

## Internship in Kenya

Sofia Rapsaniotis is a student at the VU University in Amsterdam and currently finishing her Masters in Studies, Management, Entrepreneurship & Policy Analysis in the Health Sciences. Last year, she completed her graduate internship at Mainline Foundation where she worked on the development of a strategic plan for the MEWA harm reduction department, a partner-organisation of Mainline, based in Mombasa, Kenya.

In her research, the first steps were performed of the strategic plan formulation for the organisation of MEWA harm reduction department, namely, a current situation analysis (step 1) and a SWOT analysis (step 2). For the current situation analysis of the organisation, she focused on human resource management processes and decision-making processes and the SWOT analysis was carried out for the Harm Reduction department.

To collect the data for this study, Sofia went to Mombasa, Kenya for 7 weeks where she conducted research and interviews within the organisation. The SWOT analysis was conducted by making use of a focus group discussion amongst the staff members in which the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation were discussed. Observing and being part of the organization for 7 weeks helped increase our understanding of the organization and gain insight into the current situation.

The current situation analysis of the human resource management processes and decision-making processes at the organisation of MEWA harm reduction provided a clear overview of the processes and Sofia's research contributed valuable insight for Mainline into the daily practices of MEWA. The SWOT analysis is being used by the management team of MEWA to indicate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the organisation and to work on a sustainable future for the programme.

One interesting result provided by the SWOT analysis is that a major threat to MEWA is the stigmatisation of harm reduction services. Although harm reduction is being addressed in Kenya, there is still an overwhelming incomprehension regarding harm reduction services resulting in the perception of services such as NSP as 'encouraging' drug use. In order to close this particular knowledge/awareness gap, education about harm reduction services is needed to contribute to a sustainable future at MEWA.