



# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

Campaigning at the intersections of  
the COVID-19 crisis and the “war on drugs”

## Bank of ideas for mobilisation

(This document is available in Spanish [here](#))

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic poses a [serious challenge](#) for the communities that are at the heart of our [global campaign](#). People targeted by the “war on drugs”, already facing exclusion, stigmatisation and criminalisation, will bear a specific and disproportionate burden of the negative consequences associated with the pandemic. In this context, more than ever, it is fundamental that we strive to keep ourselves and our communities healthy and resilient.

As the [2022 Support. Don't Punish Global Day of Action](#) (26 June) approaches, we offer a few ideas to get your creative juices flowing when it comes to mobilising impactfully whilst keeping physical distance to reduce the likelihood of new transmissions. Please, do not hesitate to [send us](#) your ideas and suggestions so that we can integrate them here and share with campaigners worldwide!

**Please, always consider and check with your local/national government what the legal implications of your activities might be. This is particularly important as current and potential restrictions might be in force regarding COVID-19.**

---

<b>Prior considerations</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Activity ideas</b>	<b>3</b>
Street art	3
Remote workshops and webinars	4
Social media campaigns	5
De-centralised letter/e-mail-writing	6
Banner drops	7
Balcony flash mobs	7
TikTok / video challenge	7
Show your colours!	8
Projections	8
Petitions	8
Crowdfunding and fundraisers	9
Distance demonstrations	9
<b>Useful links</b>	<b>10</b>



# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

## Prior considerations

### Come together

Support. Don't Punish has seen [hundreds of wide-ranging activities](#) take place in over 100 cities worldwide. There is a high likelihood that there are already people, collectives, networks and organisations near you either organising or planning to. As we face this unprecedented crisis, and in the context of limited resources, collaborating and avoiding duplication is more important than ever. Reach out to other local organisations and individuals who might be interested in mobilising with you. *Are there networks of people who use drugs in your city/country/region? Are other populations disproportionately affected by the “war on drugs” already coordinating efforts you can support? How are harm reduction providers in your area doing?* Organise calls to discuss priorities and needs, work together to define plans with clear goals and timeframes, allocate coordination and other key roles for your work-plan.

**Useful links:** [Support. Don't Punish resources page](#) | [An overview of SMART goals](#)

### Get informed

As always, familiarise yourself with the [campaign](#) and its objectives, but also with the situation in your community. Calls by networks of people who use drugs and other affected populations, and by the drug policy reform and harm reduction community, can point you in the right direction in terms of deciding where your campaign efforts add the most value. Think of the many ways in which this emergency is disproportionately affecting people already targeted by the “war on drugs”:

- How are your local harm reduction and other drug services coping?
- What is the government doing to protect people who are homeless and use drugs?
- What is your government doing for people in prison for drug offences (*who should have never been imprisoned in the first place*)?
- How is law enforcement affecting communities disproportionately targeted by drug policing (the poor, Black communities and other ethnic minorities, sex workers, etc.)?

**Useful links:** [Support. Don't Punish website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) | [IDPC resources and information on COVID-19](#) | [INPUD statement on COVID-19 and people who use drugs](#)

### Protect yourself and others

The COVID-19 pandemic is a severe health risk for many. Take it seriously for your own health and that of others. You might not have symptoms and still carry and transmit the virus. Read about what you can and cannot do under your local circumstances. Moreover, think about your mental health and that of your fellow campaigners. This is an incredibly challenging time to mobilise. Be kind.

**Useful links:** [Queercare resources on disinfection and care](#)

### Think and communicate creatively

To ensure that no one is left behind, we need to act. Without the usual access to public spaces, bringing attention to issues of concern can be challenging. That said, Support. Don't Punish campaigners have consistently shown a wealth of creativity and ingenuity in mobilising in difficult circumstances. *This is the time to think outside of the box.* Brainstorm new ideas, contact artists, learn from other social justice campaigners, build bridges with journalists, experiment new avenues of influence.

**Useful links:** [Mobilising under COVID-19 guides](#) | [2018 Support. Don't Punish Guide on Communications](#)



# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

## Activity ideas

### Street art

Support. Don't Punish campaigners have regularly used [street art](#) as a way to engage the public and facilitate challenging conversations. While physical-distancing measures limit the collaborative nature of these activities, provided you still have access to materials and the streets, you can still use street art to share your message, engage the public and create media attention.

#### Stop telling women to smile

Tatyana Fazlalizadeh is an artist based in the US. Her project, *Stop telling women to smile*, has engaged women in conversations about street harassment. From these exchanges, she produces posters that can be downloaded, printed and wheat-pasted. An *International Wheat Pasting Night* has seen women worldwide participate in this collaborative, yet de-centralised, effort to raise awareness about patriarchal violence.

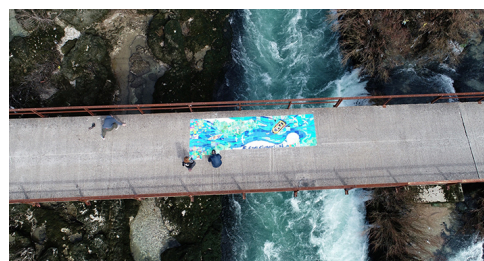
**Useful links:** [‘Stop telling women to smile’](#) | [How to wheatpaste?](#)



#### Protecting river wildlife

On World River Day, artist Vanja Lazić and the *Coalition of associations for the protection and conservation of rivers of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, planned a gathering to protest the proliferation of hydroelectric power plants. Given the risk of COVID-19 transmissions, they decided to cancel it. However, an evocative artwork was produced into a mosaic. Each square piece was painted by an activist. Then the mosaic was put together and displayed next to one of the rivers that they seek to protect. The activity produced stunning photographs of this collective artwork and helped raise awareness by engaging the press on this environmental cause.

**Useful links:** [Press article](#) | [Online image splitter tool](#)



### Similar ideas?

[Chalking](#), temporary art installations...



# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

## Remote workshops and webinars

Workshops, debates and seminars have been a [campaign staple](#) from its very beginnings in 2013. These events create space to collectively unpick the complex ramifications of the “war on drugs” and its intersections with other forms of discrimination. Crucially, they can also provide a platform to learn from people with lived experience and others whose knowledge and expertise can help maximise the impact of our campaigning efforts (including academics, civil society representatives, government officials). The pandemic might mean you cannot be in close distance to others in person, but you can still organise virtually.

[Zoom](#) is a very popular platform for conference calls that can be tweaked to organise online webinars, but capabilities are limited without a subscription. You can consider these budget-friendlier [alternatives to Zoom](#). Or, if you're more technologically savvy, you can tailor a solution using, for instance, YouTube Live and OBS Studio ([here's a video](#) tutorial).

Reports of meetings being [crashed by unwanted participants](#) broadcasting offensive content on group calls are widespread. So, as you would do for any other activity, think of risks and mitigation strategies (see some [tips here](#), for instance).

### Digital conversations on coronavirus and inequality

Dejusticia, a leading human rights organisation in Colombia, has organised a series of webinars on the many ways in which the COVID-19 crisis affects different populations in situations of vulnerability. They use YouTube Live to broadcast the webinar and promote interaction and participation, while keeping control of the content (panel interventions on Zoom).

**Useful links:** [Dejusticia webinar series](#) (in Spanish) | [Resources to organise online](#)







# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

## Social media campaigns

Support. Don't Punish has consistently relied on social media and the #SupportDontPunish hashtag (with translations into dozens of languages!) to increase the reach of the campaign's messages. There are many ways in which you could leverage the power of social media:

**Hashtag power:** You could coordinate supporters to tweet or post using the same hashtag *at a particular time*. Given the way social media algorithms work, this increases the likelihood that your post will be visible. This idea is often referred to as a [tweetstorm](#).

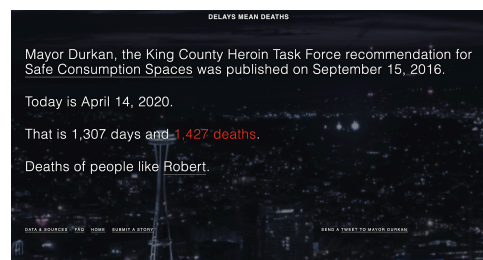
Apart from sharing the hashtag, you could encourage supporters to share their thoughts on a particular issue, or include a photo/video with a common premise. While it can be as simple as holding the Support. Don't Punish [logo / flyer](#) up, consider contextualising your ask to supporters. Being creative can help you gain media/external interest and, thus, maximise impact.

Consider always adding, next to your own hashtag/messages, the #SupportDontPunish hashtag, to help us grow the [Photo Project](#), and boost your own post through our [Facebook](#) / [Twitter](#) / [Instagram](#) accounts.

**Click-to-tweet** is a platform that allows you to provide people visiting your website (or other online platforms) an easy way to engage with your initiative on Twitter. Using [click-to-tweet](#), you can set up a link that people can click and be redirected to their own Twitter account with a pre-filled post drafted by you that can be then customised as needed.

### Delays mean deaths

The [Delays mean deaths](#) campaign for safer consumption sites in Seattle (US) effectively combines heart-rending testimonies of people affected by the overdose deaths of loved ones with compelling facts and an actionable button that facilitates tweeting at the relevant public authority.





# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

## De-centralised letter/e-mail-writing

Elected officials are meant to work *for* the people; to represent the interests of their constituencies and guarantee their well-being. This mandate of representation entails a duty of accountability. Elected officials are accountable for both their actions *and* inaction. Most elected officials are available for contact either by phone, e-mail or postal mail. Reaching out to them can be a useful avenue to both commend their merits and demand change where it is most needed. Doing this in groups can be incredibly powerful and something you can definitely organise remotely.

You could, for instance, consider a series of calls or online/Whatsapp discussions to brainstorm on key issues affecting your community, decide on the 'target', come up with 3-5 key 'asks', and then focus on writing together.

The day of writing the letters can be turned into an event itself. Using conference call platforms, you could make space for writing but also for live music, speeches, testimonies, readings, etc.

## Anyone's Child - Email your MP

Templates can be helpful and the Anyone's Child campaign (which has mobilised the global Support. Don't Punish banner for the last 3 years on the Global Day of Action!) has designed an incredibly useful [template](#) adapted to the COVID-19 crisis to help people get started.





# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

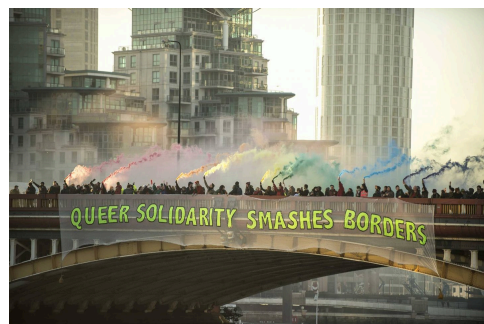
## Banner drops

Banners are a staple of social justice demonstrations. Punchy, creative and cheap, they are an easy, highly-visible way to convey important messages. While lockdowns change the way banners can be deployed, you can still use them as a means to raise awareness in your area and rally support.

On the Support. Don't Punish Global Day of Action, you could for instance, coordinate a series of banner drops from campaigners across your city, from their own houses, and encourage them to share photos and short videos explaining the objective of your mobilisation.

### #BridgesNotWalls

In solidarity with people affected by rising authoritarianism, xenophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment, Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants joined a banner-dropping initiative at bridges across the world on the day of Donald Trump's inauguration. A video produced with clips from similar activities worldwide, highlighting different messages of solidarity and support, has amassed almost half a million views.



**Useful links:** [Bridges not Walls Facebook page](#) | [Organising a banner drop](#)

## Balcony flash mobs

Lockdowns might have you and your neighbourhood quarantined, but we have seen time and time again how the power of community can express itself in confinement with impactful results. Flash mobs in Italy have seen [collective singing](#) to raise morale, [clapping to show gratitude](#) with carers in the UK health service, or [banging pots](#) against misogyny and patriarchal violence in Mexico.

## TikTok / video challenge

Here's another one for the tech-savvy! Video challenges and [TikTok duets](#) can be a way to encourage people from all over the world to react / interact around a common theme. [Medical staff in Iran](#), for instance, shared their dancing routines as a way to boost each other's and the country's morale amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. With a bit of imagination and a mobile phone, the possibilities are endless.



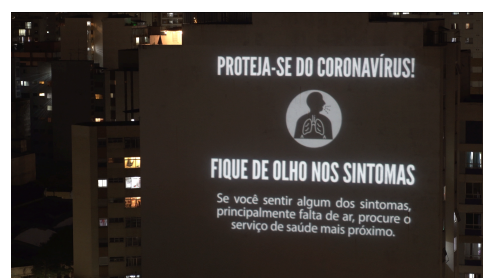
# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

## Show your colours!

Around the 2020 Support. Don't Punish Global Day of Action, you can always use the campaign's [Facebook frame](#), or cover photo, as well as any custom expression of support that you might want to utilise. If you manage a website, you could consider changing the background to the campaign's **green** colour, include a ribbon or write a blog post to show solidarity with the movement.

## Projections

Supported by a company that specialises in giant projections, who are currently involved in sharing health messages in the city of São Paulo (Brazil), our campaigning colleagues at [É de Lei](#) shared COVID-19 prevention materials near an open-air drug scene in the city. While the ordinary costs of these projections might be prohibitive, you could explore the possibility of partnering with local companies willing to do pro-bono work.



## Petitions

Online petitions can be a great addition to campaign plans and help maximise your impact. You could, for instance, organise a collective statement asking for local authorities to guarantee COVID-19 personal protective equipment (PPE) for peers involved in peer-based harm reduction outreach. Or asking the local police authority to de-prioritise policing drug possession during the epidemic, as part of a longer-term decriminalisation campaign. The sheer number of supporters that your petition can amass online could prompt important urgent action by decision-makers.

There are numerous online platforms that offer different functionalities, including [Change.org](#) and [Avaaz.org](#). You could also create your own petition site using [Google Forms](#) and throw in an email sign up to facilitate staying in touch with supporters. Especially if doing the latter, however, be very specific about the way you will store and process the data that you are collecting and make sure you obtain prior, specific, informed and unambiguous consent!



# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH

## GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

### Crowdfunding and fundraisers

Money matters, especially during a public health emergency. Communities and services providing support are likely to be overstretched and under-funded. Your activities could seek to support the local network of people who use drugs to provide emergency funds for their needs (incl. protective equipment, hand sanitiser, soap, medication to manage withdrawal symptoms, etc.). There are many online platforms that can be used for this purpose, including [Kickstarter](#), [Indiegogo](#), [PayPal](#).

**Useful links:** [Guide to Successful Crowdfunding Campaigns](#)

### Distance demonstrations

This possible action comes with a very big warning! Across the globe, governments have restricted the freedom of movement in order to limit the possibility of new COVID-19 transmissions. Some governments are policing these restrictions in extremely harsh ways that violate human rights, including through police violence and prison sentences.

Campaigning for reform is not a sprint, but a marathon. We want you to stay safe and healthy and that your efforts remain sustainable; so, *always* check regulations in place before taking action.

That said, after restrictions on movement are lifted, it may still be worth *very carefully* planning demonstrations that do not involve mass gatherings.

You could do this by pre-determining the placing of each participant (who would bring their own placards to the demonstration), in places with little or no traffic. You could recruit “marshalls” to ensure everyone’s in place, keeping physical distance between each other (at least 2 meters). As always, a media and communications strategy should be developed to maximise impact.





# SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

## Useful links

[Don't cancel: Creative activism and coronavirus](#)

The Center for Artistic Activism

[Staying active while you're staying home](#)

Amnesty International

[Community Care is Greater Than the Coronavirus](#)

350.org

[Event ideas - Climate activism without climate strikes](#)

UK Student Climate Network (UKSCN)

[Methods of Dissent & Collective Action Under COVID](#)

Crowd Counting Consortium

[Your guide to hosting an online event - International Overdose Awareness Day](#)

IOAD / Penington Institute