



Drugs & HIV

BURKINA FASO



EPIDEMIOLOGICAL CONTEXT

HIV Prevalence

Overall Population
<1%¹

- Sex Workers (SW) and clients: **16,1%²**
- Men who have sex with men (MSM): **3,6%³**
- Prison Inmates: **2,98%⁴**

Lack of data on prevalence among people who inject drugs, but a study conducted in neighboring country Mali with similar epidemic dynamics estimates HIV prevalence at 2% among people who use drugs, and 5.1% among people who inject drugs. The same study estimates the prevalence of HIV/HCV coinfection at 3% for this population.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Since the first HIV cases in Burkina Faso, successive national programs for the HIV response have been implemented, but they have completely overshadowed the health issues related to the use of psychoactive substances. Thus, it was not until 2010 that people who use drugs were included in the list of vulnerable groups targeted by the 2011-2015 National Strategic Framework. Apart from the official publications that treat drugs from a criminal perspective, and the 2011 study conducted by Kasabati community-based organization which was limited to the city of Ouagadougou, little work has been done to determine the impact of psychoactive drugs on the dynamics of the HIV epidemic.

This glaring lack of evidence-based data gives free rein to misconceptions about the lack of impact of drug use on the HIV epidemic in Burkina Faso, as the country has a very small number of people who inject drugs. To counter these biases, REVS PLUS is carrying out an active advocacy work at national level.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Burkinabé legislation, and particularly the law n° 017/99 / AN, is exclusively repressive towards production, manufacture, distribution, possession and use of psychoactive substances. Depending on the category of drug involved, people who use drugs in particular, face up to 5 years in prison and / or 5 million CFA (€ 7,500) for possession of drugs for personal use and up to 1 year in prison and / or 500,000 FCFA (750 €) fine for the purchase and use of drugs. .

OUR ACTIVITIES

REVS PLUS, Coalition PLUS' member in Burkina Faso, implements various activities toward PWUD on two levels :

Harm Reduction

- HIV prevention, screening and treatment
- Supporting patients and their families
- Information and education
- prevention and treatment of STDs, hepatitis and tuberculosis
- Distribution of condoms

- 2018: HIV testing campaign in the smoking rooms, through peer educators trained to inform, sensitize and, if necessary, refer people who use drugs to the public medical center.

However, in the absence of a legal framework for the establishment of NEP and OST, these interventions remain incomplete and do not fully incorporate the right to health for people who use drugs. This is why REVS PLUS is implementing parallel advocacy work with national authorities as well as regional and international institutions.

Advocacy

REVS PLUS organizes advocacy activities every year on June 26, the "Support Don't Punish" day of action, coordinated by the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC):

- 2015: 3 days broadcast of radio programs and spots.
- 2016: organization of a sensitization seminar for intermediate professions (media, police) followed by a football match between prison inmates and prison guards.
- 2017: initiation of a panel in partnership with the National Assembly.
- 2018: production of sensitisation films, with the participation of sports, customary and political figures.
- REVS PLUS participates in high level meeting on drugs (UNGASS 2016, CND 2019).
- REVS PLUS was identified in early 2018 as the focal point for the ECOWAS/UNODC implementation of a regional plan for the drugs response, and is about to become a member of IDPC.
- REVS PLUS is currently participating in the elaboration of a model drug law, under the aegis of IDPC and in partnership with the West African Commission on Drugs (WACD).



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OBSTACLES

- Lack of evidence-based data
- Lack of a legal framework for the implementation of needle and syringe program and opiate substitution therapy
- Repressive and stigmatizing approach towards the use of psychoactive substances

- Call for the revision of the law to mitigate its repressive side and better take into account the

treatment of problematic drug use, and integrate alternatives to incarceration.

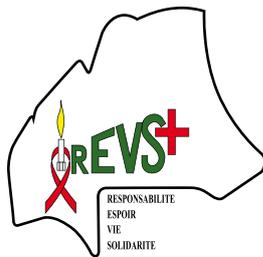
PERSPECTIVES

- Internationally, the objective is to continue advocacy work in view of upcoming international meetings.
- At the national level, a twofold objective :
 - Sensitise the government on the need of developing a strategic plan for the drugs response, integrating public health and human rights perspective for people who use drugs;



Martine Somda,
President, REVS PLUS, and Administrator,
Coalition PLUS

« I appeal to my country's national authorities to set up a specialised centre for the follow-up of people who use drugs, as well as harm reduction programs incorporating prevention, care, and treatments as well. People who use drugs need our support rather than a punitive, discriminating and stigmatising response. »



Membre de la Coalition
Internationale Sida 

REVS PLUS

Burkinabé Coalition PLUS member created in 1997, REVS PLUS (Responsabilité Espoir Vie Solidarité – Responsibility Hope Life Solidarity) is one of the first community-based organisations in Burkina Faso to engage with the authorities at the onset of the HIV pandemic in Burkina Faso.

Bringing together those infected and affected by HIV in Bobo-Dioulasso, Diébougou, Dano and Houndé, it was awarded the rank of Chevalier (Knight) with a National Merit Order for its contribution to the HIV response in Burkina Faso.

REVS PLUS has been recognised as a Public Utility Organisation by the Government of Burkina Faso in 2018.

REVS PLUS' scope of actions covers seven provinces of Burkina Faso. It covers more than a quarter of the national territory and benefits an estimated population of more than 3 million people in 2014. It mainly targets people living with HIV, orphans and vulnerable children, sex workers, persons with disabilities, prison inmates, men who have sex with men and people who use drugs.

REVS PLUS is about to become a member of IDPC.

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1 UNAIDS 2016

2 R2P PAMAC-IRSS-JHU, 2013

3 R2P study conducted in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, 2013

4 Bio-behavioral survey, 2014

5 ARCAD-SIDA RDS study, 2015

6 Study on drug dependency, drug use and HIV / AIDS in Burkina Faso, Kasabati and Open Society Foundations, July 2011. Available online: https://plateforme-elsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ESUDES-RapportAnalysisSituationnelle-Final_290811.compressed.pdf