



MINUTES OF REHAB TURKEY NATIONAL DRUG ADDICTION WORKSHOP

ANKARA – JULY 27, 2018

REHAB (Rehabilitation and Integration into Society of Drug Addicted Adults and Their Families) Project National Drug Addiction Workshop has been held in 27 July, 2018 in Ankara. The workshop was organized and hosted by OZERKDER. Approximately 120 people who are target groups of the Project participated to the workshop. Participants included families of adult drug addicts under probation, social workers, therapists, rehabilitation counselors, psychologists, trainers, adult drug addicts at the age from 18 to 29 on supervised probation, adult education institutions, supervisory and managerial staff dealing with drug addicts, universities, NGO's working with drug abusers and drug addicts and employment agency representatives.

A sociology professor and a special education professor from two different universities in Turkey, a clinical psychologist, a NGO governor and a job and employment counselor from ISKUR gave speeches in the workshop and in the end of it, a question-answer session was held. Speaker had 30 minutes for their speeches, each; and between speeches, there been 10 minutes coffee breaks. Besides, there was 1.5 hour lunch break after first three presentations.

The workshop started with opening speech of Mr. Faruk Sevindi from OZERKDER. He talked on drug addiction in Turkey. He stated that drug addiction becomes more widespread among young members of society in parallel to global technological developments. He said that global developments in any areas of life cultivate non-socialization of children and adolescents; their way of life satisfaction changes unceasingly. He emphasized the significance of prevention efforts and stated they should also follow modern pattern. He stated that REHAB was planned to rehabilitation and integration into society of drug addicts under probation. Then he introduced the project REHAB. He mentioned its objectives, target groups, partners and their countries and expected results from it. He attached great importance on international partnership and said that the combination of European and

Turkish experiences and different types of partner organizations (NGOs, universities, social work organizations) is an effective partnership in helping primary target group in rehabilitation and integration.

Secondly, Prof. Dr. Hakan Sarı from Necmettin Erbakan University made a presentation. He mentioned the importance of family, environment and education on drug addicted adolescents, particularly at initial phases of addiction. He shared his ideas for preventing the addiction. He said that children mustn't be left lonely emotionally when they are at earlier phases of puberty. He said if they were left alone, they would plunge in a quest and lose their bearings. He explained signs of drug addiction on children and adolescents. Then, he stated the importance of employment in integration into society of addicted adults. He said that the perception and attitudes of society towards drug addicted adults under probation is also noteworthy in integration.

The third speaker was a Clinical Psychologist, Mr. Cenk Adıgüzel. He analyzed drug addiction psychology in the light of incidences he had met. He corroborated that loneliness is one of the main reasons of drug addiction. He said, however, it is not the only ground for the addiction. He suggested that adolescents with bad friends are more prone to have addiction although they are social. He narrated that like all people (and more than older ages, indeed), adolescents have a need for entertainment. Parents should create beneficial entertainment opportunities for their children. Or, if they are too busy, they should send their children to good schools, which are successful in providing entertainment opportunities to the students, as well as necessary school classes. He placed special emphasis on taking up hobbies for all children and adolescents. He said that all students should take some hobbies starting from primary or secondary schools; long term hobbies like sports or playing a music instrument keep children and adolescents out of bad habits. Then, he passed to analyzing psychological status of drug addicted adults under probation. He said that these adults often have a psychology of running behind their peers. They often drifted away from their education; some of them had to stay in hospitals or prisons during some periods of their life. And now, they find a way for being recovered from addiction, but they have no professions to adapt life. Hence, Mr. Adıgüzel stated that government opportunities for these people should be enough to integrate them to society. Government should impose sanctions to employers who avoid employing these people. Or at least they should reward the ones who employ them. He stated that attitudes of family members and society should also be developed in order to ensure psychological stability and satisfaction of these people.

The next speaker was Prof. Dr. Mustafa Keskin from Abant İzzet Baysal University Sociology Department. He said they are also a partner of REHAB project. He mentioned some of his previous projects and studies. He talked on statistics of drug addiction in Turkey and in Europe. He stated that in recent years, addiction incidents in Turkey had been increased substantially. He said that 20 years ago, it was rarely (almost never) seen in Anatolian provinces, apart from big cities in Turkey. He, then, passed to society perception of drug addiction and said that rarer addiction incidences result in stronger reaction of society.

Society has bad attitudes towards addicts if people are not accustomed to it. He said that the reaction of society generally appears as exclusion and alienation. People perceive addicts as must be kept under quarantine. Mr. Keskin said that worse is that society maintains these attitudes towards also adults who are under rehabilitation process although they need the adverse. He stated that society should be informed about what rehabilitation and treatment means, the importance of environment in rehabilitation and integration process and what these adults under probation needs.

The last speaker was Mrs. Fatma İnal from İŞKUR (National Employment Office of Turkey). She talked of employment opportunities that their Office provides for drug addicted adults who are under probation. She stated that İŞKUR had been supplied financial support to ex-convicts and ex-drug addicts to set up their own businesses through more than 100 projects in the last decade. She also stated that employers who employ 40% or more people with disabilities or ex-convicts have right to get substantial amount of tax cuts and grants.

After these speeches, question-answer part was started. Drug addicted adults under rehabilitation process and their families were so interested in this part. They asked significant and more practical questions to speakers. Their questions were usually related to employment opportunities. They attempted to learn conditions of İŞKUR support programs. Adults under probation and their families mostly complained about attitudes of society including their relatives. They stated they are not aware of rehabilitation process. Some of ex-drug addicts said that they would like to work on rehabilitation of newly addicted people. They stated that the police should increase their investigations around the schools. Moreover, they stated that drug addiction conferences should be held in schools for prevention. They also said that children who smoke are under greater risk for drug addiction since they are more curious and courageous in trying different substances. Adults under probation reported that legal regulations for drug abusers are sufficient and rehabilitation process is good in Turkey.