

SUPPORT. DON`T PUNISH CAMPAIGN

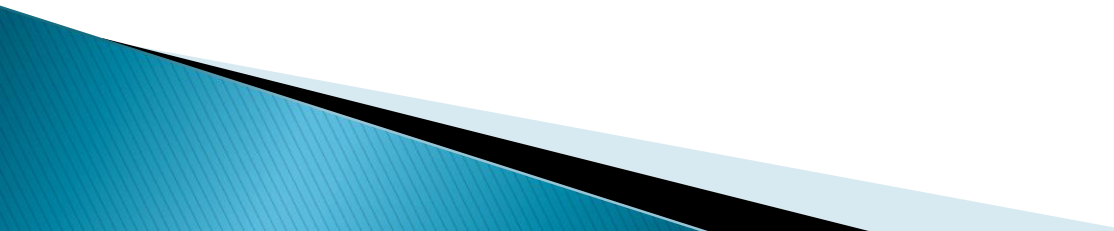
*A STEP IN THE SEARCH FOR A SUSTAINABLE
DRUG POLICY IN ZIMBABWE.*

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ The Zimbabwe Civil liberties and Drug Network is an independent trust organization working in the drug policy and harm reduction fields. It aims to see a society that is well informed in the use of drugs. It subscribes to the idea that drug policies should be founded on scientific research, promotion of rights to knowledge, public health and wide stakeholder involvement in issues.
- ▶ The organization is a national initiative with the mission to advocate for effective strategies for addressing problems associated with drug use and the handling of those involved in illicit drug use. It works to establish workable policies that are grounded in science, public health and human rights in order to help minimize the harms associated with drug use.



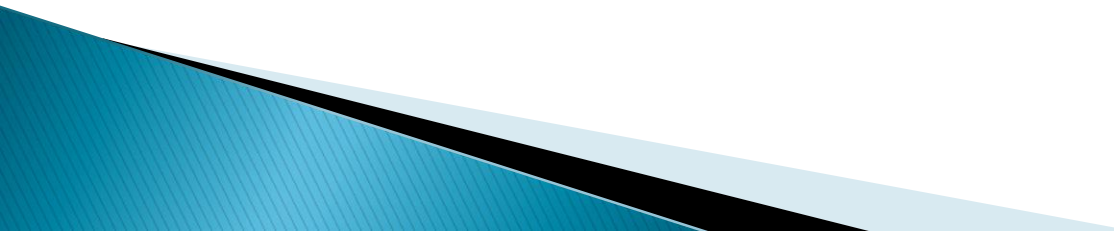
CURRENT SITUATION ON DRUG USE

- ▶ In Zimbabwe, drug use has been on the increase since 2008.
 - ▶ The most commonly used drugs are:
 - cannabis,
 - ecstasy, histalix
 - cocaine and a cough mixture bron cleer.
 - Bron Cleer is popular with youths because it is cheap and readily accessible in the streets.
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CURRENT SITUATION ON DRUG USE

- ▶ Rise in new HIV/AIDS infections. Zimbabwe has 3% of new global infections(. <http://www.newzimbabwe.com/news-16794-Zim+has+3pc+of+new+global+HIV+infections/news.aspx>accessed 10.7.2014at 1300hrs.
- ▶ Rising cases of rape, domestic violence.
- ▶ A drop in educational achievements amongst secondary school girls and boys,
- ▶ Bron Cleer sold for US\$3.00 in the streets of Harare
- ▶ Under '18s' targeted as the new drug market.

CURRENT SITUATION ONDRUG USE

- ▶ 50% of admissions to mental institutions have been attributed to substance use.
 - ▶ 80% of people admitted to mental institutions due to substance use disorders are aged between 16 and 40, and are male. (Health Professionals Empowerment Trust)
 - ▶ However, there is very little detail on the provision for treatment and in many cases, drug users are left in hospital wards and maximum security prisons without proper treatment and rehabilitation.
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CURRENT SITUATION ON DRUG USE

- ▶ According to the Zimbabwe Criminal Offenders Association, conditions in these prisons are not safe for human habitation.
- ▶ Conditions in Zimbabwean jails are conducive for treatment and rehabilitation: Zimbabwe Association of Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of the Offender (ZACRO), an average of 20 prisoners were dying daily in 2009 due to malnutrition.
- ▶ A 2011 report by Zimbabwe's parliamentary committee on human rights cited:
 - ✓ lack of toiletries, ablution facilities and the unavailability of water for a long time at some prisons
 - ✓ Prisoners' diets needed improvement.

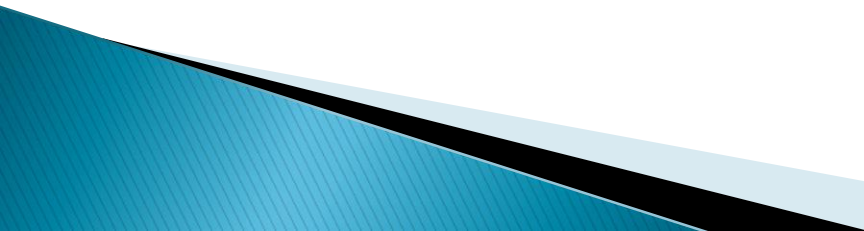
<http://nehandaradio.com/2014/02/17/zimbabwes-jails-still-disgusting-2014/>

CURRENT SITUATION ON DRUG USE

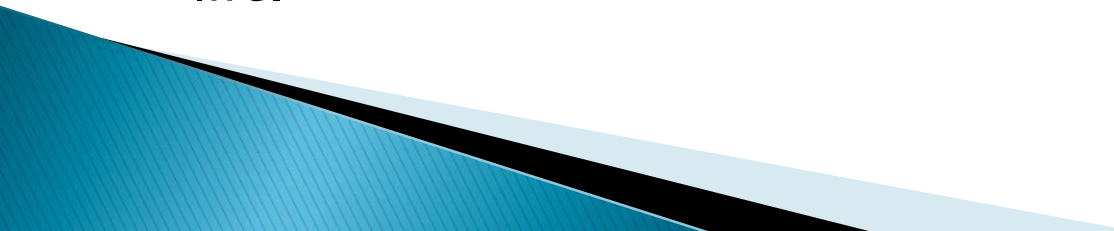
- ▶ Furthermore, a [2012 report on human rights by the US Embassy in Harare](http://harare.usembassy.gov/human_rights_report_2012_zimbabwe.html), also noted that prisoners were being denied access to ARVs and not being tested for HIV/AIDS. However it's not just those that are sent to jail that suffer.
- ▶ According to the [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/publications/atlas_report/profiles/zimbabwe.pdf) there is no provision for opioid maintenance treatment such as buprenorphine or methadone and there are no needle exchange programmes in Zimbabwe.

http://harare.usembassy.gov/human_rights_report_2012_zimbabwe.html

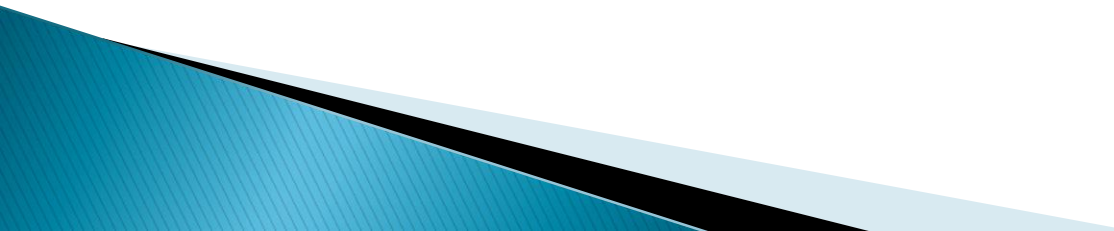
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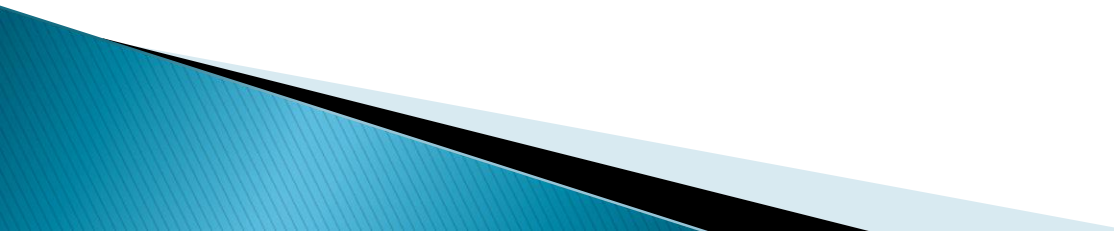
THE RESPONSE

- ▶ Drug use problems not given serious attention in Zimbabwe.
 - ▶ 2013 – 14 National budget of US\$500 000.00
 - ▶ No specific intervention programmes available for drug users except mental institutions and prisons.
 - ▶ No holistic support like treatment, rehabilitation and specific programmes for drug users.
 - ▶ Drug users regarded as criminals, social misfits and failures in life.
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The search for a sustainable drug policy in Zimbabwe

- ▶ The Zimbabwe Civil liberties and Drug Network is working in Zimbabwe in search of a foundation for a sustainable drug policy.
 - ▶ Its policy relies heavily on current international best practice on the subject. This calls for an evaluation of existing regulatory systems and the establishment of a system which is positive and balanced when dealing with drug users.
 - ▶ The organization is in touch with international stakeholders to ensure that a balanced drug policy should see the light of the day in support of people who use drugs in Zimbabwe.
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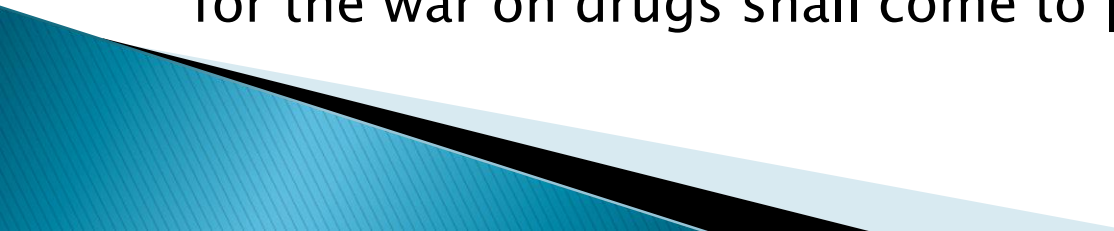
The search for a sustainable drug policy in Zimbabwe

- ▶ Zimbabwe is in need of a drug policy.
 - ▶ It does not currently have a drug policy.
 - ▶ The **Dangerous Drugs Act** and the **Criminal Codification and Reform Act(Ch.9.23)** particularly Ch.7 that deals with crimes involving dangerous drugs are the two pieces of legislation that are used on drug users.
 - ▶ They end up with the punishment of drug users. These two Acts are purely penal. They do not provide for a component on treatment, rehabilitation and general support.
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The search for a sustainable drug policy in Zimbabwe

- ▶ In such an environment, the Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network is working flat out to create an appropriate environment for a drug policy in Zimbabwe.
- ▶ It recently participated in the **Support. Don't Punish Campaign** held on the 26th of June 2014. The organization engaged the senior health advisor for Health in the Office of the President of Zimbabwe, Dr Timothy Stamps who had this to say on people who use drugs:
 - ▶ ***“We encourage all stakeholders to unite in assisting Government with ideas on how to curb such problems. Let us assist them to come up with policies that promote public safety, scientific research and human rights in the fight against drug use and illicit trafficking,”***
- ▶ <http://www.herald.co.zw/give-drug-addicts-a-second-chance-stamps/>

The search for a sustainable drug policy in Zimbabwe

- ▶ The Campaign ended with a meeting at Harare Town Hall.
 - ▶ The Church, Civil Society, Grassroots people, business people attended the function. Participants were putting on T-Shirts with the Campaign logo.
 - ▶ ZCLDN is now partnered with Harare City Health Department, Boost Fellowship – a grouping of 11 Universities in Zimbabwe and the Anglican church in the **Church Against Substance Use Campaign** to engage other stakeholders in the search of a balanced drug policy for Zimbabwe.
 - ▶ The participation of a member of its senior persons at this forum is very beneficial. It thanks **CRISA** for facilitating his presence at this august-us conference. To **Open Society**, we want to say you are a team player. Keep on the good work, for the war on drugs shall come to pass.
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CONCLUSION

- ▶ The war on illicit drugs in Zimbabwe is at its opening chapter. The Zimbabwe Civil liberties and Drug Network is committed to play its part in this herculean task which it believes shall be achieved. Drug users, who are viewed as criminals, shall be seen as patients in this 21st century. To all our international partners especially IDPC and now CRISA, we thank you for the support.

References

- ▶ <http://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2014/07/06/drug-induced-mental-illness-cases-on-the-rise> accessed 6.7.2014 at 1215hrs.
- ▶ <http://www.thestandard.co.zw/2014/03/02/drug-abuse-leads-mental-illness/> accessed 30.04.14 at 830am.
- ▶ <http://nehandaradio.com/2014/02/17/zimbabwes-jails-still-disgusting-2014/> accessed 1.06.2014 at 0930hrs.
- ▶ http://harare.usembassy.gov/human_rights_report_2012_zimbabwe.html accessed on 1.06.2014 at 0940hrs.
- ▶ http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/publications/atlas_report/profiles/zimbabwe.pdf accessed 01.06.2014 at 1000hrs.
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- ▶ <http://www.herald.co.zw/give-drug-addicts-a-second-chance-stamps/> accessed 27.06.2014 at 0900hrs
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THE END

GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

26TH JUNE 2014

**Support.
Don't
punish.**



**ZIMBABWE
CIVIL LIBERTIES
AND DRUG NETWORK**

*Advocating for a drug policy
that is evidence based.*

www.supportdontpunish.org