

UBUMI PRISONS INITIATIVE – SHORT PROFILE

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Ubumi Prisons Initiative works to improve the prison conditions, future prospects of prisoners and health of inmates in Zambian correctional facilities. We work in the intersection between emergency relief and long-term development work. Our fundamental values are rooted in universal human rights, where the individual's right to life, health and dignity is at the center of our efforts. Ubumi Prisons Initiative works to support the most vulnerable in prison: children (circumstantial children and juveniles), pregnant and breastfeeding women, the mentally ill as well as critically ill patients through advocacy, capacity building and strategic deliveries. Through strategic deliveries of for instance food and medicine we demonstrate cost-effective solutions to government and partners, which they with time will be able to implement themselves.

We work in 10 correctional facilities: Kabwe (3 facilities), Chipata (2 facilities), Lusaka (2 facilities) and Copperbelt province (3 facilities). We also have a training school for reintegration of former inmates.

SUPPORT TO COORDINATION ON HEALTH IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

We are members of the Prisons Health Advisory Committee and work to support national coordination and collaboration between civil society partners, United Nations and government. We strive to establish alliances in support of health and human rights in PHAC as well as in other foras.

HEALTH, NUTRITION AND PATIENT CARE

The prison diet is poor and inmates cannot survive on the food provided in the longer term. This in conjunction with severe overcrowding, poor hygiene and poor access to health services mean that a prison sentence can become a death sentence. Our work has entailed a reduction in mortality of up to 90%. We implement:

- ✓ Inmate volunteer caregiver teams, who are self-organized teams but work in close collaboration with health staff and management and are supervised by Ubumi. The teams provide care and support to patients, including cooking of food supplements, washing and feeding patients and ensuring adherence to medication
- ✓ Treatment of malnutrition
- ✓ Vegetable gardens to provide healthy foods designed to support patient recovery
- ✓ Improved water, hygiene, and sanitation services
- ✓ Trainings for health care workers, inmates, civil society and government



CIRCUMSTANTIAL CHILDREN AND JUVENILES

There are small children with their mothers in prison aged 0-4, pregnant and breastfeeding women as well as juveniles aged 10-18. They need support to secure health in an environment characterized by deprivation. We implement:

- ✓ Teams of volunteers work to support healthy child development
- ✓ Nutritional support services
- ✓ Activities to support healthy child development through playhouses and play areas
- ✓ Recreational activities and schooling for juveniles



MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is a major issue in prisons. Not only can the environment itself trigger existing vulnerabilities, but many mentally ill find themselves in prison. We implement:

- ✓ Advocacy and sensitizations of Zambia Correctional Service command and government more broadly
- ✓ Trainings on mental health and psycho-social support for inmates
- ✓ Support groups for inmates lead by trained inmate mental health facilitators
- ✓ Trainings and mentoring of prison health care workers
- ✓ Mental health sensitization campaigns for corrections staff and inmates
- ✓ Capacity building for civil society organisations
- ✓ Art and poetry as therapy

EMPOWERMENT, SKILLS BUILDING AND REINTEGRATION

We support reintegration through our Madzimoyo farm in Eastern Province where we have a small training school for former inmates and local community members. Here they receive training in agriculture and entrepreneurship to support them to lead active lives as productive citizens.

A collaboration with the local college ensures that those with sufficient academic skills receive formal certificates.

