

Advancing Policy Reform for People Who Use Drugs: Strategies and Opportunities in the Global South

Speakers/Facilitators:

Ahmed Said¹, Charity Monareng^{2,3}, Kiki Marini⁴, Nittaya Phanuphak⁵, Oluwafisayo Alao-Amiola⁶

¹Africa Network of People Who Use Drugs (AfricaNPUD), ²TB HIV Care, ³Students for Sensible Drug Policy International, ⁴LBH Masyarakat, ⁵Institute of HIV Research and Innovation (IHRI), ⁶YouthRISE Nigeria

Bios:

Ahmed Said

Ahmed Said, a Kenyan drug user with over 14 years of harm reduction experience, is the Regional Coordinator of Africa Network of People Who Use Drugs (AfricaNPUD). Previously Board Secretary (2019-2023), he was the first outreach worker to distribute needles in Kenya in 2012 and has influenced key population representation on the Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanism, benefiting many lives.

Charity Monareng

Based in South Africa, Charity is Executive Director of Students for Sensible Drug Policy International and leads the largest youth movement for drug policy reform. With degrees in Criminology, International Studies, and Social Development, she has driven change as a consultant and Parliamentary Research Officer. Charity is pursuing a PhD in Public Law, underscoring her deep commitment to progressive policy.

Kiki Marini

Kiki Marini (she/her) is a Research & Programme Officer and public defender at the legal aid organization LBH Masyarakat in Indonesia. She advocates for human rights and access to justice, with a focus on drug policy reform, LGBTIQ+ rights, and the abolition of the death penalty. Through her work, she hopes to help create a fairer and more inclusive world.

Nittaya Phanuphak

Nittaya Phanuphak is Executive Director at the Institute of HIV Research and Innovation in Bangkok, Thailand. She has deep interest in Key Population-Led Health services which empower lay providers who are key population community members to design and co-deliver sexual health, mental health, rights, and other harm reduction services to their peers.

Oluwafisayo Alao-Amiola

Oluwafisayo is the Executive Director of YouthRISE Nigeria and is a gender advocate, trainer, and programme specialist on young people, HIV, SRH, and substance use. Fisayo has pioneered innovative and inclusive programs that prioritize the wellbeing and empowerment of women who use drugs, and has collaborated with diverse governmental and non-governmental bodies.

Background and aims:

Laws and policies that present barriers to essential health and harm reduction services can increase the risk of HIV, Hepatitis C, and fatal overdose. The number of countries pursuing reform of drug laws continues to increase globally, whilst the UN OHCHR recently highlighted the human rights

implications of punitive drug control policies. Yet there remains a need to highlight and document approaches and strategies from countries in the Global South, where advocates working in often highly punitive contexts possess valuable insights and experience that can inform parallel efforts in neighboring regions and jurisdictions.

Aims:

- Provide a platform for information and learning exchange among advocates in the Global South.
- Equip participants with tools, tactics, and strategies for advancing policy reform in their location.
- Catalyze a 'community of practice' for future collaboration.
- Document and share the outputs of the Workshop among wider sector.

Description of Workshop:

This Workshop will explore efforts by advocates in the Global South to ensure policies and laws uphold the health and rights of people who use drugs. Speakers will provide updates on the status of various reform efforts, showcasing ongoing strategies, challenges, and opportunities with attendees.

The Workshop will also provide a space for attendees to collaborate, learn, and share with one another through a dynamic format, which will include discussion and strategizing around themes such as increasing public/media support for reform and effective government engagement.

Methods and format:

The Workshop will utilise the World Café method, allowing attendees to contribute to structured discussions on chosen themes which will facilitate knowledge transfer and ensure a dynamic and participatory approach.

Format:

- Introduction – Moderator (5m)
- Reform updates – Main speakers (5m each, 20m in total)
- World Café – All, with main speakers facilitating each 'station' (10m/station, 40m in total)
- Plenary Discussion – Facilitators (2m/station, 10m in total)
- Q&A – Moderator & Presenters (10m)
- Closing remarks – Moderator (5m)

Ideal number and type of delegate, how many people can the workshop accommodate and who is this workshop designed for?

- 40 to 50
- Advocates, affected communities, policy makers

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *See example below:*

The conference collaborators recognise the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in publications and presentations.

Note: If accepted into the program you will be requested to include a disclosure of interest slide into your workshop.

Disclosures:

- Nittaya Phanuphak, Institute of HIV Research and Innovation (IHRI) – IHRI receives funding from Gilead Sciences and ViiV Healthcare
- Oluwafisayo Alao-Amiola, YouthRISE Nigeria – YouthRISE Nigeria receives a Grant from Positive Action/ViiV Healthcare