

The Support. Don't Punish campaign

builds sustainable alternatives
to the “war on ~~drugs~~ us”



Photo: APROSAM (Ivory Coast)

Empowering networks

The International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) is the global network for drug policy reform. It brings together over 195 civil soci-

ety and community-led networks to promote drug policies that advance social justice and human rights.

For over **10 years**, we have coordinated **Support. Don't Punish** – a transnational campaign that harnesses *people power* to challenge harmful drug policies.

By linking grassroots action to global advocacy, we support most affected communities in reclaiming power and building **innovative, rights-affirming, and sustainable alternatives** to the ‘war on drugs’.



Source: Bridge Hope Health Organization (Afghanistan)

The campaign has mobilised and resourced hundreds of local partners in over **120 countries**, expanding a powerful and inclusive network. Support. Don't Punish provides financial and practical resources, and a **global shared identity**, that helps partners sharpen their organising and advocacy skills, seize key opportunities, and **push for urgently needed reform**.

For those most impacted by the 'war on drugs', the campaign provides a collective platform to build solidarity, demand accountability and drive real change. Together, we aim to end punitive drug policies, shifting away from criminalisation, stigma and discrimination, and towards **approaches grounded in harm reduction, care and support**.



Source: Lleida City Hall, Spain

To learn more about the Support. Don't Punish campaign, please visit www.supportdontpunish.org

We foster ecosystems of change and you can help us grow stronger!

Amidst the wreckage of the 'drug war', there is hope!

Globally, the 'war on drugs' fuels systems of violence and neglect, pushing millions into vulnerability, harm and premature death.

Less than half of all countries implement the most fundamental harm reduction interventions. Fewer than 1% of people who inject drugs live in countries

with adequate coverage of these lifesaving interventions.

Equally alarming, drug-related criminalisation has led to rife human rights abuses and mass incarceration. **1 in 5 people in prison worldwide are deprived of their liberty for drugs.**



Source: Harm Reduction Free School (Recife, Brazil)

The 'war on drugs' is, in reality, a war on people – especially those already facing intersecting forms of vulnerability and exclusion.

Fear of punishment, stigma, and dehumanisation push people away from harm reduction and health services. **These barriers deepen marginalisation and prevent life-saving interventions.** People living in poverty, racialised communities, women, sex workers, people living with HIV, LGBTQI+ people, and many others face compounded harms.

But there is also reason to hope. The drug policy landscape has recently experienced seismic shifts, driven by relentless civil society advocacy and community mobilisation. **The Support. Don't Punish campaign has played a key role in this transformation.**

Drug decriminalisation – in various forms – is now a reality in *over 40 countries*. And *more than 100 countries* now officially recognise harm reduction in their policies.

The time for action is now! As a global movement, we must leverage this window of opportunity to achieve meaningful change for the communities that we serve.

The momentum that Support. Don't Punish has contributed to build is reaching a tipping point. People-powered initiatives will turn this energy into greater and lasting change!

Now is the time to invest in a movement that uplifts and supports communities!



Source: BerLUN – Organisation of Russian-speaking People Who Use Drugs (Germany)

Our global effort is shaping new futures in drug policy

Our work

Support. Don't Punish raises the profile, uptake and scale of harm reduction and rights-based drug policies worldwide. We connect and strengthen community organising, foster dialogue with policymakers, and shift public narratives through media and public engagement.

Held every **26 June**, the campaign's flagship **Global Day of Action** is a counterpoint to the United Nations' *International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking*. Each year, resources and small grants (~ \$500) are provided to grass-roots organisations **to reclaim the**

narrative towards solidarity, care and reform, over punishment and violence.

From Maseru to Helsinki to New Delhi, communities organise parliamentary discussions, art exhibitions, street demonstrations and more to counter the 'war on drugs' and advance sustainable alternatives.

For experienced partners ready to take their advocacy to the next level, we offer larger grants (~\$5,000) through the **Initiatives Programme** to help grow their movements.



www.supportdontpunish.org

Source: APROSAM (Ivory Coast)

Our impact

Harnessing people power under a common banner, we have over a decade-long track record of advancing harm reduction and drug policies that prioritise health, human rights and well-being.

Support. Don't Punish local partners have leveraged the campaign's

transnational brand to organise, strengthen alliances with journalists and policymakers, and push windows of opportunity wide open.

A recent lifetime evaluation of the campaign underscored the campaign's contribution to:



Source: PULS Comunitar (Moldova)

Strengthening mobilisation capacity

Since 2013, the Global Day of Action has gained unparalleled momentum – growing from 29 partners holding events in 21 countries, to hundreds organising events in 295 cities of 85 countries in 2024. The demand for our small Global Day of Action grants has skyrocketed – from 17 grants provided in 2013 to 145 grants in 2024!

Local partners in the Global South now account for most small grant recipients.



Source: APDES. (Portugal)

Reducing stigma

The Support. Don't Punish campaign reduces stigma by elevating the leadership and visibility of affected communities, empowering them to share their stories in their own words.

Local partners create safe spaces for community dialogue and organising, engage young people and their families to ensure better support structures, and work with authorities to end discrimination.

Opening up dialogue with policymakers

The Global Day of Action serves as a springboard for dialogue, helping local partners engage policymakers and change hearts and minds.

Our partners now engage government departments, influence policy and work with health authorities to improve service access for people who use drugs. Many now sit in formal advisory working groups tasked with supporting policy development.



Source: Malaysian AIDS Council

Reforming drug policies and practices

Using a wide-range of creative interventions, **Support. Don't Punish** local partners target power-holding institutions and decision-makers to bring them closer to realities on the ground. Campaign partners report that changing policymakers' perceptions has helped catalyse bills, policies, and legislation aligned with harm reduction in Burundi, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe, to name a few.



Source: AfriLAW (Nigeria)

Changing the narrative

We have shifted the discourse on drugs through strategic media and public engagement that challenges punitive responses and offers sustainable alternatives.

Campaigners are seeing greater awareness of harm reduction, positive shifts in rhetoric, and changes toward framing drug use as a question of autonomy, health and rights – rather than a criminal issue. **Support. Don't Punish** grants and resources have fuelled real change, shifting public narratives and policies, and expanding harm reduction!



Source: Dejusticia, Mujeres Libres (Colombia)

Your investment helps us reclaim power!

Together, we can accelerate this momentum and confine punitive drug policies to the history books



Source: CONAD-CI (Ivory Coast)

How you can help:

Invest in the Support. Don't Punish campaign

Grow a more powerful movement

Our movement is growing. The Global Day of Action now reaches nearly 300 cities – we aim for 400 and beyond! Demand for grants is rising, and the campaign is uniquely placed to power interventions that bring about more caring and effective responses to drugs. *To sustain momentum, now is the time to invest in movements fighting for health, justice and liberation.*

Lead transformative change from the grassroots

Our support gives local partners the resources they need to make change – a lifeline for our movement's grassroots. At present, we can only fund about half of the Global Day of Action grant requests – and just a fraction of the Initiatives Programme grants. We want to ensure that all campaigners can mobilise yearly. With your support, we can ensure campaigners have what they need to take action and make change!

Create deeper, stronger and more creative collaborations

Drug policy reform must be part of broader and intersecting struggles for justice. We have big plans to expand our outreach and further resource cross-movement building with feminist, racial justice, LGBTQI+, and other groups disproportionately harmed by punitive drug laws.

Our goal

We need USD\$10 million invested over the next decade to take the campaign to the next level – scaling up mobilisation and advocacy capacity, and our movement’s sustainability.

This investment will fully fund a small dedicated team for coordination, communications, capacity development and fundraising.

Crucially, these funds will directly support grants for thousands of campaigners in over 100 countries – primarily in the Global South – to subvert the violence of the ‘war on drugs’, enable access to empowering and rights-affirming services, and transform current approaches to drugs. In doing so, the campaign contributes to global objectives on ending the AIDS epidemic, reducing drug-related mortality, and promoting community leadership.



Source: Support. Don't Punish

To discuss this **Case for Support** in more detail, please get in touch with the Campaign Manager, Juan Fernández Ochoa, at jfernandez@idpc.net

**Support.
DON'T
punish.**

www.supportdontpunish.org