Scaling up injecting drug use harm reduction services

WORKING IN A CONTEXT OF CRIMINALIZATION
Doctors of the World - Médecins du Monde - is an independent international movement of campaigning activists who provide care, bear witness and support social change.

60 programs in 45 countries worldwide are aiming to enable excluded individuals and their communities to access health and fight for universal access to healthcare.
Content

• Background HIV/HCV/HBV in people who use drugs

• Harm Reduction

• Criminalisation and Harm Reduction

• Case-study
Proportion of total burden of HIV attributable to injecting drug use by country, 2013

Contributions of IDU to HIV burden were highest in low-to-middle-income countries.
Proportion of total burden of hepatitis C virus attributable to injecting drug use by country, 2013

HCV burden attributable to IDU was more than 2.5 times the burden of HIV attributable to injecting.
Proportion of total burden of hepatitis B virus attributable to injecting drug use by country, 2013

IDU made a small contribution to HBV burden in all countries
Harm Reduction

According to a 2017 systematic review in the *Lancet Global Health*, injecting drug use is present in 179 of 206 countries throughout the world, with HIV and hepatitis C prevalence 17.8% and 52.3% respectively among the 15.6 million people who inject drugs.

Harm Reduction works

It really, really does..
Despite this heavy burden of diseases, effective harm reduction interventions that can help prevent their spread are severely lacking in many countries. The number of countries providing needle and syringe programmes (NSP) and/or opioid substitution therapy (OST) has more or less stagnated since 2014.

Currently, just 86 countries implement NSP to varying degrees (a drop from the 90 that did so in 2016) and 86 have OST (a moderate uptick of six countries compared to two years ago).
In 2016, the Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO) adopted the first ever Global Health Sector Strategy (GHSS) on viral hepatitis. It identified harm reduction as one of five core interventions needed to reach the goal of viral hepatitis elimination by 2030.
New HIV infections among adults worldwide declined by 14% between 2011 and 2017, but there has been no decrease in the annual number of new HIV infections among people who inject drugs.
Nearly a quarter of the world's new HCV infections occur in people who inject drugs (PWID): lack of access to sterile syringes and other injection equipment renders them vulnerable to HCV. Worldwide, more than 50% of the 15.6 million PWID are HCV antibody positive.

People who inject drugs represent an estimated 8% of the total number of people with HCV.
Harm Reduction is a prerequisite to reach stigmatised and marginalised people.
The Story of Moegang
- Myanmar is the second producer of opium in the world

- In Kachin “..every household has a least one problematic DU..”

- Unique setting with a very rural spread of DU communities. Even the smallest villages you can find a group of farmers injecting under a tree. Hospitals are often very far away.
Very concerning HIV & HepC

HIV prevalence among PWID records up to 47% (IBBS 2014)

Within MdM’s cohort, HCV prevalence among PWID reaches up to 71.9% (2015)

Currently in MdM’s program, the first time tested PWID, more than half of the people are HIV +

*Average yearly increase of HIV prevalence in point of percentage from 2012 to 2016, after adjustment on age, sex, location, and duration of injecting drug use if relevant
No elimination without decriminalization
Thank you