



Left behind? A call to fund harm reduction and end AIDS among people who use drugs

In dozens of countries, harm reduction interventions such as needle and syringe programmes and opioid substitution therapy have had a significant impact in reducing new HIV infections and saving lives. Yet financial support for harm reduction is extremely fragile, and political leadership is dwindling.

- The 2011 Political Declaration target to halve transmission of HIV among people who inject drugs by 2015 was **missed by a staggering 80 percent**. The 2016 Declaration does not include a new target to reduce infections among this key population.
- UNAIDS recently estimated that USD 1.5 billion was required to ‘fast track’ the HIV response among people who inject drugs. On analysis, Harm Reduction International discovered that this figure relates only to low- and lower-middle income countries, **excluding some three quarters of people who inject drugs globally**.
- Those left behind live in countries including the US, Russia, Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria, Thailand, China, Mauritius and Belarus. **The Global Fund has already withdrawn financial support** from a number of these countries, despite significant HIV epidemics among people who inject drugs and domestic opposition to harm reduction.
- Last month, the UNAIDS PCB announced without notice that it would not deliver the funding it had pledged to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime’s HIV Programme – currently **the only dedicated capacity on people who use drugs within the UN system**.

There is now a very real risk that people who use drugs will be left behind by the global AIDS response. A coalition of harm reduction, drug user and human rights organisations has written to Michel Sidibe warning that it will soon be **impossible for UNAIDS to deliver on its fast track strategy or to achieve its goal of ending AIDS by 2030**.

We are urging activists attending the International AIDS Conference in Durban to stand in solidarity with people who use drugs and help ensure that they are not left behind. You can support our call by:

- **Attending our event : ‘Left behind? The funding crisis facing harm reduction and the AIDS response among people who use drugs’ on Wednesday, 20 July 11am-12pm in the Global Village Drug Users Networking Space**
- **Tweeting about these issues during IAC 2016 using #leftbehind**
- **Calling on UNAIDS to prove their commitment to leaving no one behind by protecting UNODC’s HIV Programme from sudden closure and by standing up for harm reduction and the rights of people who use drugs.**

Find out more at www.hri.global/IAC2016