

AIDS News

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METHADONE THERAPY EDITION



**'I TASTED
ONCE AND
STUCK'**

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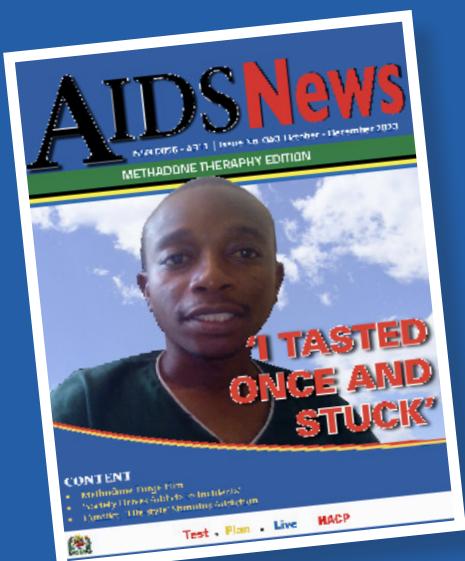
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From Programme Manager



METHADONE IS SAFE

A survey conducted in 2014 revealed that approximately 300,000 in Tanzania were consuming drugs particularly heroin. However, that number might be reduced now due to the availability of Methadone therapy which cures drug withdrawn syndromes as well as the control of trafficking drugs in the country.

The government through the Drugs Control and Enforcement Authority (DCEA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children in collaboration with other stakeholders have established many clinical sites that offer treatment to people with drug use disorders, hence a good number of them have been enrolled in the Medication Assistance Therapy (MAT).

The Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) is the use of medications, in combination with HYPERLINK "<https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/medications-counseling-related-conditions>" \ "counseling-behavioral-therapies" counseling and behavioral therapies, to provide a "whole-patient" approach to the treatment of substance use disorders. It is primarily used for the treatment of addiction to opioids such as heroin and prescription pain relievers that contain opiates.

MAT medications relieve the withdrawal symptoms and psychological cravings that cause chemical imbalances in the body. The prescribed medication operates to normalize brain chemistry, block the euphoric effects of alcohol and opioids, relieve physiological cravings, and normalize body functions without the negative and euphoric effects of the substance used.

It decreases illicit opiate use and other criminal activity among people with substance use disorders, it increases patients' ability to gain and maintain employment and improves birth outcomes among women who have substance use disorders and are pregnant.

By June 2020, there were 8,500 addicts registered in nine existing centers in the country to cure the drugs withdrawn symptoms in Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Dodoma, Mbeya, Mwanza and Pwani regions.

By June 2020, there were 8,500 addicts registered in nine existing centers in the country to cure the drugs withdrawn symptoms in Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Dodoma, Mbeya, Mwanza and Pwani regions.

The establishment of those services is implementing of The Drug Control and Anti-Drugs Act of 2015, and Policy for Treatment and Service for Addicts targeting to help substance use disorders to get safe and quality treatment so as to return them to their original condition and continue with income-generating activities to meet their needs.

The Drug Act states; "If a drug addict is convicted of possession small portion of drugs for its use and a doctor confirms to be a drugs addict, the Court will order that person to be taken to a medical facility instead of imprison or fined".

This stage aims to help drug addicts who are convicted possession small portions of drugs. This is a foremost step that opens doors for addicts to seek treatment without fear of being arrested as the Act emphasizes taking them to medical facilities and not imprisoning or fining them.

So, we stakeholder at our position we are, let help substance use disorders the on Methadone benefits they will get including, counselling and cognitive behavioral therapies, HIV, HCV, and HBV testing, TB screening diagnosis, referral and linkage to treatment, and referral and linkage to ARV treatment and care.

This will make them to return to self-reliance, building a healthy family, community and nation with developed people.

RECOGNISE DRUGS, ACT AND POLICY ON ADDICTS

DRUGS

Are chemicals if used by person, they affect their nervous system and cause emotional, feelings and behaviour changes. Drug commonly used in the country are cannabis, shrub, heroin, cocaine and with alcoholic based such a Valium, Tramadol, Pethidinin and Ketamini.

The Magnitude of the Problem in the Country

Survey conducted in 2014 reveled that approximately 300,000 (250,000 to 500,000) in the country were consuming drug especially heroin.

However, that number might be reduced now due to the availability of many clinical sites offering treatment to the heroin drugs addicts as well as the control of trafficking drugs in the country. Drug mostly used in the country is bhang. However there are no official data revealing how many Tanzanian do consuming bhang.

THE DRUGS ACT, TREATMENT AND SERVICE ASSISTANCE TO ADDICTS

Section 31 of The Drugs Prevention and Control Act Number 5 of 2015 with amendment of the year 2017, states; If a drugs addict find guilty using a small portion of drugs for his/her spent and been confirmed by a medical practiced that he/she is a drug addict, the Court will order that person to be send to medical therapy instead of sending him/her to jail or being charged fined.

AGONIES OF CONSUMING AND ILLEGAL DRUGS BUSINESS

Drugs consuming and illegal drugs business distress healthiness, socially, environmentally and safety security as follows:-

HEALTHINESS

Injecting drugs by sharing needles contributes in HIV contaminations as well to infections of Hepatitis B and C viruses. Surveys done in 2014 demonstrate injecting drugs users HIV positive were 24 to 42 percent.

In fact drugs consuming leads to Tuberculosis (T.B). Data shows was T.B infectious to addicts is 11 percent that include colonic Tuberculosis. As in the general population it was 0.2% (2014 Survey). Other diseases includes mental health, oral diseases, skin diseases and even sudden deaths.

SOCIALLY

Drugs consuming affects families and society by stimulating the following:-

families separations, increase of orphans, unethical behaviour, increase of crimes, absenteeism at school, unwanted pregnancies and loss of family assets.

ECONOMICALLY

Illegal drugs business distress country economy in many forms including: Affect the user and destroy his/her ability to work, the nation to spend the national resource in healing the addicts as well to control the illegal business,

Influencing illegal money in the economy leading to infraction, the economy been hold by a gang of small club, creating gap of income and establishment of illegal investors.

ENVIRONMENTALLY

Environment demolished Careless throwing of needles used in injecting destroys the environment, unsafe the safety of people passing and can spread micro-organism spreading infections.

Bhang farmers plants on areas which is difficult for the law enforcers to reach in big forests. To make it happen, they cut down treea and burn the forests. That last in the water resources to dry up, the rain shorten it period and land erosion.

SAFETY

Illegal drugs business causes fighting among and in the country, terrorism, pilot and legal government withdrawn. Talebani terrorists in Afghanistan spends money coming from selling heroin to sponsor terrorism in the world.

GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY TO BROAD METHADONE THERAPY

The Government through the Drugs Enforcement and Control in collaboration with the Ministry of Health Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children with other stakeholders have design a MAT Scale up Plan to establish clinic sites to treat heroin addicts in all the areas with many drugs consumers. This will enable all areas affected by heroine to have Methadone clinics services.

THE NUMBER OF ADDICT ON METHADONE TREATMENT IN THE COUNTRY.

By June, 2020, 8,500 addicts were being enrolled in the nine clinic sites which provide the services which are in Dar es Salaam Region (Muhimbili National Hospital, Mwananyamala Regional Referral Hospital and Temeke Regional Referral Hospital); Tanga (Bombo Regional Referral Hospital); Dodoma

(Mirembe Mental Health Specialty Hospital); Mbeya (Mbeya Zonal Referral Hospital); Mwanza (Sekou Toure Regional Referral Hospital) and Pwani (Bagamoyo District Hospital).

CHALLENGES IN METHADONE PROVIDING SERVICES

Addicts who are on Methadone therapy don't have income generating activities to cover their basic needs. This push some of them back to using drugs.

Stigma to addicts in family and community push back some of them for medication.

WOMEN ADDICTS' DOESN'T APPEAR IN TREATMENT

CLINICAL.

Drugs addict are people who had finish all their assets, so they don't have money for medication if they fail sick to other disease such as malaria, diabetes etc. Even that so, it makes a challenge in treatment facilities when addicts suffer other disease.

So far the Government don't have a plan to allow clinics or private hospitals to provide Methadone to drugs addicts. Even that there is possibility to aside a special window to some of the existing Government clinics where addicts who are wealth can set their time to go for service by contributing some little money.

Achievements on Drug Controls

Since the establishment of the Drug Enforcement and Control Authority in 2017, there are many achievements in the fighting in the country such a:-

Achievements on Drugs Controls

Since the establishment of the Drug Enforcement and Control Authority in 2017, there are many achievements in the fighting in the country such a:-

- ⊕ Identifying the enormous drugs traffickers' inside and outside the country, this stage have simplify grabbing the big drugs dealers.

- ⊕ Enormous drugs dealers have been seized and their cases are proceeding.

- ⊕ Political will on the fight against drugs have assist much to grab drugs traffickers and their business in the country.

Report on global drugs released by UNODC in 2018; states that Tanzania has controlled drugs trafficking by 90 percent.

'I Tasted Once and Stuck'

"If there is anything strong it is drugs. I believed I could not be persuaded to get into the drug use disorder as I saw those who had been weakened and I didn't believe on what happed after the show," says Donald and adds;

"After being exposed to secondhand smoke, I became addicted to crack of cocaine, marijuana, and alcohol. When it came to

Hospital in Dar es Salaam says he was helping his friend living next to his room to park and vending the drugs.

Donald says as his friend was famous exposed as a drugs retailer with frequently been arrested or searched by police officers, he used to hide the drugs in his room.

He says the drugs syndromes make him to feel uncomfortable always but if he sniffs, he goes to a comforting situation.

Although he has been a drug use disorder since 1999, he was desperate to quit due to causing him serious harm in a short period of time to sell his assets and break up his relationship with his girlfriend.

Donald intended to stop sincerely because one day while on a "daladala" bus passing outside the Kinondoni Regional Referral Hospital (Mwananyamala), he saw a group of young people leaving the hospital whom he found to be fellow addicts but with a different appearance.

The beneficiary says that when he asked his colleagues at his home in Temeke who told him that the addicts he saw were using anti-depressants (drug addiction), however, they told him that the drug was not good because the users were dying, a common word among addicts.

Donald, who has reached the peak of drug use disorder, says he had survived three murders, and he thought it would be better

to die in a cure that appealed to him to see the addicts healthier than to be beaten to death for their crimes.

He says as soon as he heard that the service was being offered at the Temeke Regional Referral Hospital in 2014, he joined and continued with it without interruption until he graduated from drug addiction after a year and a half.

Donald says the only reason he got out of dependence was because he was determined to break free from drug addiction as he looked for a way to escape and when he heard about the cure, he did not hesitate to get involved.

The beneficiary now serves as a community-based service provider at Temeke Hospital, saying more education is needed for drug addicts to understand they can recover and return to normal life.

Donald mentions another reason for quitting drugs is the trauma of being separated from his family and he longed to restore his relationship with them because here in Dar es Salaam where he lives he has no other relatives than his wife and one child.

"I was very upset after my relatives in Lindi heard that I was using drugs, they exclude me and here in Dar I don't have relatives, the business I had failed and the friends I had were those who drives me in drugs, I really wanted to give up alcohol addiction," he says.



Donald

says the only reason he got out of dependence was because he was determined to break free from drug addiction as he looked for a way to escape and when he heard about the cure, he did not hesitate to get involved.

the next day at a time like, the time I used the cocktail, I didn't feel well until I consumed it again".

Donald said his body to feel scratchy when it reached the similar time he took drugs in the next day until he consumed again and that was the daily outcomes until he come to be a drug use disorder.

Expressing how he become a drug use disorder, Donald who is now a Methadone beneficiary at the Temeke Regional Referral





DCEA COMMISSIONER
GENERAL, JAMES KAJI

It's Possible for Methadone First Tack'

The government has said it is possible to set aside a special window in some of its existing Methadone health care facilities, to provide such services to financially capable addicts by arranging their treatment time for a small fee.

The Drugs Control and Enforcement Authority (DCEA), Medical Commissioner, Dr. Peter Mfissi told the AIDS Newsletter it is possible to set up a special window in some of the existing government facilities to provide the service.

Speaking on behalf of the Commissioner General of the Authority, James Kaji, Medical Commissioner, Dr. Peter Mfissi says the introduction of the system will provide an opportunity for financially capable addicts to access the free service at government clinics for contributing a small fee.

Dr. Mfissi says there is no plan to allow private clinics or hospitals in the country to provide Methadone treatment that cures drugs withdrawn syndromes.

Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is the use of medications, in combination

with counseling and behavioral therapies, to provide a "whole-patient" approach to the treatment of drugs use disorders.

MAT was started in Tanzania in 2011 as a pilot program aiming at preventing HIV transmission in this population which had a high HIV prevalence and to date, there are nine MAT clinics which all together have cumulatively recruited over 9,000 clients.

Dr. Mfissi highlighted the magnitude of drugs in the country as revealed by the survey conducted in 2014 showed an average of 300,000 people were using drugs, particularly heroine in the country.

He says the most commonly used drug in the country is cannabis but even so, there are no specific statistics showing the number of Tanzanians who use marijuana.

"Until now there is no plan for the Government to allow private facilities or hospitals to provide Methadone to drug use disorders," says Dr. Mfissi and add;

"However, that number could be reduced now due to the presence of more heroin treatment centers and a decrease in drug trafficking in the

country;

"The most widely used drugs in the country are marijuana, heroin, cocaine and prescription drugs such as Valium, Tramadol, Pethidinin and Ketamine. As of June (2020), 8,500 addicts were registered at the nine existing centers in the country."

Dr. Mfissi says the Government in collaboration with stakeholders has developed a special strategy (MAT Scale up Plan) to establish medical centers for heroin use disorders in Methadone in all areas with high levels of drug use.

The move will enable all heroin-affected areas to have access to methadone treatment centers in compliance with the Drug Control and Anti-Drugs Act no. 5 of 2015 ordering addicts to be given access to treatment.

Section 31 of the Act states; "If a drug addict is convicted of possession of a small amount of a drug for its use and a doctor confirms that he is a drug addict, the Court will order that person be sent to a medical facility instead of being sent to jail or fined".

Dr. Mfissi says the move is aimed at helping many drug addicts convicted of possession of a small quantity of drugs for their use to be sent to medical facilities instead of being jailed or fined.

The facilities that provide Methadone service in the country are Muhimbili National Hospital, Kinondoni Regional Referral Hospital (Mwananyamala) and Temeke Regional Referral Hospital (Temeke) in Dar es Salaam.

Tanga Region is the Regional Referral Hospital, Bombo, Mirembe Special Mental Hospital, Itega in Dodoma Region, Regional Referral Hospital, Mwanza Regional Referral Hospital, Sekou Toure and Bagamoyo District Hospital in the Pwani Region.

The Government has recently announced that the Dar es Salaam Region will reduce Methadone services from district-level hospitals to district councils. Hospitals in preparation for service delivery in Kigamboni, Mbagala, Tegeta and Segerega Prisons hospitals.



If a drug addict is convicted of possession of a small amount of drugs for its use and is certified by a doctor as being a drug use disorder, the Court will order that person be taken to a medical facility instead of sent to jail or fined.

Methadone Removes Urban



I went to Kigoma village for road construction and I stayed there for 10 months and I was fine but when I returned to the city in 2011 I did not stay even for a month and came back to drugs

"I used drugs for 10 years without anyone realizing it until the day I told my dad I wanted to stop using the drugs," says Mohammed Hazaa, now 30, onwards;

"Despite my surprise at the news that I had been using flour for 10 years without anyone in the family knowing, he agreed to help me. I also received support from my whole family throughout my treatment here (clinic)".

Mohammed says he started smoking marijuana in 2008 at the age of 18 and two years later struggled to break free from drug addiction by failing to break free from drugs but failed.

"I went to Kigoma village for road construction to stay there for 10 months and I was fine but when I returned to the city in 2011 I did not stay even for a month and returned to the drugs," says Mohammed.

As a fugitive from his shadow, the following year Mohammed moved to Nyang'wale District in Geita Region to work on environmental protection and tree nurseries.

He returned to Mwanza in 2014 he went back to drug consuming. In January First 2015, he went to a sober house in Unguja Island where he stayed for one full year until December 31 and later the sober house of Kigamboni stayed for three more months.

Despite the success of his stay at anti-drug addicted home, when he left, the following year he returned to drug abuse. After years of struggling to break free from drug addiction, on May 14, 2018, he joined the Sekou Toure Methadone Clinic at the Mwanza Regional Referral Hospital to begin treatment.

"Since May 14, 2018 when I started the clinic here in Sekou Toure, I have not ever smoked marijuana or used any kind of alcohol and now I feel better," says Mohammed.

After joining the clinic and as a result of his efforts to encourage his colleagues to adhere to treatment and to encourage them to identify their target in therapy, he was appointed as the leader of the drug addiction center.

Mohammed says he started smoking marijuana while studying Form Four in Mwanza and continued smoking while studying Form Five and Six in Uganda.

He says it was in Uganda when he started mixing cigarettes, marijuana and alcohol searching for more comfort every time he got used to the one he got earlier from following the gangs and doing nonsense.

"As is true of many

young people, I changed the type of alcoholism from one type to another in search of a new taste by following the peer pressure and due to stress. We act without realizing it," says Mohammed and adds:

"If you are addicted you want today to get more enjoyment than you had yesterday and that thirst for more is by using higher doses and more is what causes a state of dependence".

Mohammed is currently engaged in the rearing of 400 chickens and 200 chicks of indigenous Tanzanian and German breeds that he started raising at home three months after improved treatment.

MOHAMMED HAZAA



Kibaha's Methadone Services on Track

The long-awaited Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) services to treat drug use disorders at the Tumbi Designated Pwani Regional Referral Hospital, Tumbi have begun with a bang at the end of August, 2020.

MAT is the use of medications, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, to provide a "whole-patient" approach to the treatment of substance use disorders concludes several months of addiction waiting for the services.

The explosion of the Corona severe fever delayed for the therapy services which was on its final stage for community mobilization which the mass gathering was prohibited as 150 addicts were on the track to start the medication.

The Methadone Clinic Manager at Senior Nursing Officer Anna Charles, says in the first three weeks of the service, the clinic had enrolled 36 addicts and most of them were in training to begin the same treatment.

Starting of the Methadone therapy at Tumbi Clinic includes it on the site providing the therapy to reach 10 as an outcome of many factors on the preparation process including on the completion of the clinic building and special service training for the health providers.

The Tumbi Methadone Clinic had started with a big number of drug use disorders who show their interests to join the medication after quitting from drugs where more than 100 had already registered and waiting for the start of the therapy at the regional hospital.

Anna says in June, 2019 they conducted a study tour in Kwa Mfipa Ward, Kibaha found 68 addicts registered to receive services and after a few weeks later they increased to more than 100.

She says the number does not include other addicts from Maili Moja, Mwenda Pole and Kongowe counties who are said to have multiple drug users included in treatment.

Anna, who used to work in the Mental Health Unit, says mental illness is a major problem in the Coast region as the hospital receives an average of 120 and 160 psychiatric patients every month, most of them drug users.

The Tumbi Designated Hospital Medical Officer in Charge, Dr. Edward Wayi says the release of treatment at the hospital is a big step as the service hopes to save more drug use disorders in the Pwani Region.

He says the clinic has nine providers including two doctors, two nurses, two psychologists and two pharmacists as well as a record keeper to receive classroom and practical training from Muhimbili National Hospital.

Dr. Wayi thanked for his hospital for being one of the first hospitals to be prepared from Methadone care and treatment to fulfill Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa's order for such services to be provided at all referral hospitals.

Kibaha is one of the Pwani Regional districts which is adjacent to the business city of Dar es Salaam which is highlighted as a centre of many drug use disorders in the country.



TUMBI METHADONE CLINIC SITE MANAGER, ANNA CHARLES

Anna Charles

says in June, 2019 they conducted a study tour in Kwa Mfipa Ward, Kibaha found 68 addicts registered to receive services and after a few weeks later they increased to more than 100.

100



'Society Pushes Addicts to Events'

"Dismissing or not wanting drug addicts in the community incites stigma and makes addicts turn into people of unhealthy incidents in the community," says Dr. Eunice Masangu and add;

"Most of the addicts come from single-parent families, have lost love and are isolated from society, leaving to live in their own world without guidelines."

Dr. Masangu, Center Manager, Sekou Toure Methadone Clinic, at the Mwanza Regional Referral Hospital, says most drug use addicts are young people who have been evicted by the community instead of helping them.

She says the relatives instead of helping the drug use disorders, the exclude them and don't accept them as they are because the community doesn't realize what they are facing is a treatable psychological problem and it's not wise to push them away to the streets where they are received by evil groups.

"The problem is more prevalent among adolescents when they reach the age of puberty when they lack good ethical guidelines and thus fall into the wrong groups when they lack support and family love," says Dr. Masangu.

Dr. Masangu says addiction is a cross-cutting issue that requires full cooperation from families and communities to work together to help them break free from drug addiction and self-reliance and build family, community and nation.

She says the stigma attached to drug use disorders as it is in the community also exists in the treatment centers from providers who were basically supposed to be a good example in recognizing that they are human beings facing life challenges.

"These are human beings and they need love. When they lack love in the community they live in they leave to live in their homes when they find their peers and continue to live together," says Dr. Masangu who is a Psychiatry Specialist.

DR. EUNICE MASANGU

Addiction Put Him Into Destruction

Drug abuse forced Abdul Abdallah, 32, to commit atrocities and flee from one region to another living with unknown relatives with similar goals.

He started smoking marijuana in 2004 in his village Mang'ula Ifakara District, Morogoro, a year later he shifted to heroin.

Abdul says when he was a drug use disorder, he was unable to cultivate, so he indulged in farm theft and anything he saw that would give him money was lawful for him.

His life changed for the worse and decided to lease his inherited land failing to cultivate crops that provided his food and money to spent

"I indulged in extortion and fraud when I rented my farm to different people to earn money to buy drugs," says Abdul and continues;

"When I was called to the Village Chairman due to fraudulent cases of taking people's money, I fled to Ifakara Urban in that night where I joined other drugs use disorders who also involved in stealing money and valuables items from passengers in the train".

"We were more than 30 dealing in those crimes in the trains, being divided each group on a number of stations for them as there dominate areas of delinquencies. In the trains we were also traveled with drugs dealers selling drugs to us while traveling," says Abdul and added;

"After about 30 trips, I was arrested, beaten, and taken to the police station and detained. Despite my case against the complainant, I was detained for more than a week and given minor chores before being released".

He says after the incident he moved to Morogoro City and as usual his first priority was to find the residence of addicts who for him were his new relatives and families.

"I did not know anyone in Morogoro, but we drug use disorders know each other. When you get to the spot you

look for drugs disorder by identification which doesn't bother as you are among them who will receive you as an associate," says Abdul and added;

"Once they receive you, you give them money to buy drugs and then they will introduce you to the drug retailer. That is all you had to do to become one a member of the camp where they will give you drawings (techniques) to use to earn money".

After several months, one day while they were living in their camp, one of them suggested that they move to Mwanza, which is far away.

Abdullah landed at Nyamagana Bus Station in July, 2005 and met the Mwanza drugs use disorders whom they welcome him to their camp (dago), and later introduced him to the drug dealers.

"When I was received by the 'wana' (drug use disorders) and introduced to the drug vendors here in Mwanza and handed out drawings to get money to buy drugs then they gave me techniques on grabbing and pick pockets (stealing using fingers to take out the pockets)," says Abdul.

In 2005 he received the news of the death of his mother in Morogoro where he initially decided not to return and live in Mwanza when he said he loved there dearly.

He remembers the big incident he did and says he will never forget breaking the glass of the car of the Chief of Police Investigation (OC-CID) of Kirumba District in Mwanza and stealing several items including his laptop.

"I will never forget the incident as a result of a manhunt and harassment of drug use disorders all over the Mwanza city. I was arrested and imprisoned for several years," says Abdul.

After released, in 2016 he moved to Shinyanga region where he met his current wife, a drug addict who lived together before moving to Mwanza a year later.

"My wife was selling herself (in commercial sex) and I was finger-pointing, (pocket thief) we saw the



ABDUL ABDALLAH

I was tired of being rushed by the police every day. I did not pass or approach the police station but today I am even going to give bails to people arrested at the police stations.

cash flow in Shinyanga is small so in 2017 we moved here to Mwanza, I were still dealing with finger-pointing and she in commercial sex to get money we needed," says Abdul and continue;

"After hearing about the start of Methadone treatment here in Sekou Toure, we joined and grew up among the first patients. My wife had already graduate by full recovered after one year of treatment and I am in the final stages of completing my dose".

Commenting on the progress he has made from Methadone treatment, Abdul says he had previously fallen as he lived a life of rushing with soldiers every morning.

"In fact, I had fallen. I was already dead because every day you were running to death or jail. Today he is the leader of the Mwanza clinic addicts," says Abdul and added;

"I was tired of being rushed by the police every day. I did not pass or approach the police

station but today I am even going to give bails to people arrested at the police stations".

He is also grateful for having a well-paying job at an organization that monitors drug users and prepares them for drug addiction treatment.

"Many young people falsehoods to each other about life and want to get better and have a better life. I urge my fellow youth that not everything we are told is good and should be emulated," he says.

Abdul says he is now living peaceful life where the community that knew him earlier is surprised as he has become a different person from the one of the worst events.

"Even relatives in the village (Mang'ula) are amazed at the changes I have made. Right now, I am going to the village without fear and they trust me and I am thankful that Methadone treatment has saved me," says Abdul.

Conflict, 'Life' Stimulus Addiction

Relationship conflicts, including family separation and child rearing, have been the catalyst for many youths to become addicted to drugs.

Godlove Lurandala, a psychologist at the Methadone Clinic at Mwanza Regional Referral Hospital, Sekou Toure, says most addicts are young people from single-parent families.

"Most of the addicts come from a single-parent family due to broken relationships where their teens lack proper guidance on development," says Lurandala and adds;

"Many young people start using drugs when they reach puberty if they do not have careful management to guide them to face challenges and to be independent so that they do not fall into the trap."

The psychologist also says that young people living in middle

and high families are facing the challenge of becoming addicted to their lifestyle.

"We can enjoy it and see that it is okay in life for a young person to drink one or two beers for the purpose of having fun at home is a problem that is not a problem, but as the situation continues it creates addiction for the young man," says Lurandala.

"When his body builds up addiction to alcoholism and sees them ruined we see it as a problem that does not concern us and drive them away instead of giving them help to get out of dependence."

Lurandala says education and lifestyle contribute significantly to the mental health and development of young people as it is a cross-cutting issue that requires the cooperation of the whole community.

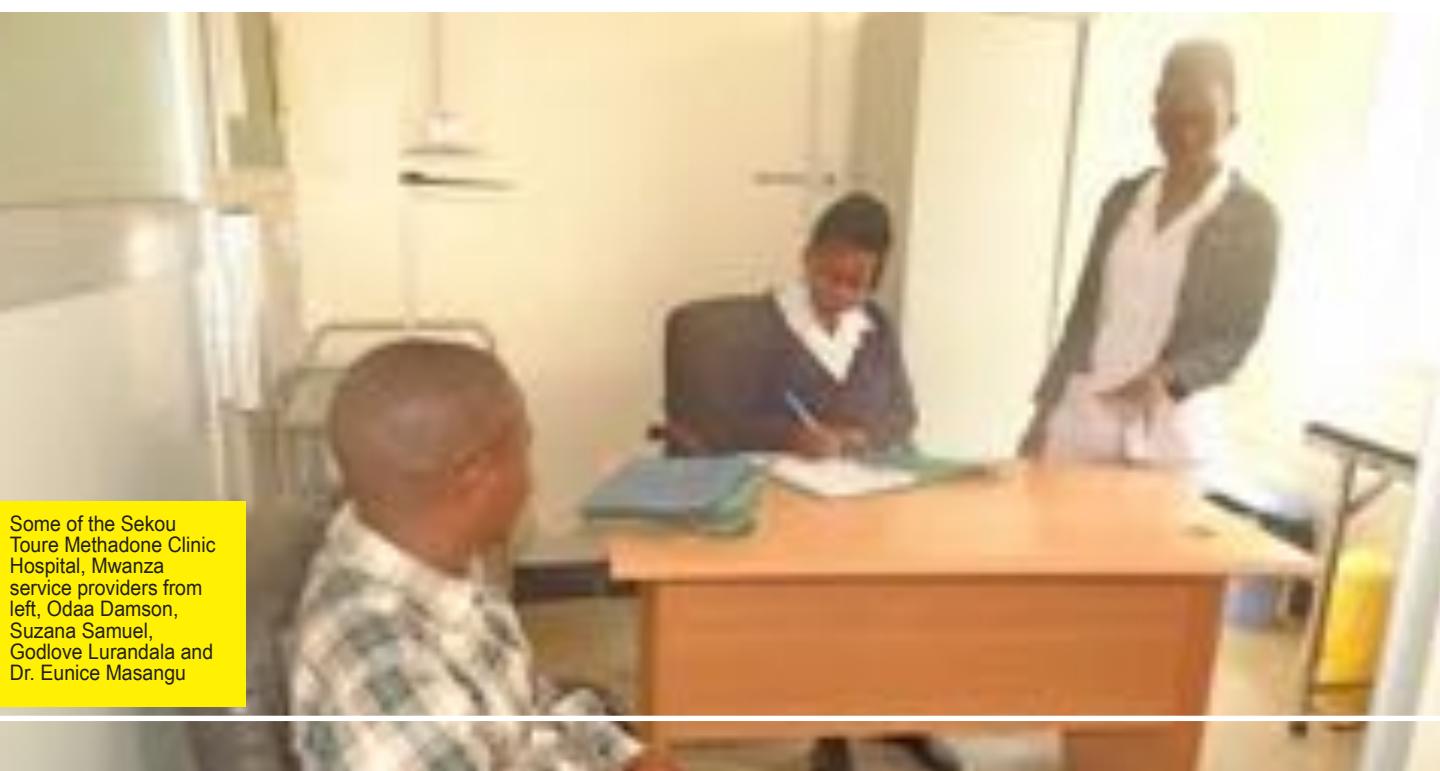
He says when a young person gets addicted to addiction, the family and community around them instead of helping them,

they drive them away from home and move to the streets where they turn into people with bad events.

Lurandala says communities from parents, guardians, families, local governments, governments and religious leaders should work together to promote moral education for children and young people.

Lead Nurse at the Methadone Clinic at Sekou Toure Referral Hospital, Mwanza, Odaa Damson says adolescence is a major challenge for young people when they lack good lifestyle guidelines.

"Breaking the sieve for adolescents and both young women and young men groups they faces major challenge as they passes from childhood to youths stage which associates with physical and emotional changes other needs money to support their basic needs are part of the challenges they face," says Damson.



Sekou Toure Saves Lake Zone Regions

II The establishment of the clinic was based on a report by a study conducted by the Drug Control and Control Authority (DCEA) in 2014 which found Mwanza Region to have 3,300 drug users.

Sekou Toure Methadone Clinic at Mwanza Regional Referral Hospital inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Kassim Majaliwa, on February 20, 2018 has become a refuge for drug use disorders in the Lake Zone regions.

The Manager of the Clinic, Dr. Eunice Masangu mentions the regions served by the clinic are Shinyanga, Simiyu, Mara and Kagera which are mentioned to cultivate as well as having the highest number of marijuana users.

"Currently we are receiving drug use disorders from outside Mwanza Region where most are from Shinyanga, Simiyu, Mara and Kagera regions which so far do not have methadone treatment," says Dr. Masangu.

The clinic has registered 443 drug use disorders females being 41 women for Methadone therapy which

cures the drugs withdrawn syndromes.

The establishment of the clinic was based on a report by a study conducted by the Drug Control and Control Authority (DCEA) in 2014 which found Mwanza Region to have 3,300 drug users.

"The study estimated the presence of 3,300 drug use disorders. Among them are 500 women and 2,800 men. Injecting an estimated 300, 50 women and 250 men," says Dr. Masangu and add;

"The most widely used drugs here in Mwanza are cannabis that is readily available from the islands and neighboring regions, such as marijuana, kubeli, glue, petrol, cocaine, alcohol, medical drugs like Valium.

Dr. Masangu says there is a big difference in the city of Mwanza from when the clinic was set up as it has reduced the number of young people scattered on the streets

with depression due to drug dependency.

"The problem of drugs in Mwanza Region is huge due to the region bordering on cannabis-growing regions a situation that leads to the presence of many psychiatric patients," says Dr. Masangu and adds;

"As of (July 26, 2020), there were 14,066 psychiatric patients registered with Mwanza Regional Referral Hospital, Sekou Toure.

The psychiatrist says the time has come for psychiatric services to be provided starting from clinics and health centers that provide services to the community and not to the regional referral hospitals and specialist centers currently.

The clinic is run by three service providers, one doctor, four nurses, two pharmacists, two psychologists, one counselor and two records keepers.



DAUDI
MAJALIWA

Life's Difficulties Push Him to Drugs

The hardships of life caused by the burden of caring for and caring for his grandfather's family pushed Daudi Majaliwa at the age of 19 to get involved in drug consuming.

Daudi, now 34, was sent to Tabora in 2005 by his paternal grandfather after his parents separated. He was forced to work as a laborer to help construction craftsmen find funds to buy school supplies.

"The hardships of life and poor upbringing together led me to smoke marijuana for comfort as my grandfather was old after his two children who had been spending money on him died so the whole family became dependent on my labor," says Daudi.

He says after the tragedy, his grandfather was left with two children, his father and a young father who were addicted to alcohol without helping their father in the village so the responsibilities forced him to smoke marijuana and later to drink alcohol.

Smoking marijuana and mixing it with alcohol did not help get him out of the mess he was facing because after a while the alcoholics also found it helpless to lose consciousness so he fell into the use of drugs.

The family had no property and no support of any kind. I was confused and so I realized the only solution was to get drunk to comfort myself," says Daudi and adds;

"I used to earn money from a job as a technician so I was able to buy flour and use it and eventually became an addict who could do nothing without first using the powder to remove arosto (drugs withdrawn syndromes)."

Daudi says he and two of his colleagues set up burglars to open stoves and warehouses using fake keys (master key) at night and stole valuable assets including television sets, radio, telephones and any other property they had demands in the market.

"We used the master key to open the stores and warehouses at night



CONTINUE ON PG 13

I heard about Methadone while in Tabora I told my wife I wanted to go to Mwanza for a drop-off treatment. My wife was happy with the decision, she donated 40,000 shillings to me in addition to the fare.



DAUDI MAJALIWA

Life's Difficulties Push Him to Drugs

FROM ON PG 12

and steal by asking for T.V, radio, phone and anything else we saw selling fast. We made a lot of money when we shared it after selling between 800,000 (shillings) and a million and more. But the money ran out after a few days from the flour," says Daudi.

Reports of his misdeeds reached his mother Arusha who followed him and sent him to a sober house where he stayed for eight months and when he recovered he moved to another house.

"When I recovered, I asked my mother to return to Tabora when I got used to it. He allowed me to return after promising not to return to the gang," says Daudi.

However, he says the community in Tabora was not ready to accept him

beyond stigmatizing him for his past actions. The situation caused her to isolate herself and return to drug use.

"I continued to live that life until one day in 2018 without the advice or influence of anyone, when I wondered the reasons for living such a life and decided to come to Mwanza to seek help to stop using flour," says Daudi and added;

"I heard about Methadone while in Tabora I told my wife I wanted to go to Mwanza for a drop-off treatment. My wife was happy with the decision, she donated 40,000 shillings to me in addition to the fare".

Daudi says that his wife, who bore him three children, all of whom are engaged in small business.

When he arrived at his

brother's house, he asked him if he really intended to quit addiction and when he assured him, he was the one who escorted him to Sekou Toure Hospital when they were given instructions and procedures and finally started treatment.

"When we arrived at the clinic, the Social Welfare Officer directed us to the procedure and asked me to join the organization for initial training and three weeks later I started Methadone treatment on June 23, 2018," says Daudi.

"Right now, I am praying. I go to social events and even tragedies. I share social forums. The community has received me and when I give my contribution of ideas I am heard and I have regained the lost happiness".

Methadone Brings Him Back to Careers, Jobs

“The success I have had from joining Methadone therapy is to have a family of my wife and child, to be reliable and even now I am employed as an IT specialist (communication technology) here at Mwananyamala Referral Hospital and one of the peer educator's community,” says Kessy.

Kessy mentions another achievement is giving a testimony of her life in therapy at local and international drug conferences and conferences including Colombo, Srilanka (Colombo Plan).

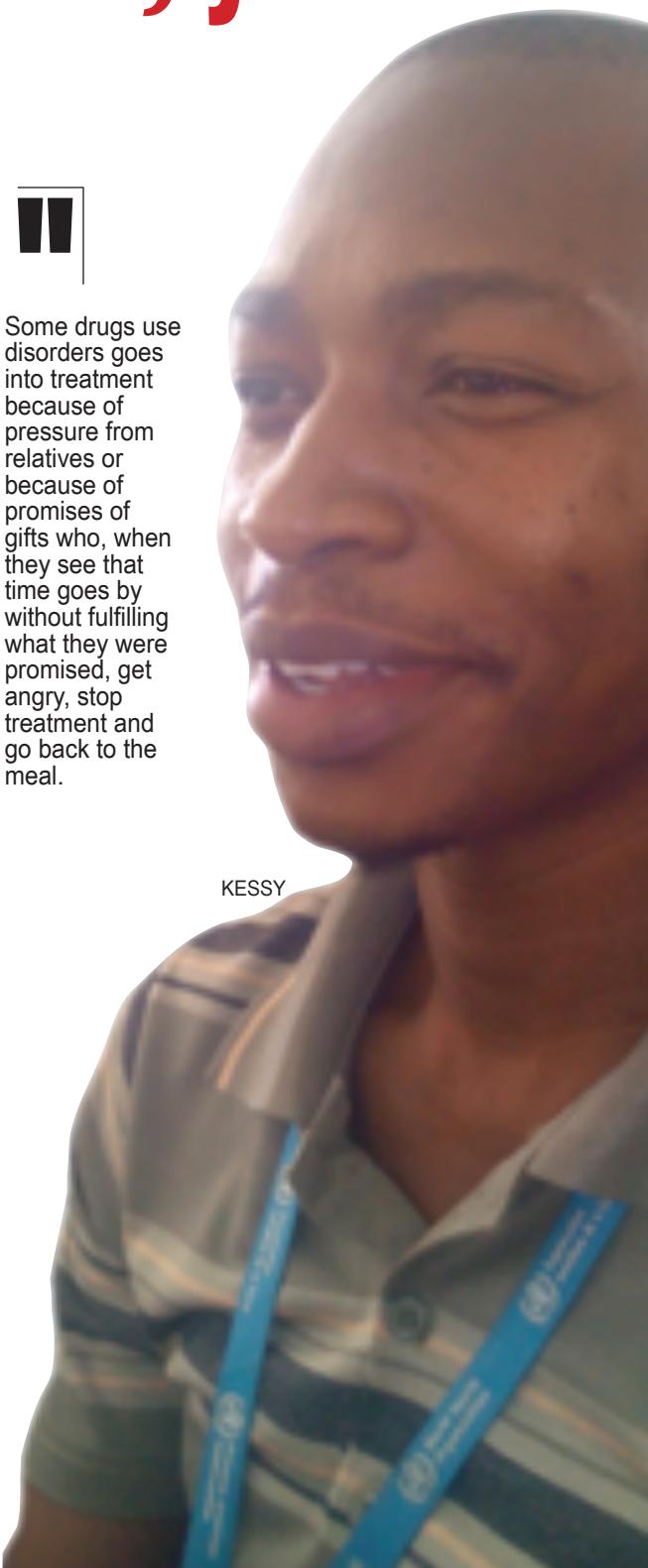
At the Colombo Plan Conference, Kessy described how Methadone therapy transformed her from drug addiction and restored her to her original state.

Kessy, a 35-year-old boy who has stopped taking drugs with the help of Methadone, says that the condition of arosto (withdrawn drugs syndromes), pushes drug use disorders to do anything even if it is dangerous, such as looting a wallet or phone at a social gathering without fear, for the purpose of obtaining funds to purchase medicine.

“When you have ‘severe arousal’, every hole in the body becomes exposed as the eyes produce tears, the nose produces mucus, vomits, defecates and in the case of men sperm come out asleep,” says Kessy and adds;

“The situation is what drives the addicts to be willing to lose their lives to save themselves from the unexplained arousal suffering accompanied by severe physical and bone pain.”

Kessy mentions another major achievement for her is restoring relationships with family, relatives and friends



Some drug use disorders goes into treatment because of pressure from relatives or because of promises of gifts who, when they see that time goes by without fulfilling what they were promised, get angry, stop treatment and go back to the meal.

and now she is respected and also involved in social activities and most importantly for her is being re-trusted by the people who previously excluded her.

He says many patients discontinue treatment at an early stage of treatment due to impatience as they hope for a speedy recovery and when they see their health improve and from the drugs withdrawn syndromes condition they discontinue treatment.

Kessy says the Methadone patient's routine of attending the clinic daily has been a huge burden for them as they do not have a guaranteed income for the fare.

“Some drug use disorders goes into treatment because of pressure from relatives or because of promises of gifts who, when they see that time goes by without fulfilling what they were promised, get angry, stop treatment and go back to the meal,” he says.

Kessy, who has interrupted her treatment three times, says the challenges stem from drug addicts' lack of mental and psychological readiness to seek treatment as advised by health care providers.

Another challenge is the drugs use disorders whose health has improved due to lack of income-generating activities and when they want to return to the communities they came from, they are not well received due to past history so they end up experiencing stress.

Kessy urges young people who have not started using drugs not to use them as it is not a good thing to desire to use, as it is easy to get into and it is hard to get rid of it.

“When you start using it, it attracts you and later controls you. At first you feel comfortable and as you continue to use it makes you dependent on the action that makes the user get drug withdrawn syndromes,” says Kessy and adds;

“For drug addicts, they should go to the Methadone

CONTINUE ON PG 15

Methadone Brings Him Back to Careers, Jobs

FROM ON PG 14

service centers, but the important thing is to be willing to give up physical abuse, sell property, a sense of insecurity by going to improve health."

Kessy joined Methadone Therapy in 2014 from one of the leading drug rehabilitation organizations that contributed to her major health and psychological changes.

Kessy says the decision to start treatment came from the bottom of her heart after she was shocked by the change in her friend's health, who had joined the Methadone treatment at the time and had reached a high level of addiction.

"I was surprised to see my friend who stopped using the powder was pleased and when I asked him the reason for the success, he replied that it was because I stopped using the powder and went into Methadone treatment" says Kessy and adds;

"I was shocked because my condition was so bad that I decided to join the treatment. However, it was not easy as Methadone treatment is a long-term condition that provides a great test of adherence to treatment".

Like other drug use disorders, Kessy, a wife and child, says that it was not easy for her to break free from drug use and recover from its dependency.

The change he underwent in Methadone therapy is the recovery and reliability of the community and that is what contributed to him getting a job as a computer communications (IT) specialist at Mwananyamala Regional Referral Hospital.

Commenting on the effects of drug abuse, Kessy says it includes losing her job as an IT professional in one of the country's largest telecommunications company due to negligence.

He says after he was fired due to addiction, he was engaged in computer repair work at his home and that is when his arrest occurred.

"I was making and installing computer programs. A friend of mine came at night to fix the laptop he had bought to remove the password. From my experience, the activity was not big I agreed to get money to buy drugs," says Kessy and adds;



I was shocked because my condition was so bad that I decided to join the treatment. However, it was not easy as Methadone treatment is a long-term condition that provides a great test of adherence to treatment.

"The next day at home we live upstairs, a friend of mine saw a relative who had sold him a laptop coming with the police carrying a bag coming to us, he realized it was a disaster he went down the stairs and ran without telling me anything;

"As soon as I heard a knock on the door, I went to open it and saw the relative with the soldiers who wanted me to show him the laptop that had been brought to me. I was not afraid as I had three laptops and I welcomed them and showed them what they wanted. After identifying them, the soldiers ordered me to go with them to the police station".

He says when he arrived at the police station, after an interview he discovered that the laptop

was stolen from one of the government institutions and it was decided to detain the detainees so that the investigation and arrest of the perpetrators could continue.

"If there is anything in my life I will never forget, it is a case of five counts of murder, three counts of armed robbery, possession of stolen property and destruction of documents, a case that landed me in prison for a year without charge," he said. Kessy and on;

"What healed me was the start of drug use that led to the dismissal of one of the largest telecommunications companies in the country and another involved in gas extraction operations as a technology communication (IT) specialist."

METHADONE CLINICS SITES



For more
information please
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