Addressing Substance Use Disorders in Humanitarian Settings – Access to Health and Social Services for Displaced Populations and Host Communities in Acute and Protracted Emergencies

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Introduction and Aims: UNODC, in collaboration with WHO and UNHCR, are developing a handbook on "Addressing Substance Use Disorders (SUD) in Humanitarian Settings". It aims to support humanitarian actors in their efforts to identify needs/resources in humanitarian emergencies to address SUD. It will provide practical guidance on available tools for the assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring on SUD treatment porgrammes to address associated health and social consequences of SU in humanitarian settings.

Method / Approach: Literature research on the topic of addressing substance use and SUDs in humanitarian settings followed by an expert group consultation, enhanced through a Delphi process and peer reviews.

Results: A summary of practical guidance and information on available tools for the assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring of SUD treatment, adapted to humanitarian settings and ready for field testing.

Discussions and Conclusions: While there is limited information about the effectiveness of addressing SUDs in humanitarian settings, the handbook aims to enhance and evaluate the integration of SUD treatment and care in humanitarian responses.

Implications for Practice or Policy: Additional investment in human resource development, system-level capacity, and supporting policies that promote a public health approach to SUD management is essential to addressing these conditions in humanitarian settings.

Implications for Translational Research: Further operational research is needed to determine how to implement evidence-based and contextually relevant SUD treatment in complex humanitarian settings

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