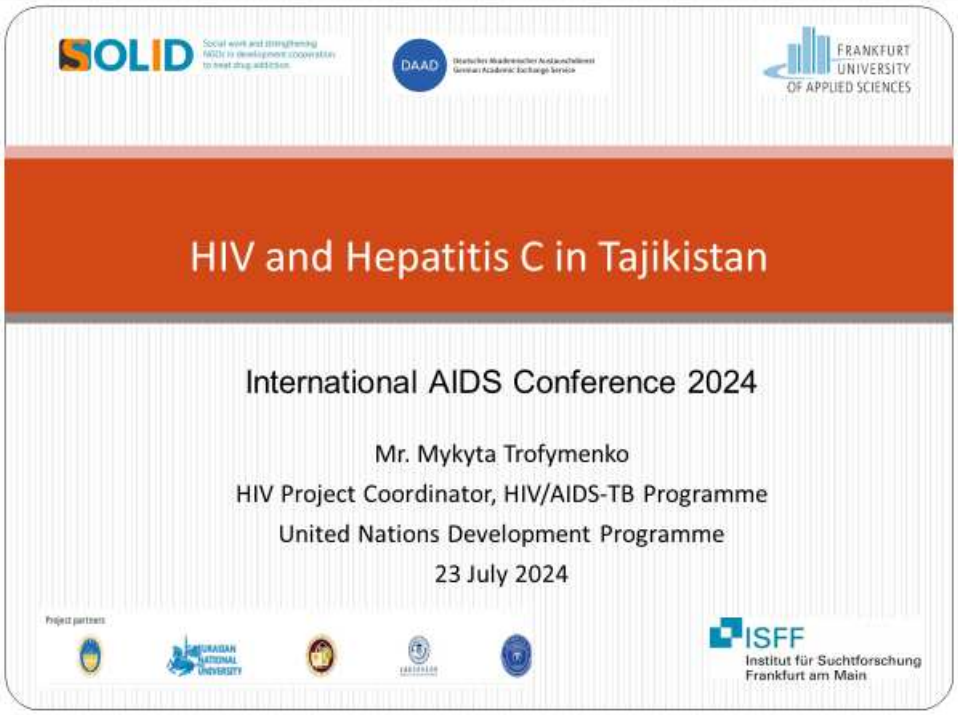


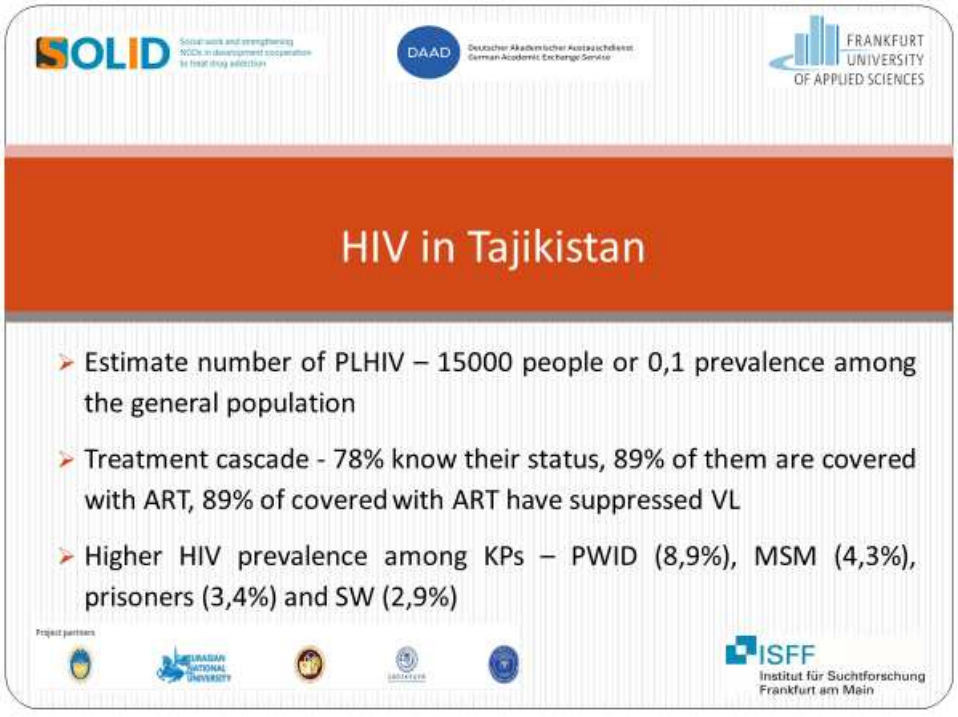


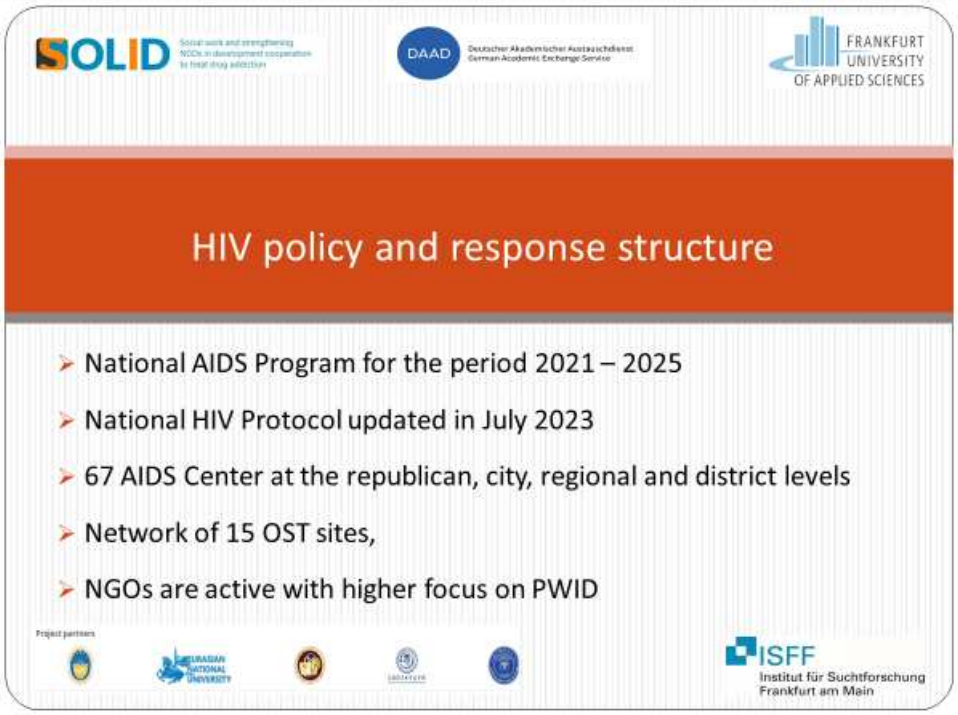


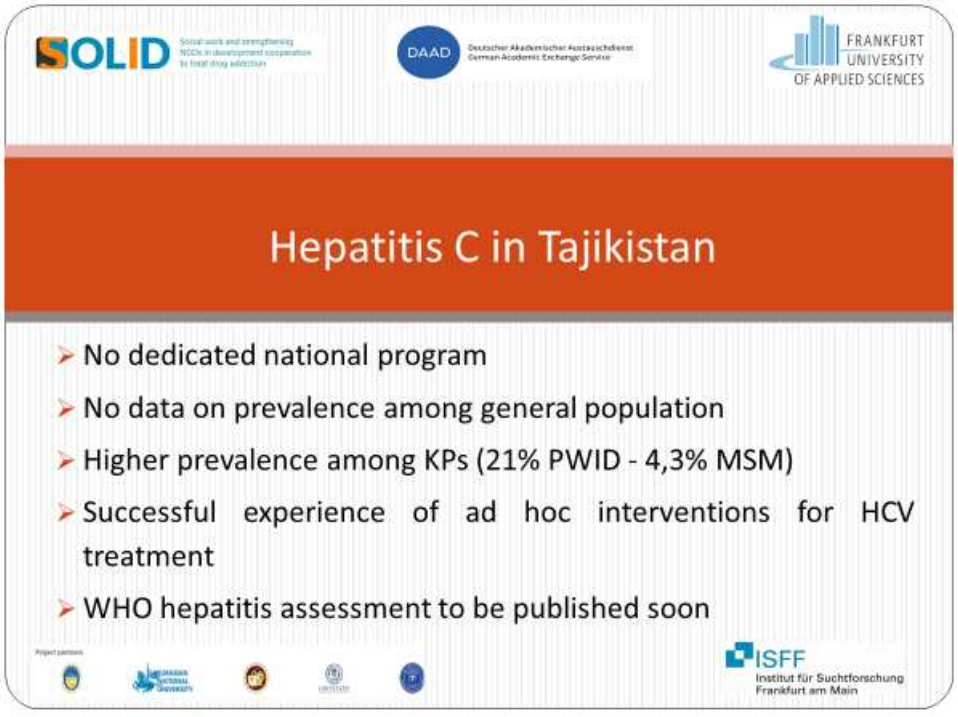
Amir Rashidov, PhD of SOLID, presented an overview on the Drugs and AIDS situation in Uzbekistan.

6. HIV/Aids and HCV in Tajikistan (Mykyta Trofymenko, UNDP, Tajikistan)


SOLID
DAAD
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
HIV and Hepatitis C in Tajikistan
International AIDS Conference 2024
Mr. Mykyta Trofymenko
HIV Project Coordinator, HIV/AIDS-TB Programme
United Nations Development Programme
23 July 2024
Project partners
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main


SOLID
DAAD
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
HIV in Tajikistan
Estimate number of PLHIV – 15000 people or 0,1 prevalence among the general population
Treatment cascade - 78% know their status, 89% of them are covered with ART, 89% of covered with ART have suppressed VL
Higher HIV prevalence among KPs – PWID (8,9%), MSM (4,3%), prisoners (3,4%) and SW (2,9%)
Project partners
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main


SOLID
DAAD
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
HIV policy and response structure
National AIDS Program for the period 2021 – 2025
National HIV Protocol updated in July 2023
67 AIDS Center at the republican, city, regional and district levels
Network of 15 OST sites,
NGOs are active with higher focus on PWID
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main


SOLID
DAAD
FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
Hepatitis C in Tajikistan
No dedicated national program
No data on prevalence among general population
Higher prevalence among KPs (21% PWID - 4,3% MSM)
Successful experience of ad hoc interventions for HCV treatment
WHO hepatitis assessment to be published soon
ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main

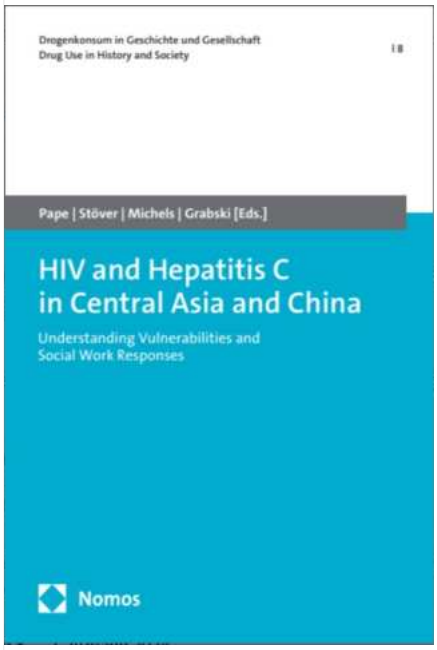




Mykyta Trofymenko from UNDP presented the Drugs and AIDs situation in Tajikistan.



During the conference, the new solid book on “HIV/AIDS in Central Asia and China” was presented:



HIV and Hepatitis C in Central Asia and China – Understanding Vulnerabilities and Social Work Responses

Ulla Pape, Heino Stöver, Ingo Ilja Michels, Meryem Grabski (eds.)

Book Series: Drug Use in History and Society
Volume: 8
Publisher: Nomos, Baden-Baden.

Open access: www.nomos-elibrary.de/index.php?doi=10.5771/9783748920021





On **Thursday 25th of July** in the networking zone of NGOs in the “Global Village” a SOLID debate „Building communities, demanding changes: The role of NGOs in HIV prevention among people who use drugs in Central Asia and China” had been presented. Guzalkhon Zakhidova, PhD in Uzbekistan, discussed on HIV prevention and the role of NGOs in Uzbekistan. Alla Bessonova, from a NGO in the Kyrgyz Republic, offered a community perspective on developing services for women with HIV in Kyrgyzstan. Sandugash Ismagulova, PhD in Kazakhstan, talked about case management in social work in Kazakhstan. Pulod Dzhamolov, from NGO in Tajikistan, presented prevention and care programs for drug users in Tajikistan. Yan Zhao, PhD in PR China, reported about HIV-related counselling in China. Sebastian Baier, PhD in Germany, discussed harm reduction services‘ development for drug users in Berlin as a “fast-track” city to reduce HIV infections to zero until 2030. Moderated was the discussion by the PostDoc from the Kyrgyz Republic, Dr. Jarkyn Shadymanova.



SOLID debate „Building communities, demanding changes: The role of NGOs in HIV prevention among people who use drugs in Central Asia and China" in the "Global Village".



The SOLID group in the "Global Village".

German Addiction Congress, Berlin, Germany, 18-20 September, 2023

The German addiction congress (trans. “Deutscher Suchtkongress 2023”) is one of the most important and greatest interdisciplinary events on drugs and treatment of drug use disorders in Germany. The 2023 congress took place from September 18-20, 2023, at the *Technical University* (TU) Berlin.

Experiencing the latest from addiction research and care practice, presenting and discussing work results, maintaining the professional network, all of this inspires and motivated the organizers. After three years of pandemic and numerous online events, the organizers welcomed the valuable the possibility of direct, personal encounter is.

Pandemic has challenged each and each of us, as well as society as a whole. The health system in particular was hit hard by pandemic measures, sick leave and shortage of skilled workers. And now we are faced with war and additional crises. Almost 2 million people are looking for protection in Germany for humanitarian reasons. Climate change, energy crisis and inflation bring rising prices. They tighten poverty and promote social division. The term “turning point” expresses the historical dimension of the challenges.

Who are the vulnerable that are particularly stressed by the consequences? Do the diverse stressors contribute to a change in problematic substance use, excessive behaviour and associated problems? How can innovation, digitization, sustainability and ecological tolerance in research and care be pushed despite scarce resources? Which new health policy framework conditions make sense?

In order to cope with the diverse tasks in the area of addiction, it requires a shoulder closure of all in research, prevention and care. The goal of this conference was therefore expressly to focus resources and solutions.

The Congress President offered the SOLID project and PhDs from the four partner countries to report on their research work in an English-language session.

At the beginning of the congress, they were personally welcomed by the German government’s drug officer, Burkard Blienert.



SOLID members with the German government's drug officer, Burkard Blienert (third from the right).

A special SOLID session was held on Tuesday, September 19, 2023.

Symposium on role of Social Work in treatment of drug use disorders by research network of Universities in Germany, Central Asia and China (SOLID)

Aisuluu Shailoobek (in cooperation with Dalida Mukasheva and Ulla Pape): Changing Patterns of Vulnerability: HIV/Aids and Drug Use in Central Asia



Department of Pedagogy at Kyrgyz State University Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (Department of Sociology and Social work of the Eurasian National University, Astana, Kazakhstan / Instituts für Suchtforschung Frankfurt (ISFF) Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences.

Aisuluu Shailoobek: aisulu889@mail.ru

Changing Patterns of Vulnerability: HIV/Aids and Drug Use in Central Asia Eastern Europe and Central Asia has the fastest growing HIV epidemic in the world. According to the *Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS* (UNAIDS) approximately 1.4 million people are living with HIV in the region. In 2021, about 160.000 people were newly infected with, which constitutes an increase of 48 % increase since 2010 (UNAIDS, 2022). The dynamic

of the epidemics in Central Asia, however, points to a number of risk factors that have enabled the spread of HIV in the region, including injecting drug use, sex work, and labor mobility between Russia and Central Asia. Initially, the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Central Asia has been mainly driven by injecting drug use. In recent years, a growing share of sexual transmission can be observed. Similar to other regions, stigma towards people living with HIV and drug users forms a major barrier to the development of effective responses in the region. This is the reason why 2 programs that specifically address stigma and discrimination are especially important. This paper studies the situation in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. It discusses the changing patterns of vulnerability to HIV as well as strategies to overcome stigma which are often conducted by local nonprofit organizations. The paper argues that by addressing specific vulnerabilities among certain population groups, programs have been successful in overcoming stigma and controlling the epidemic.

Guzalkhon Zakhidova: New psychoactive substances (NPS) and problems associated with their use in the world and in Uzbekistan.

The Republican Specialized Scientific-Practical Medical Center of Therapy and Rehabilitation, Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Guzalkhon Zakhidova: guzalya_zzz@mail.ru



New psychoactive substances (NPS) and problems associated with their use in the world and in Uzbekistan. Traditionally opiates, heroin, cocaine, cannabinoids, alcohol are the most used substances in the world. Decline in the prevalence of these traditional drugs abuse that once was a major problem in Uzbekistan is explained by high prices of drugs and mostly quarantine measures introduced because of COVID-19. This is accompanied by anecdotal evidence of an increase in the use of new psychoactive substances (NPS), which are available in the chemists' and cheaper than traditional drugs such as heroine and cannabis. An increase in the use of NPS is

an emerging problem in Uzbekistan. Despite efforts in the search for publications, no scientific works were found in Uzbekistan on psycho-social work with NPS consumers. Thus, reliable information on the number of users, their motivations for the use of NPS, as well as their awareness of the harms brought by NPS use on the health and social life is lacking. Moreover, there is a lack of information for professionals to provide necessary support. There are gaps in our understanding of the psychosocial and health needs of NPS users, how they need to be reached out, and what kind of interventions are needed to reduce the harms associated with abuse of new illegal substances that rapidly change the drug scene. This study is aimed at psychosocial work with NPS users in Uzbekistan and clarifying all the gaps in our understanding of the problem of the actual state of NPS consumption: about the methods of distribution, motives of consumption, awareness of the harm from use, about help services, about mutual assistance of users. We will develop an online survey to collect valuable data on NPS users and conduct informal focus group sessions with NPS users who are willing to meet in person. We will recruit former users of NPS to work with current NPS users. We will conduct focus groups with other healthcare providers in developing psycho-social interventions with NPS users. The expected result of this study will highlight different aspects of the existing problem. Goal is to fill the gaps in our understanding of consumer problems, to find out the motives and psychosocial needs of consumers, to raise consumer awareness of the dangers of consumption and the availability of help from medical and social services.

Sandugash Ismagulova: The use of case management technology accompanied by persons with addictive behavior in Kazakhstan



Association of Social Work in Kazakhstan, Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan.

Sandugash Ismagulova: sandu.ismagulova@mail.ru

The use of case management technology accompanied by persons with addictive

behaviour in Kazakhstan Today in all over the world and in Kazakhstan including, there is an acute need for social support of persons with addictive behaviour, leading to an increase the number of social orphanhood, divorces, suicides and other socially significant problems. One of the solution methods is the application of case management technology in the process of working with persons with addictive behaviour. Case management is the process of supporting and coordinating decision-making on all issues related to rehabilitation and resocialization, including a person with addictive behaviour and his family. This method of support involves identifying risks, assessing the needs of people with addictive behaviour, followed by drawing up an individual plan for 3 assistance and support using an interdepartmental approach. Social work in Kazakhstan is going through a period of its institutionalization. Objective factors such as the lack of a sufficient number of high-level specialists at the level of professional activity, practice and academic discipline make themselves felt at the modern stage of its development. In this regard, in order to develop our practice of conducting case management, we are interested in adapting and studying the experience of the best practices of organizing case management, its philosophy as an approach. Today, case management methods are actively used in work with addicted people around the world, but in Kazakhstan this approach is only gaining momentum.

Tianzhen Chen: Development of Artificial Intelligence-Based Comprehensive Assessment and Psychological Intervention System and its clinical application in Community

Shanghai Mental Health Centre, Shanghai Jiao Tong University; Peoples Republic of China.

Tianzhen Chen: VomChan@hotmail.com

Development of Artificial Intelligence-Based Comprehensive Assessment and Psychological



Intervention System and its clinical application in Community Community-based rehabilitation has become one of the most important measures to treat drug addiction. Community-based rehabilitation refers to the efforts of community uniting families, public health and safety agencies, civil affairs departments, and other social resources to help drug abusers to achieve long-term abstinence. Community-based rehabilitation also helps drug abusers to restore physical and mental health, enjoy equal opportunities, and become free from social discrimination. Throughout the progress of treatment for substance dependence, the main methods include medication, psychotherapy, community rehabilitation, and physical therapy. Among them, psychotherapy is an important means to maintain withdrawal and long-term recovery. Motivational enhancement therapy (MET) and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) are the most widely used and evidence-based psychological behaviour intervention methods in the field of substance dependence. In the field of mental health, AI and robotics technology have been gradually applied to many aspects such as daily mood regulation, diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, treatment effect prediction and rehabilitation management. Psychological intervention based on computer technology and AI technology has many advantages over traditional treatment methods. AI technology can simulate psychotherapists for psychological evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment. This can help save labor costs and improve treatment expertise. At present, AI and robotics technology have been applied in related fields such as insomnia, anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, addiction, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. We want to understand the applicability and acceptance of rehabilitation workers (e.g., social workers and doctors) and patients for AI Based Comprehensive Assessment and Psychological Intervention System through qualitative research methods, to understand their views and suggestions on robot-assisted systems.



SOLID member at the German Addiction Congress 2023.

10th Novel Psycoactive Substances Conference, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 6-8 November 2023

The 10th event was organized by the *International Society for the Study of Emerging Drugs* (ISSED), the *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime* (UNODC), the *European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction* (EMCDDA), the *World Anti-Doping Agency* (WADA) and the *University of Hertfordshire* (UH). The key organizer - The *International Society for the Study of Emerging Drugs* (ISSED) is an organization established to unite the world's multidisciplinary leaders on Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS), emerging substances, and associated trends in regularized discourse, partnership and study, with a goal to develop innovative strategies for interventions, while counteracting the threat posed by NPS and emergent substances in society. The central theme of this year's conference was the treatment of Novel Psychoactive Substances (NSP) and their possible intersections with anti-doping initiatives. The majority of attendees included psychiatrists, scholars,

and toxicologists, many of whom held high-profile positions, such as Owen Bowden Jones. However, the event suffered from a lack of representation from community organizations, members, and individuals who are directly affected by Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS).

SOLID presence

Three members of SOLID programme participated in the event – Dr. Katarzyna Kowalczyk, Dr. Mariya Prilutskaya (Kazakhstan) and Guzalkhon Zakhidova (Uzbekistan) – Mariya Prilutskaya is a member of the ISSED and performed the role of the secretary in the organization. Mariya Prilutskaya chaired sessions (plenary II) and also was a presenter in the panel session “International Society for Emerging Trends (ISSED): activities and opportunities” and ran a workshop “NPS clinical”. PhD candidate Guzalkhon Zakhidova who delivered a presentation “New psychoactive substances (NPS) in Uzbekistan: motives and psychosocial needs among youth”.

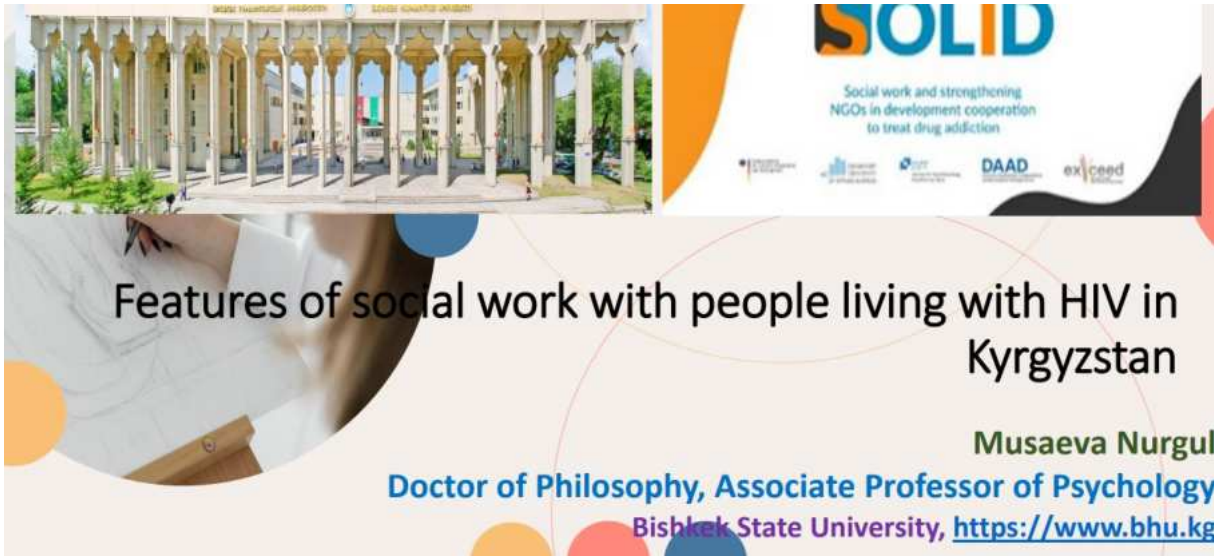


SOLID Member at the 10th Novel Psycoactive Substances Conference 2023.

Social Work Innovation: Theory and Practice in the New Development Stage, Beijing, China, 24-25 November 2023

The conference focused on innovation in social work research, education, and practices. The conference aimed to address the evolving challenges in contemporary society and promote the cultivation of skill proficiency and compassion in the social work sector. The conference brought together leading academics, practitioners, and thought leaders from around the world to exchange ideas, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and promote the implementation of new development concepts in social work.

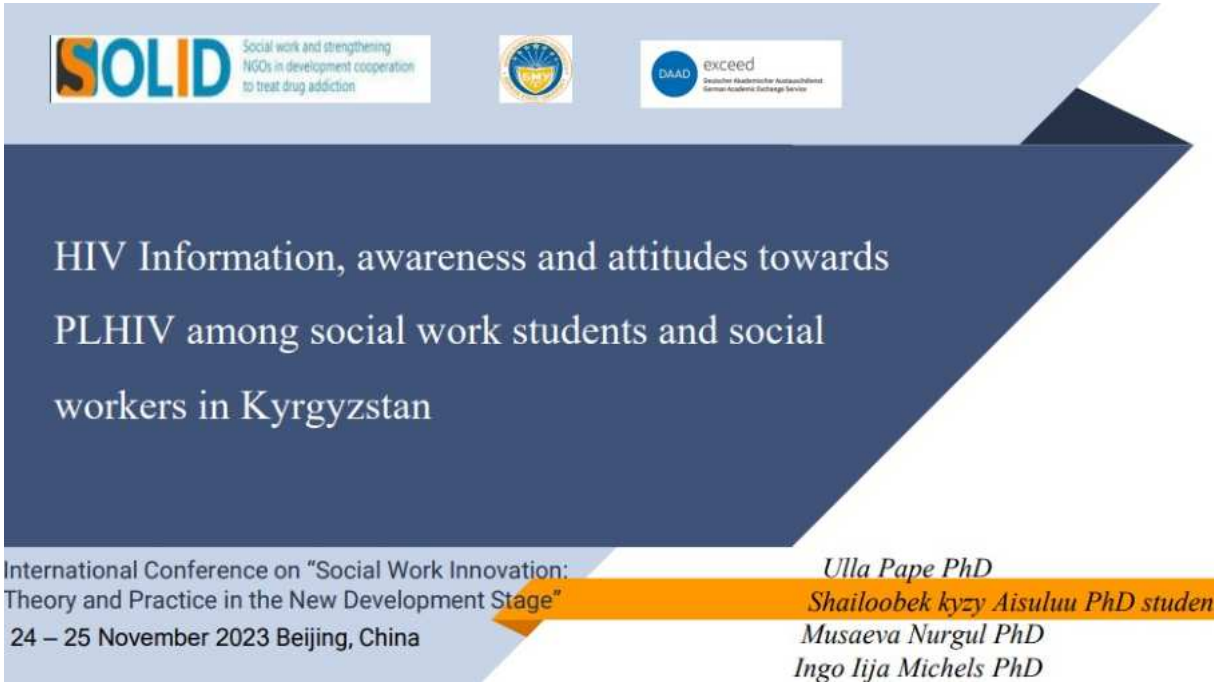
At the conference, Dr. Nurgul Musaeva gave a presentation on “Features of social work with people living with HIV in Kyrgyzstan”:





Dr. Nurgul Musaeva at her presentation.

Dr. Ulla Pape, Aisuluu Shailoobek, Dr. Nurgul Musaeva and Dr. Ingo Ilja Michels presented on “HIV information, awareness and attitudes towards PLHIV among social work students and social workers in Kytgyzstan”:



Uladzimir Pikirenia dedicated his presentation “Effectiveness of Peer-to-peer Social Support for Patients Who Receive Opioid Agonist Treatment in Belarus”:



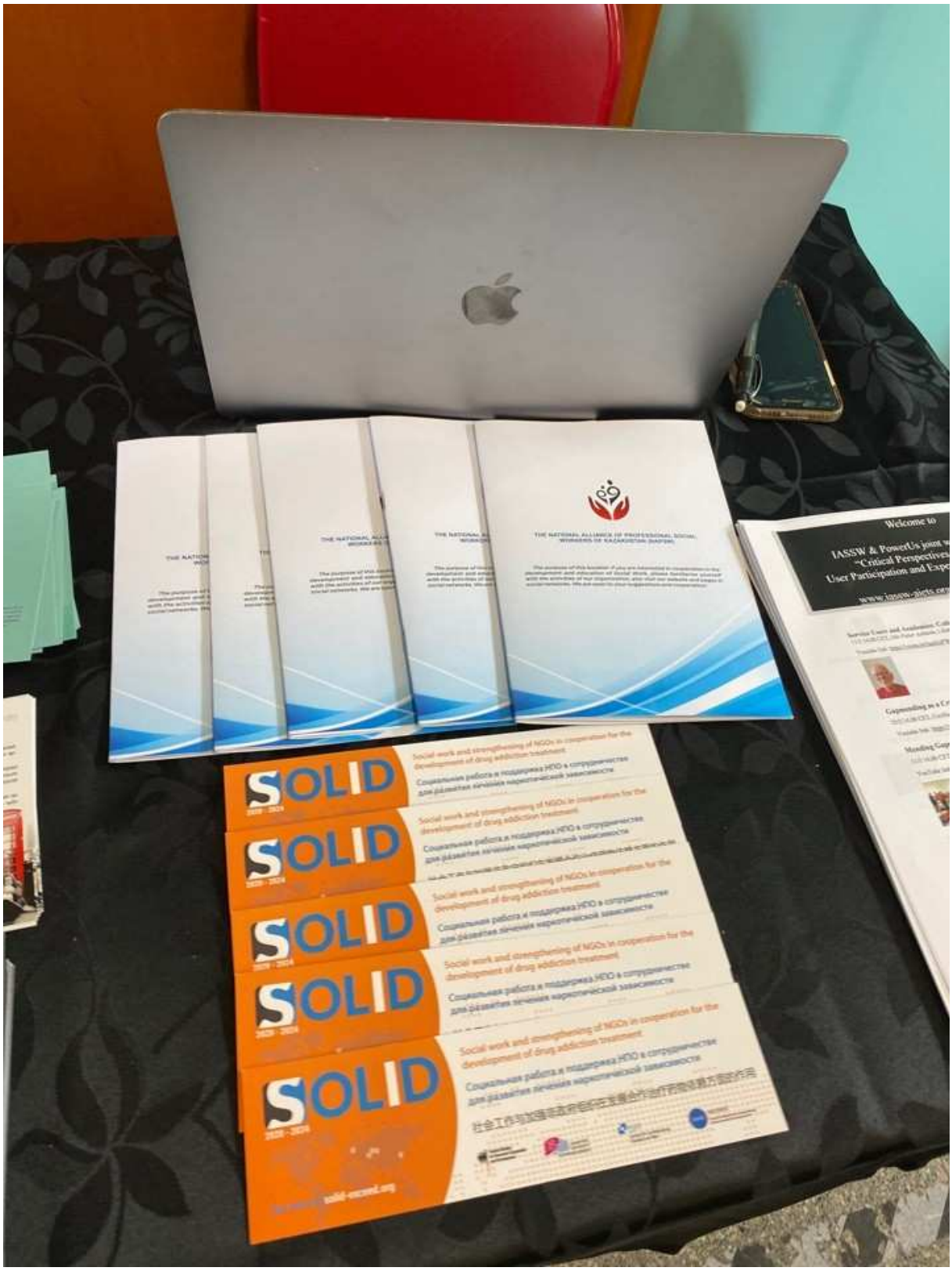
Conference Association of School of Social work “Diversity and Social Work Education: Building Bridges for Sustainable Futures”, Porto, Portugal, 20-23 June 2023

The SOLID team from Kazakhstan represented by Yessimova Dinara (SC) and Ismagulova Sandugash (PhD student) took part in the European Conference on Social Work Education “Diversity and Social Work Education: Building Bridges for Sustainable Futures”, which took place from June 20 to 23 in Porto, Portugal. The Conference was organized by the *European Association of Schools of Social Work and Institute of Social Work of Oporto* (trans. “Instituto Superior de Serviço Social do Porto”). The main goal of the conference, which brought together participants from 5 continents and 33 countries of the world was to become an international forum for dialogue and discussion of issues, problems and practices in the field of social work

education. The Conference addressed various topics in the field of Social Work education, including technologies of social work, human rights, harm reduction, social work values and ethics, proactive approaches to developing social work curricula and etc.

In separate sessions of the conference, SOLID team presented the topic “Challenges and opportunities of Social work education: case of Kazakhstan and Central Asia” which aims to overview of problems and opportunities of social work education in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. SOLID project participants established cooperation with practitioners, teachers and Associations of Schools of Social Work from different countries, including the International Association of Schools of Social Work for further develop education in the field of social work and promote the activities of the National Association of Schools of Social Work of Kazakhstan, which was founded in 2022.





Information on the SOLID project.



Sandugash Ismagulova and Dr. Dinara Yessimova at the Porto Conference.

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

Branch of the Caritas Association Germany in Tajikistan

National Association of Schools of Social Work of Tajikistan

Representative office of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Kazakhstan

Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan

International research project on Social work and NGO support in developing cooperation for the treatment of drug addiction

Association of Schools of Social Work

National Alliance of Professional Social Workers

PROGRAM

4th Central Asian (Astana) Forum of national associations of schools of social work

"Development of national and regional policies in the field of social work in Central Asia: professional standards, educational programs in professional social work. Where are we now and where should we go?

The date of the: **December 5 – 6, 2023**

Location:	Offline at the address: Astana, Saryarka 4, RADISSON hotel To participate online, please follow the following link: https://unicef.zoom.us/j/97664272006
Organizers:	National associations of schools of social work in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan with the participation of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan and with the support of the Caritas Germany Representative Office in Tajikistan, the UNICEF Representative Office in Kazakhstan, the National Alliance of Professional Social Workers of Kazakhstan
Purpose of the Forum:	Development of an effective and sustainable system of national and regional policies in the field of social work in Central Asia to ensure high professional standards and quality educational programs in professional social work.
Objectives of the Forum:	1. Analysis of the current state of national and regional policies in the field of social work in the countries of Central Asia, taking into account professional standards and educational programs. 2. Offering updated professional standards that meet modern social work requirements. 3. Formation of educational programs that meet high standards and requirements in the field of professional social work,

Lisbon Addiction Conference – European Conference on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies, Lisbon, Portugal, 21-25 November 2022



Lisbon Addictions is a multidisciplinary conference that provides a forum for networking across the addictions field. The event is organized by the *Portuguese General-Directorate for Intervention on Addictive Behaviors and Dependencies* (SICAD), the *European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction* (EMCDDA), the journal *Addiction/Society for the Study of Addiction* (Addiction/SSA) and the *International Society of Addiction Journal Editors* (ISAJE). The conference was attended by more than 1.800 participants and more than 26 leading experts in their fields. Under the overarching theme of Global Addictions, LxAddictions22 showcased cutting-edge research to help characterize, understand and respond to addiction and addictive behaviours today. Providing opportunities for early-stage researchers to

enhance their careers (through dedicated showcase sessions, networking activities and mentoring is among the priorities of the Program and Organizing Committees.

Reflections by Zhyldyz Bakirova (Kyrgyzstan)



"I attended the workshop "Getting your addiction research published" by Richard Pates, editor of the Journal of Substance Use. He presented ten simple rules for getting published in international journals:

1. *Read many papers and learn from both the good and the bad work of others.*
2. *The more objective you can be about your work, the better that work will ultimately become.*
3. *Good editors and reviewers will be objective about your work.*
4. *If you do not write well in the English language, take lessons early; it will be invaluable later.*
5. *Learn to live with rejection.*
6. *The ingredients of good science are obvious – the novelty of the research topic, comprehensive coverage of the relevant literature, good data, good analysis including strong statistical support, and a thought-provoking discussion. The ingredients of good science reporting are obvious – good organization, the appropriate use of tables and figures, the right length and writing to the intended audience – do not ignore the obvious.*
7. *Start writing the paper the day you have an idea of what questions to pursue.*
8. *Become a reviewer early in your career.*
9. *Decide early on where to try to publish your paper.*
10. *Quality is everything.*

This session provided a lot of information on writing a research article and publishing it in an international journal. The presenter also provided us with a website that gives advice on you writing and publishing scientific articles. In addition, I took part in the very interesting session on the "Portuguese model of drug policy". The history of the formation of the model was presented. Since 2001, completely new laws concerning drug addiction have been adopted in Portugal. The new approach implies that drug users and their problems become the prerogative of health care, not law enforcement. The new legislation focuses on the person himself, his interests and care for his health, life and rights. In Portugal, the possession of any drugs is decriminalized, if they belong to the consumer personally. Decriminalization does not mean legalization, that is, you cannot buy heroin in a Portuguese pharmacy. But the police do not have the right to bring a person to criminal responsibility, if a ten-day norm of any narcotic substance is found in his possession. The police have no right to arrest such a person – they only record data about him and send them to a special commission. There are several dozen such commissions in Portugal. It is these commissions that decide the fate of the drug user, not the police. The decision is made by a commission of three people: a social worker, a psychologist, and a lawyer. They decide what type of drug user they are dealing with, what kind of help (not punishment) he needs a rehabilitation course, psychological help, etc. and may decide to fine, prohibit holding a position implying responsibility for the lives of other people, prohibit visiting nightclubs, prohibit travelling abroad, prohibit carrying weapons, and so on. Portugal also has programs that involve the treatment of drug users with methadone and buprenorphine. And reintegration programs are engaged in conducting training for former drug users and 21 helping them find work and housing. Pharmacies across the country accept used syringes and, in return, provide new kits to drug addicts free of charge. The kit usually includes several new syringes, condoms, cotton wool, alcohol, and an information brochure about rehabilitation centers. These kinds of kits are distributed in Portugal and are available on the street. This is done so that an introverted drug user does not re-use the syringe and does not "pick up" some virus or infection. In parallel, intensive prevention work is underway in Portugal. Drug addiction prevention is part of the school curriculum in Portugal. The main goal is to inform teenagers: students have training and learn about the dangers of drugs and psychotropic substances and about the damage they cause. This whole complex of combating drug addiction is financed from the state

budget. These measures have led to a decrease in the spread of drugs and death rates from overdoses. The introduction of rehabilitation programs into the prison system is noted. Although there was a small discussion that problems still exist."

Reflections by Dalida Mukasheva (SOLID team Kazakhstan)



"I attended the session "The Spanish Network on Research on Primary Attention on Addiction (RIAPAd): a new multilevel integrated model of responsible research on Addiction Disorders" that was moderated by Rodriguez De Fonseca Fernando, Research head of the Laboratory of Neuropsychopharmacology of the Ibima Institute in Spain. The first presenter was Victor Villanueva – Promotion of health regarding the problematic drug use through interventions in educational and primary addiction treatment settings. The main purpose of this presentation is to show the model that assesses the impact of intervention programmes on different health determinants (drug use, internet gaming, and eventually gambling) in the school population, and how this prevention assessment reaches primary health professionals in addiction settings through the incorporation of health promotion schools. The second presenter was Rodriguez De Fonseca Fernando, he demonstrated the design and methods for incorporating translational research to give quick responses to clinician demands, providing tools and models to advance effective interventions in addiction. The discussion focused on the challenges and opportunities that translational research offers to health professionals working in addiction settings, together with the main difficulties and limitations of this approach. The last session of the second day was "Prison and drugs: exploring social determinants and pathways to the drug problem and

incarceration" where six speakers participated. The first speaker was Caroline Protais. She presented a literature review on prison and drugs. Drug use continues in prison despite the criminal prohibition and the level of control, but it is evolving. These evolutions depend on the substance: tobacco and cannabis consumptions remain at levels close to those found among prison entrants. Alcohol use is disappearing and cocaine and heroin use are decreasing very significantly. On the contrary, the use of psychotropic drugs is increasing. A recent survey distinguishes several users' profiles. The second presenter was Els Plettinckx. During her presentation she demonstrated the reports of illicit drug use during the current detention, the number of incarcerated multiple times, number of committed drug-related offences in Latvia, Czechia, Lithuania and Slovenia. Compared to those who did not report illicit drug use during current detention, significantly more people were younger than 35 years. 22 Steven Ashleigh C. demonstrated the results of her study where they found high rates of reincarceration among men who inject drugs, with the rate highest among young men. Recent criminal justice policy reforms, including changes in bail and parole laws, may explain the higher annual rates of re-incarceration. The next speaker was Richard Pates with the presentation "Adverse childhood experiences, substance use, and involvement with correctional services". An interesting result was that in Germany at least one type of moderate or severe childhood trauma was reported by 50.4 % of prisoners. The number is higher for indigenous women who are 50 % of the female federal inmate population in Canada. Focus on young people with severe Attachment Disorders based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The fifth presenter was Ellen Amundsen and her research where she examined potential risk factors associated with past year incarcerations among all those dying of an accidental overdose between 2010 and 2018 in Norway. The last one was Mark Johnson Ferguson with the topic "Wasted: the complex trajectories from incarceration to recovery. A personal experience". Mark presented a compelling personal account of this journey, the complex personal reasons why people end up addicted to drugs and alcohol, the often-inevitable entry into the justice system, how the system currently fails people, and what support the system needs to provide."

Reflections by Guzalkhon Zakhidova (Uzbekistan)

"I report about the e-poster "Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) related health responses implemented in Europe through the lens of an intersectional risk environment approach". NPS users are diverse in their motivations and social profiles, and so are the health needs and harms associated with their drug use behaviour. Researchers applied an intersectional risk environment approach to analyse public health responses to NPS use implemented at national and supranational levels across Europe. NPS related health responses accompanying enforcement measures across Europe have mostly focused on prevention, monitoring and harm reduction. As with other drug-related issues such as the opioid overdose crisis, public health responses to NPS use should utilize an intersectional risk factor framework to better assess social differences (and inequities) between and among NPS users that yield specific health needs and render some groups more exposed to harm. Including and collaborating with NPS users themselves in the policy-making processes may also contribute to designing and implementing more pertinent public health strategies that limit barriers to accessing drug services while minimizing health risks. Oral presentation: I don't chase drugs anymore and I'm not dead: The Impact of Safer Opioid Supply Programs in Ontario Canada on Client's Health and Drug Use. Over 25.000 Canadians have died from opioid overdose since 2016. Between February and October 2021, researchers examined the implementation and adaption of safer opioid supply programs (SSPs) that include 'off label' prescriptions of pharmaceutical grade opioids for take-home dosing across four sites in Ontario, Canada. This presentation described the results from the n=53 client interviews. Their results indicated multifaceted pathways that resulted in improved self-reported health outcomes among clients including reduced injecting behaviour, decreased cravings for illicit opioids and less criminal activity, coupled with increased stability (e.g., housing security), improved trust in health care, better mental health, and renewed self-identity. Importantly, most clients reported that the intervention saved their life because of the reduced frequency of overdoses. Clients reported that SSPs were life-saving interventions. Findings indicated that SSPs improved clients' health outcomes and increased engagement in health services among people who use opioids."

Reflections by Jarkyn Shadymanova (SOLID team Kyrgyzstan)



"Michal Miovsky gave a presentation on "Training the Prevention Workforce-Future Prevention Workforce". He talked about the importance of training a prevention workforce hinges on gaining core competencies based on theory, research knowledge, and skills needed to plan and implement evidence-based prevention programming. Particularly he was talking about The Universal Prevention Curriculum (UPC) which serves to provide the basis for such training. The Universal Prevention Curriculum (Translated for Virtual Training as Foundations of Prevention Science and Practice) provides a training program for prevention coordinators, managers, and students/trainees whose role includes, or will include coordination and supervision of the implementation of prevention interventions and/or policies. This Universal Prevention Curriculum might be useful for the development of the courses at our universities where we are going to introduce drug prevention and treatment courses. They presented the following courses: Introduction to Prevention Science and the Pharmacology and Physiology of Psychoactive Substances, Monitoring and Evaluation of Prevention Interventions and Policies, Family-based Prevention Interventions, School-based Prevention Interventions, workplace-based Prevention Interventions, Environment-based Prevention Interventions, Media-based Prevention Interventions; and Community-based Prevention Implementation Systems."

Reflections by Medet Kudabekov (Kazakhstan)

"I attended the session "Digital Future? Engaging online communities of people who use drugs to influence policies and practices". The purpose of this session was to show how interacting with online communities of people who use drugs through web surveys can affect policy and practice. One example is the European Drug Web Survey (EWSD) and innovative national web surveys, conducted by EMCDDA Reitox National Coordinators (NCs). In addition, the workshop aims to engage conference participants in mapping potential future applications and emerging issues that will be covered in such web surveys. This will be done through an interactive component running on Lisbon Addictions Conference. Reflecting on the importance of such

surveys in empowering people who use drugs to influence policy and practice, the group and audience will discuss the potential future of web surveys."

Reflections by Mariya Prilutskaya (Kazakhstan)

"On the third day of the conference, I attended the session "Barriers in the implementation of harm reduction interventions in European prisons. From evidence to practice". The first presentation "Provision of harm reduction interventions in European prisons: a short overview of available services" was held by Linda Montanari. As a Principal Scientist at EMCDDA, she conveyed information on low coverage by comprehensive harm reduction interventions in all the EU prisons. a) Interventions available in most countries (20 or more) include: HIV, HBV, HCV testing (29), Opioid Substitution Treatment (OST) continued from the community (29), Referral to HIV treatment upon release (28), HIV treatment (27), Referral to HCV treatment upon release (25), HCV antiviral treatment (25), Testing for TB (23), HBV antiviral therapy (25), OST initiated in prison (22), Treatment for TB (21), Vaccination for HBV (20). The rarest harm reduction interventions in the EU are needle and syringe programs. She underlined the need to scaling-up these programs. Laura Isajeva presented "Hepatitis C and HIV associated risk factors among people in prison in Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain: informing interventions to prevent communicable diseases in the prison setting" in comparison aspect with identification differences in national statistical data on infectious diseases prevalence. The highest prevalence of HCV and HIV was registered 24 in Latvia. In all countries, HCV was associated with the first drug injections in prison. Incarceration recidivism was also identified as a key risk factor for higher HIV and HCV prevalence. "The international guidance on harm reduction interventions in prisons" was the third presentation during the session. As an UNODC Advisor on Prisons and HIV, Ehab Salah reported the most dramatic world data on prison harm reduction. For me, the key part of his presentation was a report on HIV in prisons and a package for evidence-based interventions in the field. The presentation of Heino Stöver "Impact, role, and prevalence of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid users in European prisons" focused on the details of the efficacy and effectiveness of the given treatment. The presenter outlined the research data that provided evidence-based indications on mortality reduction, infectious disease transmissions and treatment

compliance in light of the OAT and naloxone supply. I asked questions about the evidence-based recommendation considering NPS harm reduction and Professor mentioned a project with peer-to-peer information on NPS harm with quite promising results. But all the speakers accepted the lack of policies in this particular direction. Linda Montanari mentioned the EMCDDA rapid communication "NPS in prisons". The fifth presentation of the session "Harm reduction interventions and viral hepatitis elimination in prison: models of care and barriers for implementation" by Lara Tavoschi was focused on the desk review of various cases with particular components of HCV harm reduction. HCV micro-elimination in prison; transitional care for HCV treatment or HBV prevention/treatment; HCV or HBV care services tailored to women living in prison; HBV or HAV/HBV vaccination in prison settings. Among the barriers identified were: the engagement of people living in prison and prison governance structure, availability of infrastructural and human resources, daily prison organization, inter-sectorial collaboration within the prison and between prison and community services and training for prison staff and lack of systematic monitoring. In the final part of the session, Fadi Meroueh and Filipa Alves da Costa summarized the main topics of the discussion and underlined the utmost importance of treatment and harm reduction in prisons and the systemic barriers to this. They also mentioned the lack of evidence-based data on the efficacy of harm reduction intervention on civil society and communities that warrants further investigations."

Reflections by Nurgul Musayeva (SOLID team Kyrgyzstan)



"The presentation of Verv Marionno was very informative to me. Verv spoke about the topic "Behavioral addictions: various groups of the population, problems and solutions". The session examined various behavioural dependencies that occur in different groups of the population. She also talked a lot about ways to solve this problem and when it will be possible to intervene. The comprehensive presentation by Demetrovics Zsolt,

Head of Addiction Research Group (Budapest, Hungary), on the topic of Convergence in behavioural addictions was also very informative for me. The lecture was about gambling disorders and gambling disorder. The presenter spoke about how teenagers still use pornography, use social networks, and become addicted to even physical exercises."

Reflections by Sandugash Ismagulova (Kazakhstan)

"The second session of this day was about "Novel approaches of alcohol use disorder" Central square 1 (C1). In this session, were raised the following current topical issues in the field of alcohol dependence treatment: Can controlled drinking be a good harm reduction strategy? How to prevent a hangover? The use of digital technology in AUD treatment delivery. How to supervise in AUD treatment? I was particularly interested in the topic "Perceived barriers and facilitators to accessing effective clinical supervision and the implementation of a clinical supervision exchange model in the alcohol and other drug sectors" by O'Donnell Courtney. She is a PhD student from Brisbane city of Australia. According to Courtney, Clinical supervision is an essential component in the development and maintenance of professional proficiency across disciplines. But among alcohol and other drugs (AOD) workers, however, access to effective clinical supervision is limited. The author conducted qualitative interviews with frontline workers (10 respondents) and managers (11 respondents) from eight government and non-government AOD treatment services in Brisbane, to examine the perceived barriers and facilitators to AOD workers accessing effective clinical supervision and effective implementation of clinical supervision exchange model in the AOD sector. The findings of this study suggest that resources such as time, cost and availability of skilled supervisors are primary barriers to AOD workers accessing high-quality clinical supervision. For me, supervision is the most effective method of supporting a specialist. In this regard, this topic is relevant in all countries of the world, especially in our country, this area of social work is now slowly developing. As a specialist in this field, I was interested in the standards and legislation in the field of supervision in Australia. To my question, Courtney replied that in Australia, supervision is very actively developing as one of the effective methods of burnout prevention and professional support. In her country, certain standards and acts regulate supervision in different areas of activity. At the

end of the session, we got to know her personally and exchanged contact information, for further fruitful cooperation in this area. The first presentation in this session was: "Benefits and Challenges of Integrating Yoga in Government-Funded Substance Addiction Treatment Programs in India: Results from a Mixed Methods Research Study with Exploratory Sequential Design", by a group of researchers from Southern Connecticut State University, USA. Researchers claim integration of yoga into substance addiction treatment programs benefits patients and improves treatment outcomes. This study examined the benefits and challenges of incorporating yoga in government-funded substance addiction treatment programs in India. Research participants (n=127) were treatment providers working in India's addiction treatment centers. This study showed the main benefits of consistently integrating yoga (practicing yoga for 45 minutes a day for five days per week). Effects: improved physical health; high tolerance for emotional and physical pain; increased ability to self-soothe and relax in the face of stressors; improved self-awareness and emotional regulation; reduced craving for addictive substances; changes in addictive consciousness; enhanced optimism in life; and improved self-discipline. Researchers also noted the main challenges associated with integrating yoga into treatment programs included patients' physical inability to practice yoga and opposing views towards yoga that stem from patients' religious upbringings. The second presentation was about "Social networks amongst people with alcohol dependence who frequently attend hospital: an exploratory qualitative study". Author of presentation was Stephanie Fincham-Campbell, a PhD student from King's College in London, UK. Her study aimed to explore social networks amongst people with alcohol dependence who frequently attend hospitals to inform social network therapeutic approaches and questionnaires. According to the author social network interventions to support dependent drinkers are recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence in the UK and have been utilized within and outside of formal treatment. Interviews were carried out with 29 people who frequently attended the hospital for alcohol-related reasons. Interviews were mostly conducted in people's homes and ranged from 45 to 160 minutes. Dissatisfaction with social networks: Loneliness – Isolation, psychological distress, feeling disconnected. This study highlighted other important factors including stigma, locus of control, age, boundaries and guilt and shame. Satisfaction with social networks: Connection – Feeling close, feeling understood, belonging."

Reflections by Tynchtyk Estebes uulu (Kyrgyzstan)



"During the conference, I got acquainted with the e-posters of my colleagues in the SOLID project:

1. *"Near-infrared mechanism of social interaction cognitive function in patients with alcohol use disorder" by Hang Su, Tianzhen Chen, Ruihua Li, Yan Zhao, Jiang Du and Min Zhao from China;*
2. *"Social assistance needs of opioid substitution therapy (OST) clients in Kyrgyzstan" by Bakirova Zhyldyz from Kyrgyzstan;*
3. *"Social and psychological services to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families in Kyrgyzstan" by Shailoobek kyzy Aisuluu from Kyrgyzstan;*
4. *"The role of social work and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Kazakhstan in prevention and treatment of drug use disorders and HIV/AIDS" by Dinara Yessimova and Sandugash Ismagulova from Kazakhstan;*
5. *"Psychosocial needs of youth using new psychoactive substances (NPS) in Uzbekistan" by Guzalkhon Zakhidova from Uzbekistan;*
6. *"Adherence to treatment among patients with alcohol use disorder" by Amir Rashidov from Uzbekistan;*
7. *"Adequacy of the addictions treatment in Uzbekistan" by Azizbek Boltaev and Sergey Soshnikov from Uzbekistan."*

Reflections by Amir Rashidov (Uzbekistan)

"Oral presentation: Patients reported positive attitudes and acceptability towards mobile telephone-delivered Contingency Management and the use of mobile telephones to deliver these interventions remotely. Patients perceived mobile telephone-delivered Contingency Management as a strong motivator, encouraging their adherence to methadone. The findings suggest the development of a

connection with Contingency Management, one that in many aspects resembles a therapeutic alliance. These interactions were deemed positive, friendly, and non-critical, with patients expressing a level of confidence, reliance, and trust in the mobile telephone-delivered Contingency Management ability to help in their recovery. Short communication: Association between cannabis use and mental health disorders in adolescents in Catalonia. Results of a cohort study the cumulative incidence of developing mental health disorders was 19.6 % in the exposed cohort and 3.1 % in the matched cohort, representing 6.3 times higher relative risk of developing mental health disorders among those exposed to cannabis; and the incidence rate ratio was found to be twice as high in women (14.0 vs. 6.9). Conclusions: This study, in line with published literature, shows a higher risk of developing MHD mental health disorders (not only psychotic disorders), among those exposed to cannabis and this risk is greater among women. Short communication: Physical activity during treatment for substance use disorder: What a systematic review tells us A total of 32 articles including 2550 participants were identified. Most studies were randomized controlled trials (78 %), followed by pre-post design (16 %) and cohort studies (6 %). The most common physical activity intervention identified was a moderate intensity, 3 times per week (≈1 hour) for 12 weeks. Cessation/reduction of substance use was the most studied outcome (13 studies, 41 %), 70 % of which showed a decrease in substance use following physical activity intervention. Aerobic capacity was the second most studied effect (12 studies, 38 %), with more than 70 % of studies showing improvement. Nine studies reported a decrease in depressive symptoms (56 % significantly) and five studies for anxiety (60 % significantly). The main limitation of included studies was their heterogeneity in terms of the type of physical activity, outcome and population. Conclusion: Considering its beneficial effects, including physical activity in treatment (detoxication, residential, outpatient) for substance use disorder seems to be a promising and safe practice, but more methodologically rigorous scientific studies are needed to have clearer recommendations."

Reflections by Aisuluu Shailoobek (Kyrgyzstan)

“Hauser Winfried “EFIC recommendations: When to use opioids for chronic pain and when not to”. There are marked differences between European countries in trends of opioid prescribing and proxies for opioid-related harms. Europe as a whole is not facing an opioid crisis. Discussions on the potential harms of opioids should not obstruct their prescription for cancer pain and palliative care. Differences between German and North American guidelines on opioids:



Germany guidelines on opioids:

- *First version in 2009, updated 2015 and 2021*
- *Predominance of non-pharmacological therapies*
- *Limited evidence for long-term effectiveness of opioids for chronic non-cancer pain*
- *Potential indications and contraindications for opioids*
- *No opioids for chronic pain conditions with predominantly oncoplastic pain mechanisms.*

North American guidelines for opioids:

- *Canada 2011, update 2016*
- *CDC guideline in 2016, update 2022, Chronic pain*

The accepted wisdom about the US overdose crisis singles out prescribing as the causative vector. Although drug supply is a key factor, we posit that the crisis is fundamentally fuelled by economic and social upheaval, its aetiology closely linked to the role of opioids as a refuge from physical and psychological trauma, concentrated disadvantage, isolation, and hopelessness. Over-reliance on opioid medications is emblematic of a healthcare system that incentivizes quick, simplistic answers to

complex physical and mental health needs. Analogously, simplistic measures to cut access to opioids offer illusory solutions to this multidimensional societal challenge. (Dasgupta. Am J Public Health 2018) Research results:

- *In most European countries opioid prescriptions increased from 2004 to 2016. The levels of opioid consumption and their increase differed between countries. Some Eastern European countries still have low opioid consumption.*
- *Opioids are mainly prescribed for acute pain and chronic non-cancer pain in some Western and Northern European countries.*
- *There was a parallel increase in opioid prescriptions and some proxies of opioid-related harms in France, Finland and the Netherlands, but not in Germany, Spain and Norway.*
- *In United Kingdom, opioid overdose deaths, but not opioid prescriptions increased between 2016 and 2018.*
- *There are no robust data available on whether prescribed opioids for pain patients contributed to opioid-related harms.*
- *Optimization of non-opioid treatment: Before considering opioid treatment, we first suggest optimizing nonpharmacological treatments (exercise, physiotherapy, psychological therapies) and considering non-opioid analgesics.*

Danial Stjepanović: Under-reporting of amphetamine use in the National Drug Strategy Household Survey Australians' use of meth/amphetamines is among the highest in the world, with speed (powder) and ice (crystal methamphetamine) as the most common forms. The introduction of ice into the established market prompted concerns of increased harm. One can observe a shift to more use among young people and rural regions. Researchers in Australia speak about an "ice epidemic". The "Ice Destroys Lives" campaign was started in 2015. There are discordant indices of use in Australia. The general population surveys (National Drug Strategy Household Survey, NDSHS) show a declining use. The wastewater monitoring, however, suggested a dramatic increase in population consumption. The treatment-seeking and emergency department use increased over the same period. Aim of present work The research aims at identifying potential explanations for the

discordant estimates of use: Increased harm despite reduced use in population surveys results in increased purity of ice or switch from injecting to inhalation. The researchers claim that we see under-reporting of use data in surveys as a consequence of negative media portrayals of methamphetamine use. The aim of the present work is to estimate the degree of under-reporting of meth/amphetamine use from 2001 to 2019. The researchers examined rates of a lifetime using birth cohorts over survey waves. Methods NDSHS data from 2001 to 2019.

- *Approximately 20.000 participants in each wave*
- *One wave every 3 years. Data weighted to adjust for implementation and to align with the Australian population.*
- *Focused on three birth cohorts: 1951-1960, *1961-1970 and 1971-1980.*

Conclusions:

- *Strong evidence of under-reporting of methamphetamine use. Lifetime prevalence cannot decrease in a cohort.*
- *Prevalence of cocaine and ecstasy use stable or increased. For the oldest cohort, the lifetime prevalence of methamphetamine use is likely much higher. Level of underreporting driven by negative perceptions.*
- *Under-reporting of cigarette smoking in Italy es social acceptability decreased. Similar trends for heroin and cocaine in the USA. Limitations of the present work*

Results:

- *Summary Cocaine and ecstasy use is largely stable or increasing across all birth cohorts. Lifetime methamphetamine use declined dramatically across all choirs from 2001 to 2019.*
- *What could be driving this effect?: Increasing media attention on methamphetamine use (this epidemic) and negative depictions of methamphetamine use."*

The SOLID summer and winter schools

SOLID summer school, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 3-14 July, 2023

Two interesting weeks had been waiting for the participants. During the summer school they learned more about social work in Germany with a special focus on drug prevention and treatment, infectious diseases and social work in prisons. The summer school is part of the SOLID project which stands “Social work and strengthening NGOs in development cooperation to treat drug addiction”.

The SOLID project focuses on three key research areas:

- Social work, drug treatment with special focus on opioid substitution treatment including psychosocial support and counselling,
- Social work and infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, hepatitis-C, COVID-19,
- Social work in prisons and with people with imprisonment experiences due to illicit drug use, sale, or possession.

During the 2023 SOLID summer school in Frankfurt am Main, participants had been studying these three key research areas. The program includes seminars, workshops, discussions, site visits and group work. The participants of the summer school will receive an introduction to the main of social work in Germany and will discuss current issues in small working groups. Furthermore, they will have the chance to participate in an ISSUP workshop on substance use, get insight knowledge on motivational interviewing and learn the skills of professional presentations.

At the final day of the conference, the participants of the summer school present their projects in a student conference. The conference starts with a presentation by the working group “Harm Reduction” that explains the development of a needle exchange programme in a small German city. The presentation is design as a project

presentation. The group made a project plan that includes funding. After the presentation, the project is discussed by the audience. It was mentioned that many harm reduction projects face resistance from political decision makers and the public. In many parts of Germany, it was not possible to start harm reduction projects despite the need among people who use drugs. The second presentation was provided by the “Health Information Group” which presented a comprehensive plan for health information among vulnerable groups. The group emphasized that stigma and discrimination are important barriers in providing health information to vulnerable groups. Doctors and other health care staff members should be aware of stigma and discrimination. The group concluded that it is necessary to raise public awareness about HIV and HCV prevention. The group focused on health information of HIV and HCV. The group provided two discussion questions:

- How can we ensure that the health information plan effectively addresses the needs of diverse community members?
- What are some potential challenges in implementing the health information plan, and how can we overcome them?



SOLID summer school in Frankfurt am Main 2023.



SOLID summer school, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 27 June-8 July, 2022

The *Institute for Addiction Research* (ISFF) organized a summer school at the *Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences* in Frankfurt am Main. Over 20 social work students, trained social workers and physicians from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan had the opportunity to gain exciting insights into the theory and practice of social work and social institutions in Germany, to discuss them in context and reflect on their perspectives. The program included seminars, workshops, panel discussions on the topic of social work in the drug sector, exciting visits to on-site facilities, including the drug consumption room at *Niddastraße*, a guided tour through Frankfurt's main station district as well as visits to the nonprofit organizations *Maincheck* and *Doña Carmen*. Moreover, the summer school provided the opportunity to as well as short documentaries produced by the ISFF on different areas of the Social Work in the drug and addiction area. Over twenty social work students, trained social workers and physicians from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan had the opportunity to gain exciting insights into the theory and practice

of social work and social institutions in Germany, to discuss them in context and reflect on their perspectives. The program included seminars, workshops, panel discussions on the topic of social work in the drug sector, exciting visits to on-site facilities, including the drug consumption room at *Niddastraße*, a guided tour through Frankfurt's main station district as well as visits to the nonprofit organizations *Maincheck* and *Doña Carmen*. Moreover, the summer school provided the opportunity to as well as short documentaries produced by the ISFF on different areas of the Social Work in the drug and addiction area. At the final day of the summer school, the participants presented the results of their group work, which they had developed over the two weeks. These presentations were a true success, as they showed how intensively the participants had worked on the projects. The feedback of the summer school was overwhelmingly positive and motivates the SOLID staff members for many more summer schools in the years to come.



SOLID summer school in Frankfurt am Main 2022.

SOLID winter school, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 22-26 November 2021

In 2022 the “COVID19” pandemic led to the situation that a Summer Meeting in presence had not been able; so we decided to combine the SOLID Summer School event with the International Week at the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences. The event offered a variety of lectures from our SOLID partners in Central Asia and China, as well as from our colleagues from Europe. This international and interdisciplinary program was dedicated to all education, research, and practice in social work and will offer a variety of lectures focusing on social work in the fields of drug use, treatment, HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, as well as carceral social work in detention facilities. The invited speakers will cover aspects of history and development of social work in Germany and beyond, addressed questions on how to deliver care, fight stigma and discrimination in day-to-day social work practice and expand access to social services for the most marginalized and underprivileged groups in our society. The event was held in a hybrid format – live and online –and lectures had been in English and in German.

During the International Week, participants were able to learn more about the various practices, organizations and dedicated social work professionals who work with drug users, people with lifelong infectious diseases or those who live in prison facilities. The individual program items represented an important addition to the curriculum in the social work degree program. The International Week also aimed to impart practical and theoretical expertise and to present the best practices and the latest international research result. Prof. Dr. Heino Stöver, Managing Director of the ISFF. After Stöver welcomed the participants, Dr. Ingo Ilja Michels and Dr. Aysel Sultan first gave a general classification of addiction research within social work. The focus was not only on the German-speaking area, but also on the international area. Afterwards, Sjef Pelsser, *aid organization Mainline* (Netherlands), Gulnaz Isabekova, *Research Center for East European Studies* at the *University of Bremen*, and Margot Uys, *School of Health Sciences* (South Africa) showed some best practice examples of how drug users can be supported within social work. How social work can support self-help and self-organization and what challenges and opportunities exist in AIDS support work in the penal system were reported by Dirk Schäffer, *Deutsche AIDS Hilfe e.V.*, at the end of the first day of the event. The morning of November 23rd was

devoted in particular to social work and drug use in China. The ISFF was able to secure the researchers Tianzhen Chen, Ruihua Li and Yan Zhao from the *Shanghai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine* (PRC) as speakers. The second day of the event was also devoted to questions such as the success that existing aid programs have achieved in recent years and how research and guidelines can accommodate drug-using prison inmates. The questions of how alcohol addiction can be dealt with on a psychosocial level, how opioid addicts can be treated with medication in times of Corona and how, for example, (low-threshold) addiction counselling can be carried out in football fan projects were addressed on the third day of the International Week. In addition, Prof. Dr. Ute Straub, *Fachbereich 4*, gave a general overview of international social work. Sarah Maier, also *Fachbereich 4*, also presented our university's master's program "Addiction Therapy and Social Management in Addiction Help". On November 25th, Zhyldyz Bakirova, *Republican Center of Narcology* (Kyrgyzstan) and Tynchtyk Estebes, *Bishkek State University* (Kyrgyzstan) focused in particular on social work in their home country of Kyrgyzstan. Aisuluu Shailoobek, *Kyrgyz State University* (Kyrgyzstan) also reported on how social work can prevent diseases such as HIV/AIDS in drug users. On the fifth day of the event, Stöver also addressed the question of what role social work plays in total institutions. Claudia Schieren, *VISION e.V. Cologne*, showed how the quality of life and justice for (former) drug users can be ensured. In addition, Simon Fleißner, ISFF, addressed the question of why it is the task of social work to enable the distribution of naloxone to take home as an essential opioid mortality prophylaxis. The fourth and final day of the international week focused in particular on the health care of female prison inmates and the prevention of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS or hepatitis in injecting drug users. The question of how social work must be equipped in view of the modernization of the social system was also addressed. Speakers were Dalida Kukasheva, Zhaniyat Baltabaeva and Medet Kudabekov, *Eurasian National University* (Kazakhstan). Maike Sinead O'Reilly from the *Institute for Social Health and Nursing Research* (IPP) at the *University of Bremen* emphasized that gender also plays a role in low-threshold drug assistance. Katja Kraus, *Fachbereich 4*, spoke about addiction in old age and José Queiroz, *Piaget Agency for Development Porto* (Portugal), dealt in his lecture with harm reduction during the pandemic. Finally, Regina Agostini, *Marienhof Hospital* (Austria) addressed the topic of psychotherapy for and with people with substance use disorders.

Summer/autumn school, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 26-30 October, 2020

Due to the COVID19 pandemic, the “October School” was an online event with a mix of pre-recorded video presentations and live components. The “live” part took place from 26th to 30th October 2020, and its objectives were:

- to impart professional skills (such as understanding the background of the Drugs and HIV/AIDS Situation in Central Asia and China; the philosophy of the SDGs; the SOLID exceed project agenda and research projects) and;
- to update knowledge in key areas of social work, psychiatry and dependence/addiction research and practice (e.g. epidemiology, addiction, affective disorders and anxiety disorders, Opiate Substitution Treatment etc.).The topics will be presented in highly virtual/digital interactive workshops.

The SOLID project lead by the *Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences* and funded by the *DAAD Exceed program*, organized an online workshop (formerly called ‘Summer School’) between the 26th and 30th of October 2020. The target groups of this workshop were the social work students, doctoral students, postdoctoral researchers, scientific coordinators, and other potentially interested University staff from the partnering countries of the SOLID project, i.e. PR China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan.

The workshop was initially planned to be a Summer School in the original project proposal, however, due to the COVID-related circumstances has been rescheduled and renamed into an online ‘October School’. The workshop took place via a password-secured and professionally moderated Zoom room and lasted for five days. Each day had two presenters whose main focus was to address the three key areas from the SOLID project focusing on the role of NGOs in the practice of social work with people who use drugs.

The program had a total of eight experts who spoke about different aspects of local drug policy strategies, opioid-substitution programs, drug treatment and harm

reduction in prisons, infectious diseases among people who use drugs, and the role and development of social work practice and education in each partnering country.

About 30 people attended each session throughout the program with the majority of the participants being from Central Asian countries. The pre-recorded videos have been viewed by up to 200 people (9th November 2020). The presentations of each expert were pre-recorded ahead of the workshop and uploaded on the official website of the SOLID project (www.solid-exceed.org) and were made available to presenters online to facilitate a flexible learning environment and allow participants to prepare their questions ahead of the workshop. Followed by this step, the actual workshop hours were mainly dedicated to a Q&A format giving the participants a chance to actively take part in the workshop and communicate with the experts.

One of the main assets of the workshop was the interdisciplinary and international approach to the topic of social work and its role in the work with people who use drugs in all partnering countries. Through bringing together lively discussions on social work practices, education, and research, participants were able to compare and communicate the differences between different country practices and thereby provoke discussions between the experts on a comparative level.

To allow an easy dissemination of the knowledge materials, some presenters from Central Asian countries did present in the Russian language, while the moderators of the sessions helped with the live translation between English and Russian to overcome the language barrier between some of the participants and presenters.



Drug Addiction treatment and rehabilitation in China

Min Zhao, M.D. & Ph.D., Professor in Psychiatry

Chinese Association of Drug Abuse prevention and Treatment
Shanghai Mental Health Center
Shanghai Jiaotong University School of Medicine

Solid-Exceed October School 2020 by Prof. Min Zhao



The annual meetings of the SOLID project

Shanghai, China, 22-26 April 2024

The SOLID annual project meeting and the City Health Conference took place in Shanghai, China. SOLID researchers from China, Germany, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan came together at the Shanghai Mental Health Center to discuss ongoing research and future plans. Highlights of the meetings were the presentations of the doctoral projects, the practice visits to a methadone clinic and a community health center in Shanghai and the City Health Conference on 26th April 2024 that allowed researchers and practitioners from China, Central Asia and Germany to study topical issues of harm reduction and to learn from best practices.


Professor Jiang Du
Dr. Mariya Prilutskaya




SOLID Project Overview
ISFF
SOLID

The President of the Shanghai Mental Health Center, Prof. Dr. Min Zho, warmly welcomed the guests from Central Asia and Germany. Dr. Michels presented her with a gift, as he had the opportunity to work with her (at the time she was still head of the drug treatment department at the clinic) between 2006 and 2008 and to get to know the first methadone treatment programs in China.



Visits





Visit at a Counselling Centre of the Shanghai Ziqiang Social Service Federation.





Visit at the Methadone site in Shanghai Chonging district.

Shanghai, China, City Health Conference, 26 April 2024

The Shanghai Mental Health Center, Global Public Health Network, in collaboration with the SOLID-exceed Project, cordially invite you to join us for the 13th City Health Conference. The City Health Conference is a global annual event dedicated to addressing public health and harm reduction challenges, with a keen focus on the unique obstacles encountered by urban centers worldwide. This year marks a significant milestone as we bring the conference to Asia for the first time, hosting it in the vibrant city of Shanghai, People's Republic of China. Our gathering aims to delve into the critical issues surrounding mental health, substance use, and risky behaviors, particularly exploring the intersectionality of these challenges and the role of social work – a crucial but often overlooked aspect. With a diverse array of presenters hailing from various countries and backgrounds, we eagerly anticipate rich insights and experiences being shared. Attendees can expect an enriching environment conducive to knowledge exchange and collaborative brainstorming. Together, we will explore innovative strategies to address pressing public health concerns, transcending boundaries and silos to foster impactful change on both national and international platforms. Join us as we embark on this collective journey towards a healthier, more resilient future for our cities and communities.



Scientific Coordinator of SOLID in Shanghai, Prof. Dr. Jian Du.

Dr. Ingo Ilja Michels – Opening of City Health Conference, 26 April 2024

"Dear participants at this already 13th City Health Conference, organized again by our Polish colleagues from "Global Public Health Network" and in cooperation with the Shanghai Mental Health Centre and our SOLID project will continue the discussion we started at the last conference in Bishkek one year ago again on the challenges and opportunities for Public Health and Harm Reduction. It will deal again with the challenges of public health regarding several severe diseases and the medical and social consequences. We know that health depends on the lifestyle of the individual, on medical services, the genetic dispositions of the individual and on social-economic circumstances. It will deal with the development and answers to the use of psychoactive substances whether they are legal (such as tobacco or alcohol) or illegal (such as opioids and stimulants) which needs answers on how to deal with prevention, treatment and harm reduction for those who are not able to stop the usage. As we already learned from the last conference, public health can be a driver for changing the awareness, where the state, the medical and psychosocial experts, business people and non-profit actors need to work together. Infectious diseases are of great concern in our countries such as HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis which have been successfully reduced in recent years, especially here in China, but also in Central Asia and Europe. However, the incidence of HIV might increase again in people who

are not part of groups at risk. The problem of stigma is a major concern which can complicate prevention and treatment. In China Opioid Substitution programs with Methadone had been successfully implemented and we had been able to visit such sites in Shanghai. We realized that alcohol use with its negative social and psychological consequences is a concern in all our countries. We also know that that ecological and health issues are interconnected, and that clean air is a concern in all our countries. Air pollution is a major problem in this region, but also in all big cities worldwide and because of this, respiratory diseases are on the rise.

All the public health programs are aiming to improve the quality of life. Healthy lifestyle is essential for public health and one important part of it is lowering the percentages of people who are smoking tobacco because of the severe health consequences of it. We need also programs on healthy nutrition, focussing on food with a reduced level of salt, sugar and fat. Complex activities are developed to address these issues and we will discuss some of these at this conference. The growing number of mental and psychiatric illnesses is also a major problem in modern societies. When I lived in Shanghai 2006-2008, I was able to attend the 21st World Congress on Psychotherapy in May 2014 in Shanghai where Prof. Zhao Xudong mentioned that China with its population of 1.3 billion people is exposed to rapid social changes, which, among other things, lead to an enormous increase of mental illnesses. 16 million people had been diagnosed with serious mental illnesses, over 26 million with depression, more than 67 million suffering from anxiety disorders and 173 million are living in psychologically unhealthy conditions. According to data from the WHO, neuro-psychiatric illnesses are ranking high in China, now exceeding cardiovascular diseases, cancer or respiratory diseases. A study by the Beijing Psychological Crisis Intervention Centre reported over 180,000 annually suicides and 2 million suicide attempts. These are the challenges for Public Health that we are meeting and we hope to be able to contribute a little to the relief with our expertise. I invite you to an exciting conference and thank the Shanghai Mental Health Centre very much for their extraordinary support!"



Dr. Ingo Ilja Michels at the Opening Speech.



Dr. Michels with Lingmin Fu, Director of Shanghai Ziqiang Social Service Federation whom he met alead 2007 for trainings at the NGO centre



Group photo at City Health Conference in Shanghai.

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 24-26 April 2023

The meeting was prepared by the SOLID team Kyrgyzstan. SOLID participants from China, Germany, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan travelled to Bishkek to participate in the meeting. For the first time since the project start, we were able to welcome our partners from Shanghai Mental Health Centre. The conference provided an excellent platform for discussing harm reduction policies in the region and worldwide. SOLID researchers participated as speakers and discussants during the conference and were able to make new contacts with state officials, researchers and members of the non-profit community in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

The first day started with a discussion of the e-learning modules. After that, the group departed to Bishkek State University to meet the dean and other staff members of the department of social work. The SOLID was welcomed by the dean of the faculty, Professor Dr. Erik Sadykovich Orozaliev, who provided an overview of the study programs and the international cooperation of the department of social work. Professor Orozaliev is also president of the *Association of Social Workers of the Kyrgyz Republic*. Gulzat Tynybekova, the head of the *International Department of BSU*, gave a presentation of the *International Department on International Relations* of the University.

In Kazakhstan there had been group work on the Social Code with support of the SOLID project and also work on Professional Standards for Social Work and on a Curriculum “Addiction Therapy and social management in addiction support”. There will be Round Tables for Penitentiary Administration and for Drug Treatment specialists. Progress has been achieved in curriculum development in Uzbekistan. Regarding China: the project implementation at the Shanghai Medical School had been presented. The team selected MI (Motivational Interviewing) and PM+ (Problem Management Plus). What has been achieved with regard to the PhD program? For future cooperation: standardization of processes is needed, expanding of the mentoring teams, invitations of experts from other countries, strengthening the assessment system for the students, applying for workshops and symposia to introduce the project at national and international conferences. Regarding Kyrgyzstan: there are achievements of the SOLID project, including studying the role of social work in the prevention and treatment of drug addiction, strengthening awareness for the work of NGOs and government agencies in developing social work in the fields of probation, social protection and people living with HIV; combined efforts of scientists and practitioners to develop scientific, methodological and educational support for the prevention of addictive behaviour; active involvement of students in prevention work progress of the SOLID project. The PhD students are involved in teaching at the university. All SCs provided a short description of the PhD trajectories in their countries.

The second day of the project meeting started with a visit to the State TB Clinic in Bishkek. The SOLID participants were welcomed by the director of the clinic and learned about medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for drug users. After the discussion of the medical staff of the TB clinic, the SOLID participants visited the methadone substitution point which is located on the premises of the TB Clinic. The rest of the day was devoted to the discussion of the progress of the PhD projects.

As an Outcome of the 2023 SOLID project meeting in Bishkek we discussed the prospects for applying for a new SOLID project.



City Health Conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 27 April 2023



Mariya Prilutskaya, Amir Rashidov and Katarzyna Kowalczyk at the City Health Conference.

A representative of the Kyrgyz Ministry of Health welcomed the participants of the City Health conference. Drug use was mentioned as a serious problem in Kyrgyzstan. The Ministry welcomed the development of a forum for discussing harm reduction programmes. Risky health behaviour among pupils (13 – 17 years) has become a serious health concern in Kyrgyzstan. Katarzyna Kowalczyk of the NGO “Global Health Network” opened the conference.

Panel Session: Challenges and Opportunities for Public Health and Harm Reduction

The participants discussed the interconnected challenges of public health and harm reduction in Central Asia. Alfiya Samigullina is a professor at the *International Medical Institute* and works on prevention and harm reduction programs. She is also a deputy and has been involved in the development of the concept of harm reduction in Kyrgyzstan. The countries of Central Asia have their own specifics. This conference is very important for Kyrgyzstan. Health depends on the lifestyle of the individual, on medical services and the genetic dispositions of the individual.

Zhyldyz Bakirova is deputy director of the *Republican Center of Psychiatry and Narcology* in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The center is working with people who are using drugs. The center offers services for those who are longterm users and those who have just started to use drugs. It is a broad spectre of tasks. Aigul Solovieva is a deputy and a chairwoman of an association of ecological organization in Kyrgyzstan. The organization deals with green economy. It is important to develop green economy in Kyrgyzstan, because we need a healthy environment. We face a lack of water in our republic. Public health can be a driver for changing the awareness in our country. State, business and non-profit actors need to work together.

Illmira Urazalieyeva is a lecturer at the *Department of Public Health and Management* in Uzbekistan. Infectious diseases are a main concern in Uzbekistan. However, the government has realized that alcohol use is a concern.

Nadezhda Petukhova emphasized that ecological and health issues are interconnected and that clean air is a concern in Kyrgyzstan. Air pollution is a major problem in the city of Bishkek. Because of this, respiratory diseases are on the rise in

Kyrgyzstan. Air pollution can lower life expectancy for one year (according to the data of a US study). Ecological problems are interrelated: environmental degradation can lead to forced migration.

Bachyt Tumenova explained that the first cases of HIV infections occurred among people using drugs. In the past time, the incidence of HIV again increased. The problem of stigma is a major concern.

Zhyldyz Bakirova said that the *Republican Center for Psychiatry and Narcology* was merged only last year. Before that the two different departments dependently. The work is built on 5 pillars: treatment, narcological services. We understand drug use as a chronic disease. In this way, drug use disorders are similar to diabetes. It is a long-term disease. Remises are normal in the process. The centre is serving three groups: those who have used psychoactive substance for one time, these people have tried, those who have used them more regularly, and those who are used psychoactive substances regularly 11 for a long time. Three groups: some want to stop but cannot. Some want to stop, but do not manage. Some want to continue to use psychoactive substances. We aim to lower the harm of substance use. If people want to stop using, we help with de-toxication and rehabilitation. For those, who want to stop, but do not manage, we introduced programs of substitution therapy. Substitution therapy is very important. We want to understand what the needs of our patients are. The experience of Kyrgyzstan can be helpful for our partners in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. We now face a new issue of new psychoactive substances. There are young people using these substances and there are new modes of purchasing these drugs. We need to find new ways of responding to this new issue. We need to understand what we need to do to face the challenges of new psychoactive substances.

Bachyt Tumenova (Kazakhstan) argued that the challenges for public health need to be understood. The rate of HIV infection has doubled in Kazakhstan. There are some decision-makers who do not understand the harm reduction approach.

Zhyldyz Bakirova explained that the evaluation of narcological services is based on the registry. Drug use is not increasing in Kyrgyzstan; it remains on the same level. In Kazakhstan, it is necessary to develop recommendations that improve the quality of life. For this, we need to know the risk factors. We have established a working group

on health risk. We are working on the program “Healthy Nation”. This is an important state program. Our working group is involved in this program. We are working on healthy lifestyle promotion. We have developed a road map. We want to return the services to the state. This work can only be effective, if it is coordinated. Healthy lifestyle is essential for public health. It is important that all people understand that they can follow a healthy lifestyle. Therefore, it is necessary to inform and educate people from a young age. This also includes lowering the percentages of people who are smoking. Prohibition is not enough. We need a complex information work. We need to work for our population and for future generation. The problems of ecology, of public health and of drug use are important for all. Bachyt Tumenova from Kazakhstan provides an example of palm oil. Drug use does not only affect the people who use injecting drug, but potentially also affects other people as well.

Harm reduction programs are conducted in Uzbekistan. The health risk factors in Uzbekistan include smoking and drug use. The government has developed policies to address risk factors. The Ministry of Health and local self-administrations are working in this field. We follow an inter-sectoral approach. The President of Uzbekistan issued a decree on the prevention of infectious diseases. This covers the prevention of smoking and drug use. There had been started a new program on healthy nutrition and on alcohol use prevention. The program on healthy nutrition focuses on food with a reduced level of salt, sugar and fat. We face the challenge of a high population density. We face the rise of smoking and drug use among teenagers. The Ministry of Health is now paying attention to this issue. Complex activities are developed to address prevention among teenagers. Smoking is mostly a male issue. Uzbekistan has started a new state program on smoking and alcohol use. A new alcohol strategy and smoking strategy is developed.

Zhyldyz Bakirova explains that Kyrgyzstan does not have state rehabilitation programs. There are a number of private rehabilitation programs. We still have a lot of work in this direction. We need to collaborate with all different institutions, with different professionals (social workers, psychologists). Unhealthy food products are often presented in an attractive way. If there is no awareness of healthy nutrition in a family, children do not learn what healthy nutrition is.

Representation of the organization *Wings*: We need a good form of partnership between international organizations, state organization and non-profit organization

that often represent communities and have a lot of knowledge. In the past, we had a good cooperation with donor organization. Now the level of funding is decreasing with every year. Only harm reduction is not sufficient.

Batma Estebesova, a representative of the non-governmental organization *Socium* explained that she was involved in the promotion of harm reduction programs in Kyrgyzstan. In general, a lack of knowledge is causing harm. The level of prevention in the public health system is very low. The countries of Central Asia now face a new wave of drug use. Young people do not use heroin, but new psychoactive substances. Why is this question not raised?

Panel: Drug, Drug Treatment and Harm Reduction in the 2020s

Dr. Julia Rozanova, from *Yale University* and *King's College London*, presented a research project Research on prisons in Kyrgyzstan. More than 25 % of Kyrgyz prisoners are people who inject drugs (PWID). They have a history of drug dependency. Drug dependency is co-morbid to HIV infection. HIV prevalence in the prison is more than 10 times higher than in the community. Peer-driven intervention is an evidence-based strategy to effectively link PWID to MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) in the community. PDI has never been adapted to prison settings to date. The Methods include intervention – adaption – process. The researchers found that people in prison are interested in managing their addiction. Preliminary evidence from implementation: An example video was shown to explain how the approach of PDI is applied in prison. Important developments in the course of the project include the following: The mental health state was very poor in the beginning. Many people have anxieties. We had follow-up meeting after three and six months after the training. The state of mental was improved. We saw a reduction in anxieties of one third. The resilience went up. The indicators for resilience were better than before the training. Most of the participants use drugs, also in the prison. If they are more resilient, it is more likely that they make healthy choices.

Dr. Mariya Prilutskaya: Epidemiology of the use of NPS among young people Use of traditional and new psychoactive substances: Kazakhstan is the first country in Central Asia that developed a system of control for NPS. The problem is very topical. The use of NPS is increasing. The 13 number of patients with NPS use who

approach medical institutions is increasing. Patterns of NPS use: use, effect motives, groups of substances, modes of usage, frequency of use. We study all these factors. We do field research among the users of NPS. This way, we can reach a broad variety of different young people. A Survey on the use of traditional and new psychoactive substance was conducted. In the survey, we used the words that are used in every-day language. Traditional substances include marihuana etc. We see a rise in the use of stimulating substances (sol, fentanyl). We also asked users about the symptoms of intoxication that they experienced. How difficult is it to purchase new psychoactive substances? Respondents differed in their assessment on how easy it is to purchase psychoactive substances. In some cities, respondents answered that it is very easy to purchase psychoactive. There are very different ways to purchase NPS. Their popularity is increasing. NPS have more toxic effects than traditional drugs. Why do you think people use psychoactive substances? One of the main findings: NPS have become more popular among young people in Kazakhstan.

Amir Rashidov: Drug situation in Uzbekistan he showed the changes in drug use in Uzbekistan. In 2022, we observed an increase in people with drug use disorders. The absolute number is 5365 in 2022. This is the first time that we see an increase in drug use after several years of decrease. The share of women among drug users is increasing. Age categories: The share of young people (20-39 years) is increasing among drug use. The older generation (older than 40 years) is decreasing. What kinds of substances are used? Opiate – 64.5 %, Cannabis – 30 %. The number of injecting drug users is increasing. General trend: There is an increase in NPS. The majority of these cases were registered in the city of Tashkent. Harm reduction programmes in Uzbekistan include needle exchange, condom distribution, and “Kabinet doveria”. These so-called “friendly cabinets” are used to provide information HIV/AIDS anonymously, but ate often not used, because PWDU fear to be registered as a drug user with several negative consequences. Prevention: Counselling for drug users: The need for services has also increased, especially over the past year. It is necessary to develop trainings for social workers in the field of drug use.

Dr. Jiang Du: NPS and drug treatment in China. There is still a large number of drug users in China. Why? The most often used substances are Methamphetamines, heroin and ketamine. Characteristics of synthetic drugs are prone to psychotic symptoms and the possible severe impairment of cognitive function. She presented

the policy of drug prevention and intervention in China. In the first phase, before the adoption of the Drugs Control Law, drug users were identified as criminal offenders in China. Compulsory isolation treatment was offered for them, but also Methadone Treatment The Drugs Control Law opened up for the introduction of a medical approach and a Community recovery system. Drug use patients will return to the community. Drug addiction is a chronic relapse brain disease. The CARD Study ("Cohort of Addiction Related Disease") in China is funded by the government. CARD Study showed that the Western provinces are more affected than the East. There had been non-medical treatment / intervention strategies. rTMS could reduce craving and improve cognition Computerized Cognitive Addiction Therapy (CCAT). The therapy includes 10 sessions. After the interventions, the therapy is evaluated. People have very different motivations to use substances. Some use them to lose weight, other to improve study performance etc. That should be taken into account.

The second day of the conference started with a panel on harm reduction in tackling non communicable diseases.



The SOLID team presents the new publication "Social Work and Health in Prison. Studies from Central Asia and China" at the 2023 City Health Conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, April 2023.

RESOLUTION

XII INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CITY HEALTHCARE «CITY HEALTH» April 27-28, 2023, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

The participants of the XII International Conference on Urban Health Care "City Health", represented by medical and scientific communities, non-profit organizations, government agencies, the media and international experts from Germany, the UK, the USA, Poland, China, Mongolia, Russia, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan after having listened to the reports and jointly discussed the proposals, unanimously agreed that the modern health care system of densely populated cities and the suburb areas in the region has faced a big number of problems and challenges.

Issues such as proper and balanced nutrition, providing the population with quality and legal medicines, smoking, excessive consumption of alcohol, the distribution of drugs, especially synthetic ones among young people, air quality, constant population growth, the growth of illegal trade in food (including counterfeit) and everyday life are increasingly contributing to the development non-communicable chronic diseases and placing an enormous burden on national economies.

The participants of the conference recognize that these problems do not exist in isolation, and the whole society should be highly active in addressing them in their social and political contexts. The conference called for a critical examination of the causes and solutions to these problems and the relationship of public health with institutions that are interested and play an important role in their structure.

After having listened to the reports, discussions and opinions shared, the participants of the conference, as its results, consider as necessary the following:

- recognize that the conference has created a platform for knowledge sharing and discussion on how all stakeholders can work together and most effectively respond to challenges and major public health issues.
- apply a joint approach to solving traditional and modern public health problems (especially NCDs) in the region with the joint efforts of governments, businesses, the media, and public associations. This approach opens opportunities for an effective prevention of NCDs.
- promote an approach based on the concept of reduction harm from unhealthy lifestyle behaviors (excessive alcohol consumption, unbalanced diet, smoking, physical inactivity, reproductive hygiene, and drug addiction) and thereby reducing risk as. The harm reductions approach is a missing element in addressing comprehensively NCDs, particularly in prevention and increasing effectiveness of disease therapies.
- to carry out a comprehensive program for prevention of the use of narcotic drugs, including raising public awareness of new illegal ways for the distribution of traditional and non-traditional psychoactive substances, including tightening control over the circulation of sedative drugs through pharmacies. Promoting national harm reduction programs to manage drug addiction for further socialization of people at risk.
- consider the effective use of harm reduction tools in the management of drug addiction, including the experience of developed countries such as the UK, the USA and China, and recommend that the Governments of the countries of the

region to apply this Concept to deal with other NCD risk factors: addiction to alcohol and smoking, unbalanced diet, etc.

— systematically improve the quality of primary health care for the population in the region and promote harm reduction in the prevention of not only diseases, but also various injuries, burns, traffic, and other accidents.

— encourage differentiated regulation of products and goods with scientifically substantiated less harmful potential in accordance with the national laws of countries in the region based on the experience of developed countries and ensure the availability of such products as a harm reduction tool for NCD risk factors prevention and other certain infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, AIDS, etc.

— continuously improve the social life and health of prisoners in prisons in the region as well as systematically improve the quality of special medical services for certain vulnerable groups in the countries.

— recommend to the Governments of the countries participating in the conference to consider the opportunity to legally frame the definitions of "Harm reduction concept" and its tools in local laws.

— study international experience and propose feasible measures to improve the environmental situation in large cities and their suburbs (air pollution, dense population, disruption of the natural wind rose), which leads to the development of a number of chronic diseases.

— create an international coalition of associations, government agencies and experts - supporters of the harm reduction, coordinated by the organizers of the conference, and ensure a systematic exchange of knowledge, experience, and data on scientific developments.

— recommend to the Governments of the participating states to establish a dialogue with international organizations on promoting the concept of harm reduction as a missing element in the prevention of NCDs and their risk factors.

Nur Sultan (Astana), Kazakhstan, 24-25 May 2022

Dr. Azizbek Boltaev reported on "Drug dependence in Uzbekistan" and mentioned that drug policy in Uzbekistan is aimed at countering illicit drug trafficking, protecting the health of the populations with 457 narcological clinics with 1.885 beds; 230 syringe exchange sites and more than 220 emergence care sites. The interests to harm reduction services in Uzbekistan has dropped in recent years. In 2022, the seizure of opiates trafficked from Afghanistan had been increasing again. This probably leads to a new increase in opiate users.

Drug use is treated as a medical issue. There is not so much information outside the medical profession. Interdisciplinary research is still in its infancy. The social and psychological issues need to be tackled as well. But drug users do not only have

medical needs. One objective of the project is to advocate for an integrated approach.
The main care institutions are state-owned. The harm reduction services are supported by the Global Fund. There are non-profit organizations that offer services. One group is the Narcotics Anonymous is existing.
There are also private clinics that offer drug rehabilitation and drug treatment. But there is no data on these clinics. Some clinics do not have a license.
There are standards for the treatment for drug use and alcoholism. Everyone who is offering services should adhere to the standards. But it is difficult to measure the quality of services. There are very good statistics of those who need emergency care at toxicologist department.

Dr. Nurgul Musaeva presented the PhD program at Bishkek State University. The university has a postgraduate studies program and a doctoral studies program. There is a cooperation with external organizations includes the ASW – Association of Social Workers of the Kyrgyz Republic.
The university has several cooperation agreements with nonprofit organizations. The university cooperates among others with the Aids Foundation East West (AFEW). There are also contacts with Kyrgyz nonprofit organizations.
The university provides training courses on HIV, drug users, social support to PLWH.
New courses are developed: neuro-linguistic programming, gestalt psychology, and English courses.

Dr. Dinara Yessimova and **Dr. Mariya Prilutskaya** reported that the PhD team focuses on social work with vulnerable social groups (HIV, drug addiction, convictions) and the goals of postdoc and PhD collaboration are -to strengthen scientific skills in methodology and study design; to rise awareness about national drug treatment services; to broaden networks with field practitioners in drug treatment facilities and to introduce and advocate the SOLID project’s ideas in drug treatment services.
The LGTB community is facing a double or triple stigma. The LGBT community faces a higher risk of infectious diseases. In Kazakhstan, the LBTB community is completely closed.

Dr. Hang Su, from the *Shanghai Mental Health Centre*, presented a study on stigma that he was preparing. He is working with a standard catalogue of reported stigma and evaluates what kind of stigma clients report. The legitimation and perpetuation of damaged identities by cultural norms and social institutions is called structural stigma.

Account of the SC meeting:

All presentations of the meeting should be put on the website (internal part). It is important to make all project activities visible. The information about meetings should be put on the website. The title of the project includes the strengthening of nonprofit organizations in Central Asia. This is exactly what we intend to do with the project. We want to reach out to nonprofit organizations. It is very important to collaborate with nonprofit organizations. During the workshop in Frankfurt am Main in November we will be focusing on presentation skills. The trainer is a professional actor as well.

Account of the postdoc meeting:

Problems and challenges (technical and methodological issues)

- Differences in local standards in PhD regulations (regulations for medicine and public health dissertations, sometimes the required structure is very rigid); the regulations create problems for PhDs in social work,
- Combining the medical part of a dissertation with the SOLID project (medical criteria, interventions, including laboratory tests and examinations need to be combined with social issues and combined with social work study approaches)
- Research study design (this relates to technical and methodological issues), methodological discrepancies, discrepancies between theoretical approaches between the disciplines that are relevant for addressing drug addressing.

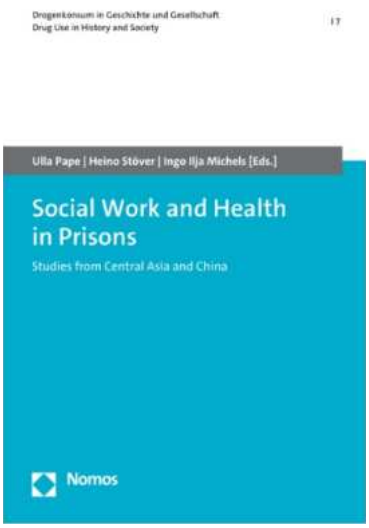
Ideas and opportunities:

- Improving practical skills
- Developing methodological skills
- Combinations between qualitative and clinical data
- Need to include short mobility stays within Central Asia (between the project countries), example trip to Pavlodar

- Webinars on different methodological approaches, qualitative and quantitative data (MaxQDA, qualitative methods, introduction into statistical methods
- Course Introduction to Statistical Analysis, www.coursera.org

Dr. Ulla Pape presented the plan for a new Publication on “Social Work and Health in Prisons. Studies from Central Asia and China”. The next book publication will be devoted to the topic of social work and health in the penitentiary system. The structure and the timeline for this publication are discussed. Both structure and timeline will be updated after the meeting and distributed among all prospective authors.

The book had been published in 2023.





International Conference of Social Workers of Kazakhstan “Social work with convicts as ensuring human rights: Issues of interaction between state institutions and civil society” program, Astana, Kazakhstan, 23-27 May 2022

The conference (there had been 600 participants) was organized by the *Eurasian National University named after L.N. Gumilyov*, the *National Alliance of Professional Social Workers of Kazakhstan*, the *Commissioner for Human Rights*, the *Commissioner for Children’s Rights in the Republic of Kazakhstan*, the *Ministry of*

Internal Affairs, the *National Commission for Women and Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan* and the *Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan*.

The Republic of Kazakhstan has set the task of developing modern approaches to the provision of social services and initiated changes that aim to improve the population's quality of life and strengthen the sustainability of individuals, families, and communities. In this regard, a radical revision of the state's attitude to the institution of social work as a profession, practice, and academic discipline are more relevant than ever. The purpose of the conference is to strengthen the commitment of the Forum participants to the mission, goals, and objectives of social work as a profession, recognition of its importance in the modern agenda of the government and society, discussion of priorities in the field of protection of children's rights and further actions to achieve the SDGs, as well as a broad exchange of international experience and proposals to promote social work as an academic discipline, profession and practice both in the penitentiary system and in closed institutions in general.

The objectives of the conference had been:

- Discussion of the "open agenda" in the development of Social Work in closed institutions at the present stage;
- Presentation and discussion of trends in the development of social work in closed institutions both on the international and national agenda;
- Exchange of international experience in the development and advocacy of the profession of Social Work within the framework of the SOLID project "The role of Social work in the treatment and prevention of drug addiction";
- Strengthening cooperation between Schools of Social Work as countries participating in the implementation of the SOLID project and expanding cooperation to support the Institute of Social Work as a profession and practice, especially in monitoring closed institutions;
- Discussion of the accumulated experience in the field of prevention of torture and ill-treatment and the comparative experience of Central Asian and European countries;
- Social work and SDGs. Development of recommendations for the successful implementation of the deferred SDG goals by Kazakhstan.

- The need to develop education in the field of probation, the development of a curriculum for social work with dependent behavior “Addiction disorders” within the SOLID project framework.
- The role of Social work in the prevention and treatment of dependent behaviour, drug addiction, alcoholism, and other addictions, as well as in the prevention and treatment of HIV.

It was expected that the FORUM:

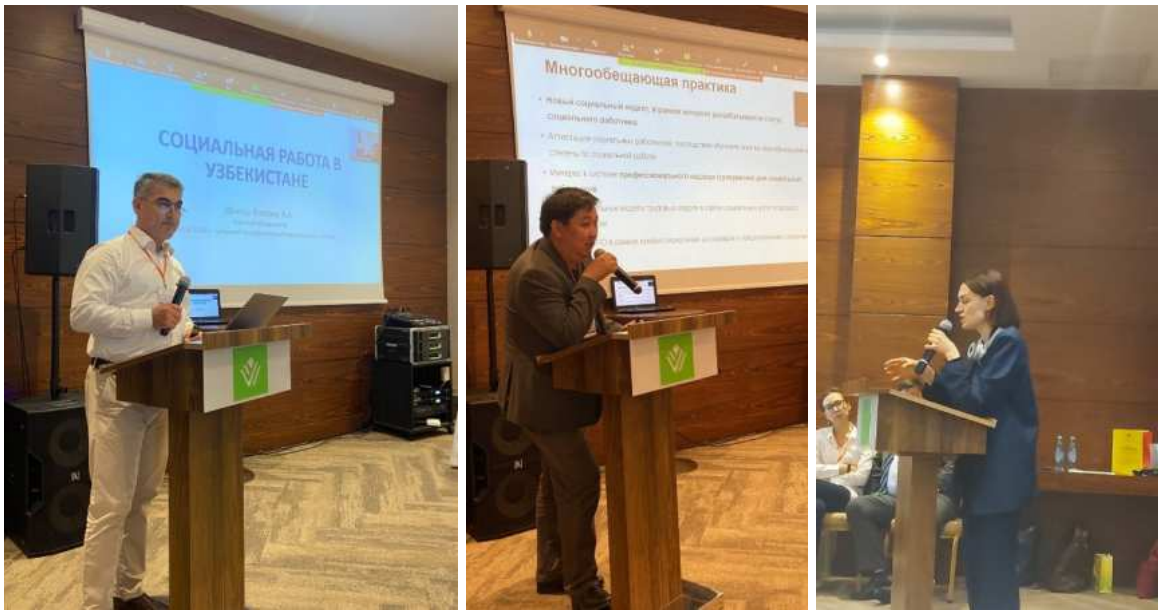
1. values and understanding of Social Work and the use by the state of the accumulated experience in using technologies to improve the quality of life of individuals, children, families, and communities;
2. establish stronger cooperation and exchange on support for education in social work professional activity within the framework of the National Alliance of Professional Social Workers of Kazakhstan;
3. will contribute to the formation of a different strategy for developing and using the potential of Social Work at the macro, middle, and micro levels of practice.

In the session on the “Development of social work in the field of treatment and prevention of addictions, including the example of the SOLID project” Prof. Heino Stöver spoke about “The need for treatment and prevention of dependent behavior. Achievements and challenges of the Institute for Research on Dependent Behavior. Question statement and research review“; Prof. Jiang Du, *Shanghai University School of Medicine*, China spoke on “the experience of research in the field of dependent behavior, within the SOLID project in China”; Dr. Mariya Prilutskaya, Post-doctoral student of the SOLID project in Kazakhstan, talked about *“*Synthetic drugs: new challenges and issues“; Prof. Jarkyn Shadimanova, Post-doctoral student of the SOLID project in Kyrgyzstan, talked about “the experience of narcological practice in the treatment of addictive behavior in Kyrgyzstan” and Medet Kudabekov, PhD student of the SOLID project in Kazakhstan, talked about “Social work on drug addiction treatment in Kazakhstan”.

In the session on “Social work in Closed institutions Global and national professional challenges. The role of the NPM as a monitoring tool for closed institutions” several

experts under the moderation of Elvira Azimova, Commissioner for Human Rights in Kazakhstan talked about “First steps towards professionalization of social workers of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the penitentiary system within the framework of the Social Code” (Vice-Minister of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan) and about “The current state of Social work in the penitentiary system in Kazakhstan. General and special. Further steps in the development of Social work in the penitentiary system” (Marat Kozhayev, First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Nurlan Biyekenov, Rector of the Kostanay Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kazakhstan named after Shrakbek Kabylbayev). Prof. Heino Stöver talked on “Social work in the penitentiary system The experience of Germany” and Nurgul Musayeva, Head of the *Department of Psychology and Social Work of the Bishkek Humanitarian Institute*, scientific coordinator of the SOLID project in Kyrgyzstan talked about “Lessons learned from the experience of introducing the staff of a Social work specialist into the probation system of Kyrgyzstan”.

In the session about the “Development of academic education in the field of Social work in the field of treatment and prevention of addictive behavior, drug addiction, alcohol dependence and other types of addiction, as well as in the field of probation” experiences from neighboring countries had been discussed, with presentations on “The concept of continuing education and retraining of social workers: about the system of training of social workers in China, including for drug treatment services” by Dr. Jiang Du (SOLID Project Coordinator, China, *Shanghai Jiaotong University*); on “Case management technology in dealing with addictive behavior” by Sandugash Issmagulova, PhD student of the SOLID project in Kazakhstan and “The role of Social Workers and their training system at the present Stage in Uzbekistan” by Azizbek Boltayev, MD, Director of the *Center for Human Research and Development*, Bukhara, Uzbekistan, Coordinator of the SOLID project in Uzbekistan.



Dr. Azizbek Boltaev, Medet Kudabekov and Dr. Mariya Prilutskaya.

Bukhara, Uzbekistan, 5-7 October 2021

At this first Annual Meeting of the SOLID project in Bukhara it was first discussed the common tasks of the project partners.

The delegation had been greeted by Prof. Shukhrat Jumaev, Rector, *Bukhara State Medical Institute* and by Prof. Heino Stöver, Project leader, SOLID, *Frankfurt University of Applied Scienced* who gave a project overview and further plans followed by the country reports of the Scientific Coordinators and later by the PhDs. Lyudmila Lubenova, the Officer of the *EU/International Research and Funding Department* of the *Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences* gave an overview on the guidance on administrative procedures of the SOLID project and Arailym Erkebaeva, the Finance Officer on the planning and approval procedures for international travel, conferences and internships, the planning, approval and payment procedures for PhD study related expenses (books, courses etc.).

On the second day it was organized a site visit to *Bukhara State Medical Institute* & *Bukhara Regional Addiction Clinic*. In the afternoon Prof. Heino Stöver gave an overview on the Master Study curriculum for Treatment of addictive disorders.

On the third day a cultural program of the old history of Bukhara region was organized i.e. on the Bukhara Old Town with Sufi Meditation sessions.



Welcome by Dr. Azizbek Boltaev.



Working session of the SOLID project partners.



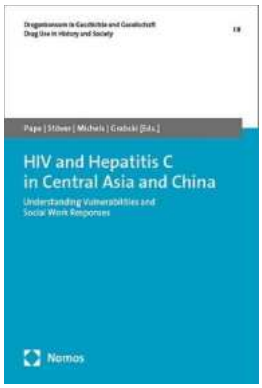
Visit at the Bukhara State Medical Institute.



SOLID group at the Annual Meeting in October 2021 in Bukhara.

SOLID Project publications

HIV and Hepatitis C in Central Asia and China. Understanding Vulnerabilities and Social Work Responses



Editors: Ulla Pape, Heino Stöver, Ingo Ilja Michels, Meryem Grabski

Published: 2024

Book Series: Drug use in history and society

Volume: 8

Publisher: Nomos, Baden-Baden, Germany

Open access: https://doi.org/10.5771/9783748920021

2024 International AIDS conference book of SOLID contributions for NGO networking



Published: 2024

Publisher: Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Available at: https://solid-exceed.org/download/Mjk2

Virtual Digital Psychotherapist App–Based Treatment in Patients With Methamphetamine Use Disorder (Echo-APP): Single-Arm Pilot Feasibility and Efficacy Study



Authors: Tianzhen Chen, Liyu Chen, Shuo Li, Jiang Du, Hang Su, Haifeng Jiang, Qianying Wu, Lei Zhang, Jiayi Bao, Min Zhao

Published: 2024

Journal: JMIR Mhealth Uhealth, 11, e40373

Available at: https://doi.org/10.2196/40373

Background: Substance use disorder is one of the severe public health problems worldwide. Inequitable resources, discrimination, and physical distances limit patients' access to medical help. Automated conversational agents have the potential to provide in-home and remote therapy. However, automatic dialogue agents mostly use text and other methods to interact, which affects the interaction experience, treatment immersion, and clinical efficacy.

Objective: The aim of this paper is to describe the design and development of Echo-APP, a tablet-based app with the function of a virtual digital psychotherapist, and to conduct a pilot study to explore the feasibility and preliminary efficacy results of Echo-APP for patients with methamphetamine use disorder.

Behind bars: Understanding prisoner perception of penitentiary rehabilitation in Kazakhstan



Authors: Dalida Mukasheva, Nurlan Tulkinbayev, Mariya Prilutskaya, Dinara Yessimova, Heino Stöver

Published: 2024

Journal: International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice, 77, 100669

Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijlcj.2024.100669

This study focuses on identifying factors that, from the perspective of prisoners, contribute to positive perceptions of rehabilitation (correction) in prison. A survey was conducted of 645 soon-to-be-released inmates (530 males and 115 females) in five institutions, with questions covering demographics, incarceration details, access to social services, and personal values. The research revealed that male inmates tended to hold more positive views on penitentiary rehabilitation than female inmates. However, it was observed that the rigidity of the prison regime and the existence of chronic illnesses among inmates negatively influenced these positive perceptions towards rehabilitation. Furthermore, the implementation of diverse rehabilitation-focused initiatives by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), coupled with an awareness of rights and responsibilities and the presence of strong family values, has been linked to fostering positive perceptions of rehabilitation. These findings highlight the critical need for enhanced cooperation between non-governmental organisations and prison facilities, as well as the introduction of social work practices within Kazakhstan's prison system. Policymakers should consider these factors when designing evidence-based rehabilitation strategies, emphasising the utilization of social work technologies.

Environments for intuitive decision-making: A theoretical framework for assessing intuitive-reasoning in social work


Environments for intuitive decision-making: A theoretical framework for assessing intuitive-reasoning in social work

Authors: Simon Fleißner, Larissa Steimle

Published: 2024

Journal: International Social Work, 67(5), 1122-1134

Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/00208728241245920

Decision-making is an essential part of social work practice. Intuition is one possible basis for these decisions, but relying solely on it might not always be the best choice. No overarching framework for social work exists on how to deal with intuition. By building on the work of Kahneman and Klein, who describe conditions for successful intuitive-reasoning, the aim of the article is thus to offer such a framework for further

research and reflection on social work practice. It can be used as a guideline for social work practice and social care policy to improve intuitive-reasoning of social workers.

Project Coordinator

ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main

Institute of Addiction Research (ISFF) at the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences

Building 2, Room 328, Nibelungenplatz 1, D-60318 Frankfurt am Main

+49 69 1533-2823

hstoever@fb4.fra-uas.de

https://solid-exceed.org/

Graphic:

Fisnik Haziri

Drei-Mohren-Str. 9

93047 Regensburg

fisnik.haziri@gmail.com

Project Coordinator

ISFF
Institut für Suchtforschung
Frankfurt am Main

Institute of Addiction Research (ISFF) at the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences
Building 2, Room 328, Nibelungenplatz 1, D-60318 Frankfurt am Main
+49 69 1533-2823
hstoever@fb4.fra-uas.de
https://solid-exceed.org/

Ch. Aitmatov Avenue, 27, Bishkek, 720044
+996 (312) 21-86-59
bhu@bhu.kg
https://bhu.kg/en/

EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

10000 Kazakhstan, Astana city, 2 Satbaev st.
+7 (7172) 709500
enu@enu.kz
https://www.enu.kz/en/

上海交通大学医学院

No. 227 Chongqing South Road, Shanghai, China
021-63846590
service@shsmu.edu.cn
https://www.shsmu.edu.cn/

Gijduvan street, Bukhara district, 23
+998 (65) 223-00-50
info@bsmi.uz
https://bsmi.uz/abu-ali-ibn-sino-nomidagi-buxoro-davlat-tibbiyot-instituti/

Project organisers and supporters

The project is part of the DAAD exceed projects
Excellence Centres for Exchange and Development - exceed - DAAD

The project is financed by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.