



# Guidelines for developing a healthy prison and preparedness before inmates in correctional institutions towards sustainable development in Thailand

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## Abstract

This research article explores the development of healthy prisons and the preparation of female inmates for sustainable reintegration into society. The study aims to assess the historical, theoretical, and practical aspects of healthy prison environments, focusing on the current conditions and challenges faced by female inmates. Using a qualitative research approach, data were collected from 24 key informants, including female prison administrators and staff. The study identifies significant barriers such as overcrowding, outdated facilities, and inadequate healthcare, which adversely affect inmates' physical and mental well-being. Overcrowding, driven by rising inmate populations, contributes to stress, health issues, and limited activity space, while insufficient medical personnel and facilities further constrain health care delivery. Additionally, the study highlights barriers in preparing female inmates for release, including educational deficits, inadequate vocational training, and limited access to essential resources. Educational programs often fail to align with inmates' interests or market needs, and vocational training is hampered by financial and logistical constraints. Moral and spiritual development is also challenged by psychological issues and limited support networks. To address these challenges, the study recommends a multifaceted approach that includes enhancing prison infrastructure, improving educational and vocational programs, and supporting mental and emotional well-being through family and community involvement. Effective prison reform requires collaboration among relevant agencies to ensure that female inmates are successfully reintegrated into society and can achieve long-term sustainability.

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## Introduction

The national development plan, as outlined in the 20-Year National Strategic Plan (2018–2037), the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017–2021), the 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023–2027), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizes the enhancement and development of human capital. This focus is directed towards fostering a society of opportunities and fairness. The government's policy on the rehabilitation of former inmates aims to improve the quality of life and well-being of communities. Consequently, the Department of Corrections has been tasked with increasing the effectiveness of inmate rehabilitation programs, aiming to reform the attitudes and behaviors of prisoners to reintegrate them as responsible citizens. The Department of Corrections is committed to its core mission of ensuring that the custody and rehabilitation of inmates align with judicial rulings. This involves the development of organizational capacity and human resources to address the rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates under the Department's jurisdiction. The key objectives include maintaining high standards in the custody of inmates, overseeing the evaluation and treatment of drug-dependent prisoners, and improving behavioral rehabilitation to facilitate the successful reintegration of reformed individuals into society. Additionally, the Department focuses on enhancing the efficiency of its custodial practices and addressing the issue of drug abuse within prisons (Department of Corrections, 2022).

The Global Prison Trends 2023 report highlights critical issues such as the global prison population, which has surged to 11.5 million, leading to overcrowded facilities. This overcrowding has strained prison healthcare systems, with higher rates of infectious diseases and inadequate mental health services (Ismail et al., 2021). The rising cost of living has further exacerbated budget constraints, making it difficult for families to support incarcerated relatives. In Thailand, as of March 1, 2024, the female prison population stood at 34,599, with most inmates convicted of drug-related offenses (Department of Corrections, 2022). This situation has led to unmanageable overcrowding, posing significant challenges to inmate rehabilitation and prison health. Improving prison health is crucial for achieving the SDGs. Ensuring that incarcerated individuals have access to healthcare services during their confinement demonstrates the government's commitment to upholding human rights. This effort aligns with the

SDGs' focus on human development, particularly in eradicating poverty, promoting health and well-being, and providing quality education. Prison health is directly linked to SDG Goal 3, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, and Goal 5, which emphasizes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Prisons in Thailand are a significant element of sustainable social development, as they play a crucial role in controlling and rehabilitating offenders to reintegrate into society effectively. However, prison management continues to face numerous challenges, particularly concerning female inmates, a group with distinct needs and circumstances compared to their male counterparts. According to the Department of Corrections, as of 2022, the number of female inmates in Thailand has been steadily increasing, accounting for approximately 15 percent of the total inmate population. Key issues affecting female inmates include overcrowding, lack of mental health support, and insufficient preparation for reintegration into society.

Moreover, the conditions in prisons highlight gender inequalities and difficulties in accessing basic resources for female inmates (Department of Corrections, 2022). Since the enactment of the Corrections Act of 1939, significant changes have been made in the design and improvement of prisons nationwide, including the separation of areas by gender and a focus on detaining offenders according to the justice process. However, the rapid rise in the female inmate population has led to overcrowding and shortages of essential facilities, adversely affecting their quality of life and health. Gender-specific issues such as reproductive health, pregnancy, and childcare within prisons pose major barriers to accessing fundamental rights. Additionally, spatial and regulatory limitations exacerbate social and administrative challenges for female inmates. The emotional strain of being separated from families and loved ones has sparked new calls for reform in the treatment of inmates, strongly supported by Princess Bajrakitiyabha. Her advocacy, particularly during the 2008 conference in Vienna, has driven new perspectives and momentum to align prison development with human rights principles and international standards (Hawanont & Watthanothai, 2018).

This research aims to explore solutions for improving prison conditions and addressing the specific needs of female inmates in Thailand. It also seeks to examine the role of sustainable development in shaping prison policies and practices. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more inclusive and

effective strategies for managing female inmates and promoting social equity within the criminal justice system. The researcher emphasizes the approach of “Healthy Prisons” as a strategy for empowering inmates positively. This approach focuses on the development of basic public health and an integrated health system. It involves transforming prisons into spaces where inmates can engage in activities that foster positive experiences and creative learning, thereby promoting physical, mental, social, and intellectual well-being. This approach aims to enhance the quality of life for inmates, enabling them to reintegrate into society as law-abiding citizens upon release. The integrated rehabilitation approach seeks to create a prison environment that closely mirrors the outside world, both physically and in terms of daily life, fostering a positive mindset among inmates. By the end of their sentences, former inmates should be better equipped to reintegrate into society and avoid recidivism.

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## Literature Review

The researcher has undertaken an extensive literature review to establish a conceptual framework for the study “Guidelines for Developing Healthy Prisons and Preparing Female Inmates for Sustainable Reintegration.” This framework integrates key aspects of sustainable development, with a particular emphasis on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, and SDG 5, which focuses on achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls. The “Healthy Prison” concept, central to this framework, encompasses four essential domains: the well-being of living and sleeping environments, the quality of daytime activities and lifestyle, nutritional well-being, and access to health care and medical services. The study further explores the importance of pre-release preparation in three critical areas: vocational training, education, and moral and ethical development. Moreover, the research addresses the challenges and limitations in developing healthy prison environments and preparing inmates for reintegration, alongside the processes and models necessary for effective implementation. Sustainable prison development, aligned with the broader SDGs, particularly SDG 3, 4, and 5, highlights the necessity of improving prison health and education to reduce inequalities and ensure that incarcerated individuals, often among the most vulnerable and marginalized populations, are not “left behind” (Ismail et al., 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing health disparities, making it more imperative than ever to protect the rights of inmates by ensuring their access to quality healthcare and education during confinement, thereby supporting the overarching goals of the SDGs related to social well-being, gender equality, and quality of life.

## *The Concept of Treating Female Inmates*

The concept of treating female inmates reflects an evolving approach within society, where justice has historically been administered to ensure fairness for victims and maintain social order. The methods of treatment, while varying across cultures, traditions, and legal systems, serve as a means of punishment that aligns with the severity of the offense committed. Kant’s Theory of Punishment (Kant, 1999) has significantly influenced the development of justice systems, with four primary theories of punishment being particularly relevant: (1) Retributive Theory—grounded in Kant’s work, it posits that punishment should be a just recompense for the crime committed, with the severity of the punishment reflecting the severity of the offense to uphold societal justice. Failure to punish would equate to condoning the crime. (2) Deterrence Theory—originating from classical criminology, this theory argues that punishment should deter future crimes by instilling fear of consequences in both the offender and potential offenders. (3) Rehabilitative Theory—rooted in positive criminology, it emphasizes the reformation of offenders, aiming to reintegrate them into society through education, training, and psychological support. (4) Social Protection Theory—advocated by social defense schools, it focuses on safeguarding society by isolating offenders to prevent future crimes (Brooks, 2003).

In contemporary practice, the treatment of offenders has shifted towards a dual focus on control and rehabilitation, providing offenders with opportunities to reform and reduce recidivism. Effective rehabilitation requires the classification of inmates based on their individual characteristics, ensuring that treatment is appropriately tailored. This process involves several key steps: (1) studying the individual histories of inmates, (2) analyzing and categorizing inmates based on collected data and behavior, and (3) monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of these classifications. Such classifications facilitate the design of rehabilitation activities that are most effective for each group of inmates, ultimately contributing to their successful reintegration into society (Chaichompoo, & Thertudomtham, 2022; Khantee et al., 2015).

### *The Concept of Healthy Prison*

The study of the concept of well-being by the World Health Organization reveals that well-being encompasses three primary dimensions: physical, mental, and social. These dimensions are dynamic and can evolve with changing times and societal contexts (Chokewiwat, 2009). Additionally, an expanded understanding of well-being identifies five dimensions: physical, emotional, social, mental, and spiritual well-being (Butler, 2001), reflecting the diverse and interconnected aspects necessary for improving quality of life. In the prison context, the concept of a “Healthy Prison” aims to create an environment conducive to fostering inmates’ well-being in all dimensions. This is achieved through activities and management practices focused on rehabilitating relationships with families and communities, as well as preparing inmates to reintegrate into society as quality citizens (Chokewiwat, 2009). The development of a healthy prison involves the integration of health, rehabilitation, and social development dimensions to establish an environment that supports sustainable well-being for inmates while enhancing opportunities for adaptation and effective reintegration into society.

In conclusion, the concept of a healthy prison, as outlined by Wajanasara and Archavanitkul (2021), presents a holistic approach to inmate well-being. By focusing on enhancing self-care capabilities, reducing disease risks, and increasing access to healthcare, prisons can directly improve the physical health of inmates. Additionally, promoting vitality, fostering positive thinking, and nurturing healthy relationships address the mental and emotional aspects of well-being. Maintaining family roles and creating opportunities for reintegration into society further support social rehabilitation, ensuring

that inmates are better prepared for successful reentry. Together, these components foster a supportive and transformative environment that not only focuses on inmate health but also on long-term societal reintegration.

### *Concepts of Preparation for Release*

The training and behavioral correction of inmates are essential processes in preparing them for reintegration into society with potential and without reoffending (Department of Corrections, 2022). These efforts focus on three key areas: 1) Vocational Training for Inmates: Vocational training enhances skills and provides opportunities for lawful employment (Sutthisorn, 2019); 2) Educational Opportunities for Inmates: Education programs aim to enable inmates to develop themselves into good citizens through tailored learning experiences. By categorizing inmates based on their backgrounds, these programs enhance knowledge and qualities essential for becoming responsible members of society (Hutapat, 2013); 3) Moral Training: Moral training reinforces ethical values and mental resilience. This involves integrating Buddhist principles into a systematic and sustainable behavioral development process. (Dhirabhaddo et al., 2018) Collectively, these efforts highlight the importance of holistic care and development for inmates, ensuring they can return to society as valuable and contributing members.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study, illustrating how concepts, theories, academic literature, and related research, together with the perspectives of administrators and staff of the women's correctional institution, contribute to the development of guidelines for healthy prisons and pre-release preparedness in correctional institutions towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

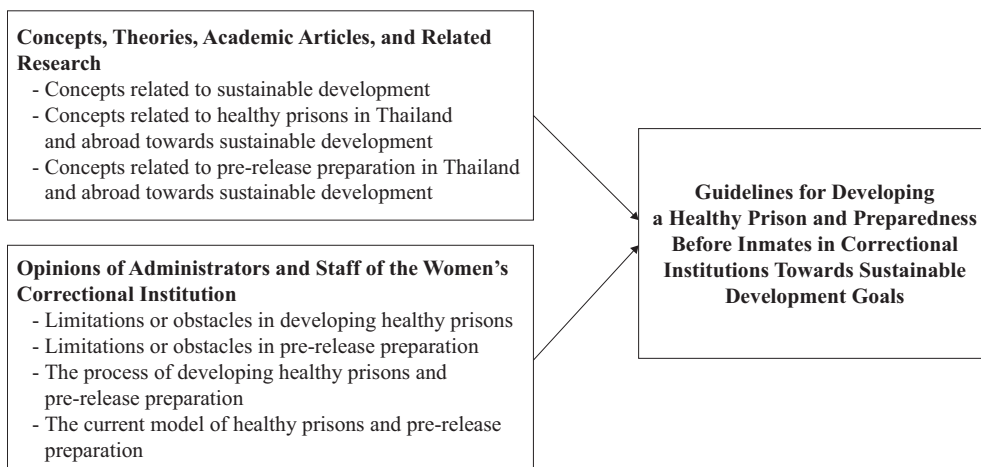


**Figure 1** Conceptual framework

## Methodology

The researcher has established the research methodology using a qualitative approach, specifically a phenomenological approach, which focuses on studying individuals' life experiences (Holloway, 1997). This study employed two research approaches: (1) Documentary Research: This method involves collecting and analyzing secondary data from academic documents, concepts, theories, articles, and previous research related to pre-release preparation in both Thai and international contexts. This approach helps in referencing and supporting the study with existing literature. (2) Field Research: This method gathers primary data through in-depth interviews with key informants. The qualitative research process involves interviewing individuals who have significant knowledge and involvement in the subject matter. Structured interview questions are designed to elicit comprehensive responses, allowing for an in-depth understanding of the topic.

### *Population and Key Informants*

The researcher defined the population and sample for this study by selecting key informants from eight female correctional institutions across the country. Employing purposive sampling, the study targeted individuals with significant involvement and expertise. The sample comprised two groups: Group 1 included eight senior executives from the eight institutions, while Group 2 consisted of sixteen staff members, two from each institution, who possessed knowledge of healthy prisons and expertise in pre-release preparation with a minimum of five years of experience. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 24 key informants from eight female correctional institutions.

### *Measurement*

The data collection tool for this research is a semi-structured interview guide. The interview questions are developed based on a review of relevant literature, theoretical concepts, and expert recommendations. The semi-structured interview guide covers the following areas: The interviews will cover various topics, including SDGs, healthy prisons, and the challenges and limitations in developing such environments. Additionally, the discussions will focus on pre-release preparation, exploring the processes, steps, methods, and models involved in both developing healthy prisons and preparing

inmates for release. Special attention will be given to strategies specifically designed for female inmates to ensure their successful reintegration into society, aligning with the broader objectives of sustainable development.

The interview guide was created based on a thorough review of textbooks, academic documents, and relevant theories. It was reviewed by five experts for content validity and revised accordingly. The tool's quality was verified through an Item-Objective Congruence Index (IOC) and triangulation to ensure validity and reliability before analysis.

To ensure the quality of the interview instrument, the researcher employed comprehensive methods for data verification, analysis, and integration. This process included triangulation to enhance validity and reliability. For reliability, the researcher assessed the credibility of data sources, adherence to criteria, transferability to other contexts, and the avoidance of bias from both informants and the researcher. Confirmability was achieved by clearly outlining the procedures and steps for data collection and analysis, allowing interested parties to verify the accuracy and completeness of the research findings and reports.

The researcher employed two primary methods for data collection. First, secondary data were gathered from academic sources, including theories, articles, and research, to build a theoretical foundation. Second, primary data were collected through 24 in-depth interviews with key informants, focusing on the development of healthy prisons and inmate reintegration. The process involved obtaining permission from the Department of Corrections, scheduling interviews with executives and staff from eight female correctional institutions and recording and transcribing the discussions for analysis and academic reporting.

### *Data Analysis*

Data analysis involved integrating information from semi-structured interviews to gain diverse perspectives and in-depth insights. The following steps were taken:

**Data Reduction:** The data from 24 interviews were summarized to focus on key questions.

**Data Organization:** The reduced data were categorized into themes.

**Conclusion and Interpretation:** The context was considered to derive meaningful insights, which were then used to develop a conceptual framework and discuss the findings, along with recommendations for further research.

## Results

The data analysis from key informants in the qualitative research titled “Guidelines for Developing a Healthy Prison and Preparedness Before Inmates in Correctional Institutions Towards Sustainable Development Goals in Thailand” is a process focused on understanding the in-depth experiences of informants regarding the prison environment and preparation for reintegration into society. The findings reveal the complex perspectives of inmates and stakeholders involved in the development of healthy prisons, through narratives reflecting their needs, challenges, and approaches to aligning prison development with the SDGs. The data gathered enable the researcher to identify key factors that support the development of healthy prisons across various dimensions, including creating a health-promoting environment, supporting educational and vocational opportunities, and enhancing the mental resilience of inmates. These factors ensure that the development of healthy prisons is both sustainable and aligned with international standards. The following are the basic details of the key informants.

1. The personal factors of the 24 key informants are divided into two groups: the group of female correctional institution executives and the group of female correctional staff, [Table 1](#) shown as detailed below:

From [Table 1](#), the analysis of the personal factors of 24 key informants can be summarized as follows:

All 24 key informants were female, with the majority falling between the ages of 41–50 (37.50%). Most had a bachelor’s degree (66.67%), and their work experience ranged predominantly from 11–15 years (33.33%). In terms of job positions, 33.33 percent were directors, another 33.33 percent were welfare and inmate assistance officers, 16.67 percent were correctional operations officers, and 16.67 percent were inmate development officers.

2. The development of healthy prisons and preparation for the release of inmates in female correctional institutions toward sustainable development revealed that the development of female correctional institutions aligns with the SDGs as follows:

2.1) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. All eight female correctional institutions have established guarantees for good health and well-being within the institutions. The integration of cooperation from all relevant sectors has been implemented, with the organization’s core policies set for concrete action. Compliance with the Department of Corrections standards and the Bangkok Rules has been applied to care for and provide welfare for children born in prison and to care for inmates with disabilities or elderly inmates appropriately. Additionally, appropriate education is provided to inmates.

**Table 1** The personal factors of the 24 key informants

| The personal factors |                                                 | Quantity | Percentage |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------|------------|
| Gender               | Female                                          | 24       | 100        |
|                      | Male                                            | -        | -          |
| Age                  | Under 30 years old                              | 2        | 8.34       |
|                      | 30–40 years old                                 | 6        | 25.00      |
|                      | 41–50 years old                                 | 9        | 37.50      |
|                      | 51–60 years old                                 | 7        | 29.16      |
| Education levels     | Bachelor’s degree                               | 16       | 66.67      |
|                      | Master’s degree                                 | 8        | 33.33      |
|                      | Doctoral degree (Ph.D.)                         | -        | -          |
| Work experience      | Less than 5 years of experience                 | 3        | 12.50      |
|                      | 5–10 years of experience                        | 5        | 20.83      |
|                      | 11–15 years of experience                       | 8        | 33.33      |
|                      | 16–20 years of experience                       | 4        | 16.67      |
|                      | More than 20 years of experience                | 4        | 16.67      |
| Positions            | Director of the Female Correctional Institution | 8        | 33.33      |
|                      | Welfare and Inmate Assistance Officer           | 8        | 33.33      |
|                      | Correctional Operations Officer                 | 4        | 16.67      |
|                      | Inmate Development Officer                      | 4        | 16.67      |

Source: obtained from primary data

2.2) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. All eight female correctional institutions ensure equal care for female inmates in all dimensions, including physical, mental, and social aspects, without discrimination. The development of behavior and habits for female inmates and girls is promoted through classification, medical treatment, education, vocational training, welfare, and preparation for release, tailored to the needs of each inmate. This is done to ensure that operations are effective and sustainable in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

3. The development of healthy prisons toward sustainable development involves processes and models for the development of healthy prisons, with an emphasis on proper and adequate management to meet the needs of inmates, collaboration with internal and external agencies, proactive work, and multidisciplinary cooperation. This ensures that operations are effective and lead to the sustainable development of healthy prisons. The development is divided into four areas, as follows:

3.1) Health and Living Conditions: It was found that the organization of appropriate and sufficient bedding and living spaces has been implemented, with improvements made to inmate dormitories. Restrooms have been provided for elderly and disabled inmates, and bedding is regularly cleaned to reduce skin disease issues. Inmates are provided with adequate space, and patients are assigned to separate rooms designated for sick inmates.

3.2) Health and Daytime Living Conditions: It was found that inmates have sufficient space for daytime activities, in accordance with the Department of Corrections' regulations. Areas are allocated for vocational training activities. From Monday to Friday, inmates carry out personal duties and engage in work according to their skills, in addition to participating in various vocational training activities such as sewing, weaving, handicrafts, carpentry, cooking, and beverage preparation. Vocational training is tailored to each inmate's interests and context. On Saturdays and Sundays, inmates are given rest and time for personal activities as appropriate.

3.3) Health and Nutrition: It was found that the correctional facilities provide meals that meet established nutritional standards, with three freshly cooked meals served daily, carefully controlled for sweetness, fat, and salt. A nutritionist oversees the food preparation process, ensuring quality and compliance with health requirements. Raw materials are inspected for freshness and quality, and food samples are kept for seven days for safety. While the meals meet the Department of

Corrections' standards, taste preferences may vary among inmates. Inmates can also purchase additional food from an on-site kitchen or receive food from visitors, with payments made via fingerprint scanning and deducted from their accounts.

3.4) Health Care and Access to Medical Services: Inmates have access to comprehensive healthcare services, including initial health screenings, ongoing treatment, and medication. Medical and dental services are provided weekly, with nurses available daily to care for ill inmates. A doctor visits three times a week, and telemedicine services ensure that all inmates can access medical care. Psychiatric support is also available, with 24-hour care for inmates. Pregnant inmates receive designated spaces for breastfeeding and childcare, and children born in the facility can stay with their mothers for up to three years. Afterward, children are either sent to relatives or transferred to external care if necessary, ensuring their well-being.

4. Preparation for Release of Inmates: The process is carried out according to the policies of the Department of Corrections. It was found that all eight women's correctional facilities have developed the quality of life for inmates and prepared them for release. The process, steps, methods, and forms of preparation for release involve categorizing inmates from the time of intake, during their sentence, and after their release to meet their individual needs and potential. Personal history and background information are evaluated to create individualized rehabilitation plans, aimed at developing behavior based on their needs and capabilities. The preparation process focuses on three main areas:

4.1) Vocational Training: It was found that all eight women's correctional facilities offer vocational training programs designed to prepare inmates for life after release. These programs focus on rehabilitation, behavioral modification, and skill development in real-world settings, including restaurants, massage therapy, beauty salons, agriculture, and crafts. Inmates undergo a 12-week intensive training that covers physical, mental, and social preparation for reintegration into society. The programs align with labor market demands and provide career paths, with collaboration from government, private sectors, and communities. Inmates also receive emotional and social support, including guidance on entrepreneurship and job networking, ensuring they are well-equipped for successful reintegration.

4.2) Education: All eight women's correctional facilities provide education and training programs. Every inmate receives basic education and the opportunity to pursue higher education. Inmates are given the chance to

complete compulsory education through both formal and alternative educational systems. Vocational training is provided according to the standards set by the Department of Skill Development or vocational education institutions. However, it was found that some inmates do not fully recognize the importance of education. As a result, the correctional facilities enforce compulsory education for all inmates while they are incarcerated. One challenge is the loss of inmates' educational credentials, which hampers the continuation of their education. The facilities assist in following up with educational institutions, and in cases where educational documents cannot be retrieved, inmates are required to start their studies anew.

4.3) Moral Training: Inmates receive moral training based on their respective religions, including Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. Buddhist inmates participate in daily alms-giving activities and invite monks to receive offerings, which help purify their minds. Religious activities are also conducted on significant religious holidays. Furthermore, there are individual rehabilitation programs to correct, heal, and develop inmates' behavior. These programs include various training sessions that are tailored to the specific needs of each inmate, and they involve ongoing evaluations of inmates' attitudes and behaviors before, during, and after the training, as well as post-release.

5. Women's correctional facilities face significant challenges in developing healthy prisons, primarily due to overcrowding, limited space, and inadequate sanitation. With only 1.6 square meters per inmate and outdated dormitories, living conditions are substandard. Limited space for daily activities, poor segregation, and budget constraints affecting food quality further exacerbate the situation. The correctional staff stated,

*"Inmates spend their days by engaging in vocational training and doing tasks they are skilled in from Monday to Friday, with weekends off on Saturday and Sunday. Each inmate has time to rest, read books, exercise, and write letters to their families, which helps reduce stress."*

Healthcare is also compromised by staff shortages and insufficient medical resources, despite efforts to coordinate with external hospitals and use Telemedicine. These issues hinder the delivery of adequate healthcare, especially when external transfers are necessary. The correctional staff stated,

*"The facility lacks necessary medical equipment, requiring inmates to be sent outside for treatment, and there is a shortage of resident medical personnel within the correctional facility."*

The information reflects the challenges and limitations in caring for female inmates in correctional facilities,

highlighting issues that require development and improvement. Efforts should focus on enhancing the quality of life for inmates, not only in terms of physical and mental health but also in improving living conditions and creating an environment conducive to rehabilitation and self-development.

6. The preparation of inmates for release faces significant challenges, including limited resources and mismatched vocational training programs, insufficient educational records, and low inmate engagement in moral development activities. The correctional officers shared that

*"Inmates lack financial resources to start a career after release, and the funds allocated for post-release employment are limited and insufficient to meet demand. Some inmates do not meet the eligibility criteria for receiving these funds. Moreover, the government's funding system for post-release employment is slow and does not meet the urgent needs of inmates after their release. Additionally, most inmates come from families with low income, so they do not have the capital to start a business on their own from the funds provided by the correctional facility. As a result, they often resort to their previous occupations and may reoffend."*

Vocational training lacks technological support and relevant course diversity, while educational progress is hindered by lost records and limited family support. Additionally, moral training programs struggle with low participation and resistance from inmates, making effective rehabilitation difficult. These factors create barriers to successful reintegration into society. The correctional officers shared that

*"Inmates are not interested in education because they believe that studying will not be beneficial. Therefore, it is necessary to foster a positive attitude towards education among the inmates, helping them recognize its importance. Regarding moral training, inmates show little interest in participating as they prefer activities that generate income. It is necessary to use attendance checks and scoring to encourage inmates to join the moral training activities."*

*"Inmates do not prioritize it, but they will turn to it when they are in situations where they need emotional support, such as when they have to hear the verdict, they seek sacred things to pray for various matters, etc."*

From the analysis of the limitations or obstacles in preparing inmates for release in terms of vocational training, education, and moral development, it is recommended to add vocational training courses that match labor market demands, provide modern and up-to-date vocational training programs, and promote funding for inmates post-release to help them start their careers.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

To achieve sustainable development in healthy prisons for female inmates, a systematic and ongoing approach is essential. This involves collaboration with relevant agencies at both policy and operational levels, supported by adequate personnel, funding, knowledge, and resources. Staff must engage in comprehensive planning, analysis, and evaluation, addressing obstacles and refining practices based on performance outcomes and recommendations. Such an approach ensures effective and sustainable development, preparing female inmates for reintegration and fostering long-term improvements in correctional systems. A visual summary of this approach is illustrated in [Figure 2](#).

From [Figure 2](#) can be explained as follows: Based on the research findings, a systematic approach to developing female correctional facilities can be outlined through Input, Process, Output, Outcome, and Impact factors. Input factors include comprehensive screening and assessment of inmates' personal data, criminal history, and health conditions, which guide classification and the creation of tailored behavioral development plans. Process factors involve planning and implementing health-related activities, pre-release programs, vocational training, and education aligned with market needs. Output factors focus on ensuring inmates leave with improved health, vocational skills, and basic needs support. Outcome factors are categorized into short-term, mid-term, and long-term results, with the aim of

reducing recidivism, promoting societal acceptance, and ensuring successful reintegration. Impact factors emphasize improvements in quality of life, economic stability, and reduced crime rates, though challenges such as familial, economic, or social barriers to reintegration must be addressed for effective rehabilitation and societal reintegration of female inmates.

The pre-release preparation for female inmates should be systematic, convenient, and accessible, avoiding complexity and ensuring long-term sustainability. Collaboration is crucial among the operational system, inmates, staff, and relevant agencies, including both public and private sectors, to enhance and create a network for developing inmates' behaviors and capacities in preparation for release.

Regarding Health Needs of Female Inmates, compared to male inmates, female inmates exhibit greater health needs. For instance, more than two-thirds of female inmates face mental health issues, compared to over one-third of male inmates. Additionally, female inmates experience higher rates of alcohol addiction and are often marginalized from their communities, exacerbating mental health problems (Prison Reform, 2019). Health support in prisons typically focuses on disease prevention and screening rather than health promotion or improvement due to limited resources and the prioritization of maintaining a safe and disease-free environment. However, psychiatric data indicate that certain diseases are more prevalent in prisons compared to the general community (Woodall et al., 2021).

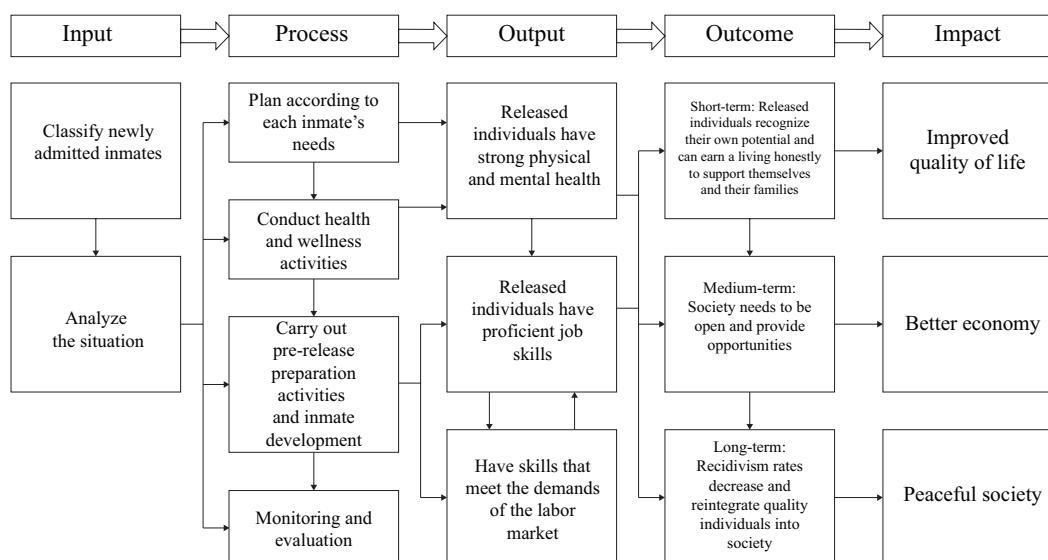


**Figure 2** Guidelines for developing healthy prisons for female inmates towards sustainable development

This highlights the challenges and limitations in caring for female inmates and underscores the need for improvements to enhance their quality of life. Addressing both physical and mental health, as well as providing a supportive environment for rehabilitation and self-development, is crucial. Implementing recreational and exercise activities, along with various programs, can significantly improve the quality of life for female inmates.

Pre-release preparation involves rehabilitative practices to help inmates reintegrate into society as productive citizens. This approach encompasses four key elements: (1) the staff or rehabilitators, (2) the rehabilitation facility, (3) the methods or programs used, and (4) the inmates themselves. Staff should possess moral qualities, including compassion and kindness, and should be motivated and engaged in their work with inmates to foster motivation, attention, and reflection in their roles. The success of pre-release programs is contingent on staff attitudes towards inmates. Negative attitudes from staff involved in the pre-release program can undermine the effectiveness of the program and impede successful outcomes.

Establishing a clear framework for the development of correctional facilities is essential to enhance the physical environment, reduce inmate stress, and improve data management systems. This framework should focus on analyzing welfare provisions and customizing pre-release preparations to meet individual inmate needs. Administrators and staff must fully understand wellness-oriented correctional systems and embrace wellness principles to ensure appropriate inmate treatment. Cultivating a positive correctional culture and fostering a supportive attitude towards correctional work are key for sustainable development. Effective program planning should integrate systems for screening, classification, vocational training, education, and post-release support to ensure inmates are equipped with skills for employment and self-sufficiency. Collaboration with stakeholders, including government agencies, businesses, and civil society, is vital to create job opportunities for former inmates, reduce recidivism, and alleviate societal pressures. A central coordination unit should be established to facilitate communication between correctional facilities and released inmates, offering targeted support such as funding, transportation, and employment opportunities to ensure successful reintegration into society.

### *Implications*

**Practical Implications:** Developing effective pre-release preparation policies requires a holistic approach that includes clear communication, collaboration with partner organizations, and a comprehensive strategy starting with health screenings, education, and vocational training. Correctional officers play a key role in guiding inmates, while improved living conditions and data management foster sustainable development. Collaboration with government bodies and civil society is essential for reducing recidivism and supporting post-release employment.

**Theoretical Implications:** The SDGs, especially Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and Goal 5 (Gender Equality), provide a crucial framework for improving correctional facilities, particularly for female inmates. Ensuring access to healthcare, education, vocational training, and respect for women's rights is essential for successful reintegration and personal growth, aligned with international standards such as the Bangkok Rules.

**Policy Implications:** The SDGs provide a valuable framework for developing core policies in correctional facilities, ensuring alignment among staff and administrators. Collaboration with partner agencies is essential to create a supportive network for inmates, reducing recidivism and fostering legitimate career paths. Key to success is well-trained correctional staff, standardized procedures, health screenings, and tailored referrals. Education, vocational training, mental health support, and resilience-building are crucial for inmates' future success. Staff play a vital role in guiding inmates, and focusing on both staff and inmate development helps facilitate successful reintegration and sustainable practices in correctional systems.

### *Recommendations for Future Research*

Research into the welfare of correctional staff is crucial for enhancing their morale and motivation, which in turn is expected to improve the effectiveness of wellness-oriented correctional facilities and pre-release preparation programs. Additionally, evaluating inmate feedback on intensive pre-release programs is essential for refining these programs to increase their success rates. Understanding the perspectives of inmates who have participated in these programs can provide valuable insights for program improvement. Furthermore, a detailed examination of post-release support for inmates who have completed intensive pre-release preparation is

necessary. This research should assess the effectiveness of these programs in reducing recidivism rates and determine the overall success of post-release support initiatives.

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## Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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