



The Art of Healing

A new era in substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery support



24-28 June 2024
Thessaloniki, Greece



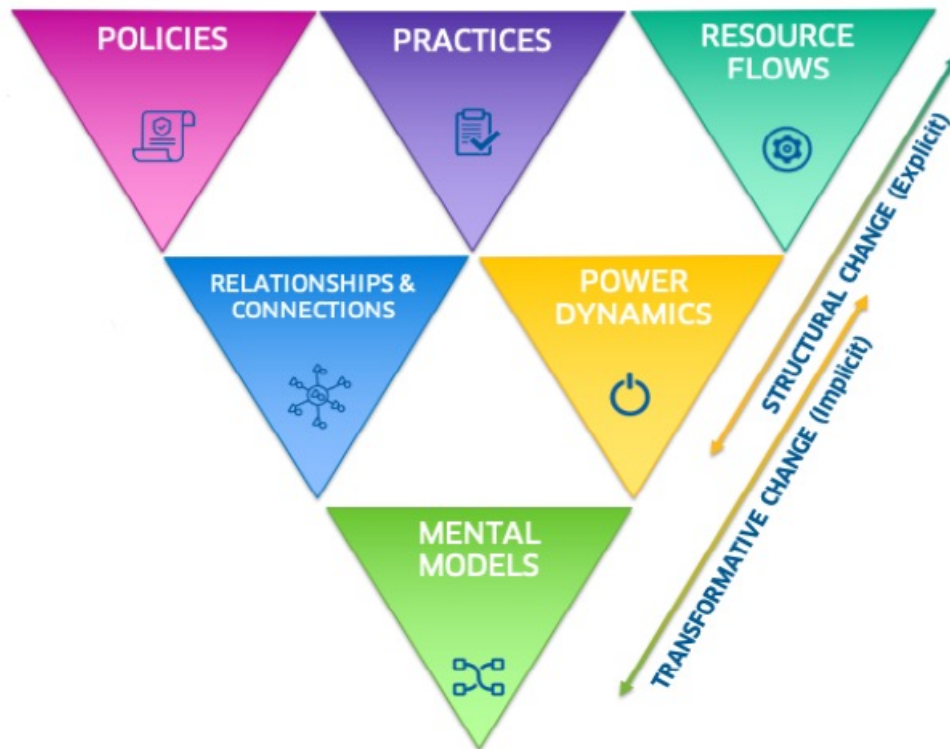
Thailand

ITTC

International Technology Transfer Center
A program of the International Consortium of Universities
for Drug Demand Reduction

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SIX CONDITIONS OF SYSTEM CHANGE



**Psychosocial Counseling for
Wrongdoers with Substance
Use Disorders in Thailand's
Criminal Justice System**



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Psychosocial Counseling for Wrongdoers with Substance Use Disorders in Thailand's Criminal Justice System

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Southeast Asia - HIV
ATTC

Academic Partner & TA Providers



14 Years Journey



Year 2009

initiated by Thonburi Criminal Court, Bangkok



Year 2010-2013

sponsored by Thai Health Promotion Foundation



Year 2014-2016 MOU#1 – 3 pilot courts

established by ONCB in collaboration with
justice – public health – social welfare - academic



Year 2017-2019 MOU#2 – 5 pilot courts

focused on counseling system development



Year 2020-2022 MOU#3 – 25 to 102 courts

focused on capacity building for scaling-up



Year 2023-2025 MOU#4 – 165 courts

covered 70% of total courts of first instance in Thailand

Partnerships Matter!

Partnerships provides a more comprehensive understanding the issue at hand and generate solutions.

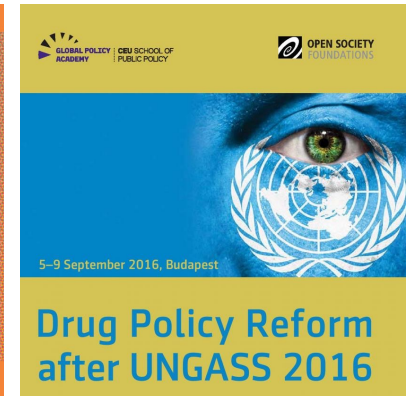
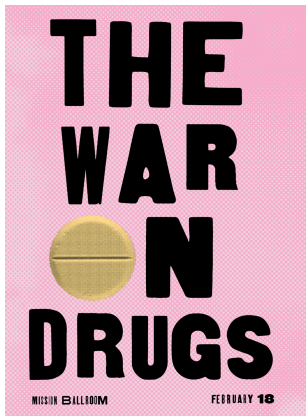
By uniting across sectors from justice, public health, social services, academic, to civic society, we can increase the likelihood of our initiatives being implemented.



Substance use disorder (SUD) is a complex issue, influenced by a multitude of biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors. Addressing SUD requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach.

Psychosocial counseling

in justice system has been piloted as diversion sentencing option.



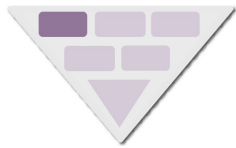
War on drugs and strict policies have been used to suppress misuse of illegal drugs. **Punitive approach** causes more harm and ignores root cause of addiction.

Overcriminalization of drug use has led to overcrowding prisons. **Punishment** does very little to actually reduce drug use and overdoses.



Drug policy reform, based on public health and human rights approaches, reclassified drug users as patients instead of criminals. **Diversion programs & alternatives to imprisonment** for drug-involved offenders have been developed and applied by decision of a judge.

Pic: thaihealth.or.th, seattletimes.com, shopatmatter.com, unodc.org



Structural Change (explicit)

Policies: Government, institutional and organizational rules, regulations, and priorities.



What is holding the problem in place?
What is hindering the progress?



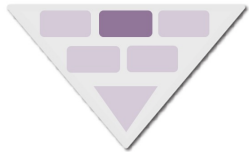
Traditional criminal justice approach and traditional sentencing guidelines constrained judges to refer wrongdoers with substance abuse disorders to diversion program which undermined the goals of rehabilitation and reducing recidivism.



Actions and strategies taken to help advance the system change efforts.



- Adhering to the principle that “drug users are patients who need treatment instead of imprisonment”.
- Developing a systematic 5-step counseling process and phase-by-phase counseling roadmap in pre and post sentence trials to survive stress, prevent bail jumping and ensure court appearances.
- Implementing data management for progress monitoring and 1 year follow-up evaluation.



Structural Change (explicit)

Practices: Organizational and practitioner activities targeted to addressing and making progress.



What is holding the problem in place?
What is hindering the progress?



Actions and strategies taken to help advance the system change efforts.



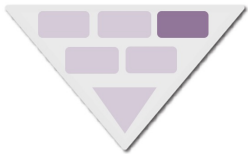
Lack of capacity and confidence to implement health approach diversion which should be provided in treatment facilities rather than in court premises.

Whereas probation supervision outweighs one-to-one psychosocial counseling.



Implementing SBIRT. Using ASSIST-Lite and standard mental health screening tools suitable for non health professionals to screen and keep only low risk drug users for ongoing counseling.

Providing counselors and court/psychosocial clinic staff with comprehensive and practical trainings in counseling techniques and ethics for substance use disorders through targeted & intensive TA activities.



Structural Change (explicit)

Resource Flows: How money, people, knowledge, information, and other assets such as infrastructure are allocated and distributed.



What is holding the problem in place?
What is hindering the progress?



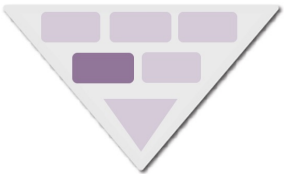
Actions and strategies taken to help advance the system change efforts.



Lack of resources professionally for setting up a psychosocial clinic in the court premises. Criminal court often operate in a closed system culture limiting collaboration with external networks and opportunities for successful reentry supports.



- Recruiting/appointing qualified volunteers and lay judges to provide psychosocial counseling.
- Promoting cross-sector initiatives and establishing partnerships with external organizations that facilitate access to resources, expertise, and support services for drug use offenders participating in psychosocial counselling program.



Relational Change (semi-explicit)

Relationships & Connections: Quality of connections and communication occurring among actors in the system, especially among those with differing histories and viewpoints.



What is holding the problem in place?
What is hindering the progress?



In punitive system, judge may sometimes overlook or undervalue the scientific understanding of addiction and the complex factors contributing to drug use offenders who need support, treatment, and rehabilitation.



Actions and strategies taken to help advance the system change efforts.



- 🎯 Providing scientific information about the drugs, brain, behavior, and disorder of drug addiction
- 🎯 Fostering a collaborative relationship between judge – multidisciplinary team - drug use offenders to ensure that the psychosocial counseling is responsive while achieve recidivism-reduction goal.

Judge

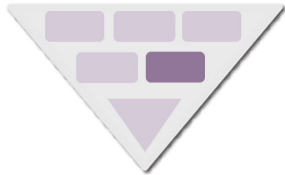
becomes partner in offender's journey towards a drug-free lifestyle.

Court and clinic staff

work closer with health professionals, social workers, and community leaders.

Counselors

serve as facilitator, life coach, and psycho educator.



Relational Change (semi-explicit)

Power Dynamics: The distribution of decision-making power, authority, and both formal and informal influence among individuals and organizations.



What is holding the problem in place?
What is hindering the progress?



In punitive system, judges hold significant power and authority while drug use offenders may feel powerless and vulnerable. However, global norms; human rights movement, and media influence can increase the likelihood of judges to divert more rather than traditional sentencing.



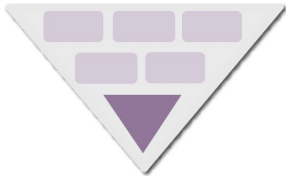
Actions and strategies taken to help advance the system change efforts.



In psychosocial counseling diversion, judges – multidisciplinary team – drug use offenders/defendants work together. Judges assume a supportive role ordering drug use offenders to receive counseling. Incentives and sanctions are used to reinforce positive behavior and discourage relapse.



Empowering drug use offenders to make decisions and implement strategies to address their substance abuse issues.



Transformative Change (implicit)

Mental Models: Habits of thought – deeply held beliefs and assumptions that influence one's actions.



What is holding the problem in place?
What is hindering the progress?



Misinformation and myths about addiction fuel pre judgmental attitude and stigma against people who use drugs and drug use offenders/defendants in the media, public discourse, and individual interactions.



Actions and strategies taken to help advance the system change efforts.



- Keeping judges and court administration informed about clients' progress, best practices in drug demand reduction and health approach diversion.
- Building capacity for volunteer counselors, lay judges, and working team through ongoing various basic, targeted, intensive TA forms.
- Educating the media to destigmatize addiction
- Hosting media tours for media advocacy to promote diversion programs.



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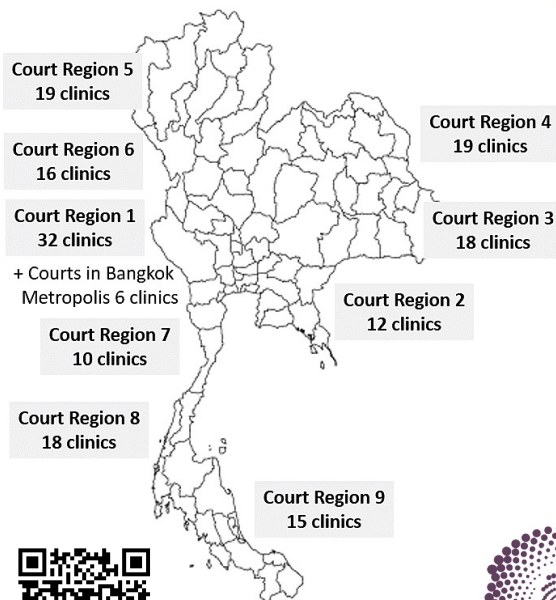
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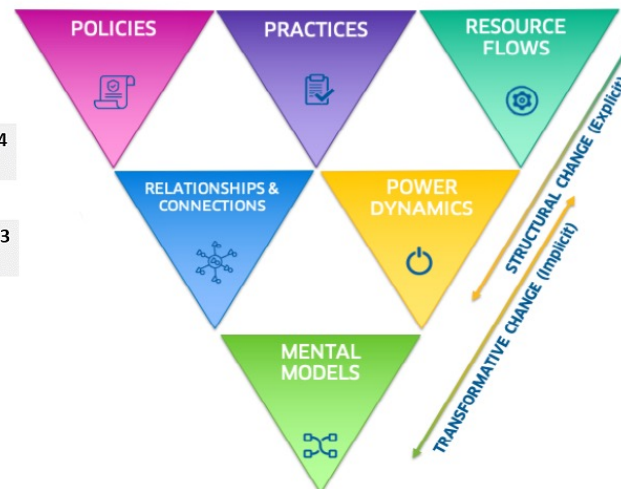
Lessons Learned



Download full booklet
ITTC Network Resource

Since 2009 from 5 pilot courts
to 165 courts countrywide 2023

SIX CONDITIONS OF SYSTEM CHANGE



- 1 System change is complex requiring multiple strategies to influence transformative change.
- 2 Building relationships with multiple stakeholders is an essential part of the work of ITTC.
- 3 Addressing shifts in power dynamics at multiple levels is important.



Compulsory Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation in East and Southeast Asia

Voluntary Community-based Alternatives

Discussion Paper of the UNAIDS–UNODC Asia–Pacific Expert Advisory Group on Compulsory Facilities for People Who Use Drugs

