

End violence against women and gender diverse people who use drugs

EVAWUD26

WHRIN and *(add your organisation name/s)* call for an end to all forms of violence against women and gender diverse people who use drugs. The EVAWUD campaign highlights the need to end violence against women and gender diverse people who use drugs and bring a gender lens to drug policy reform.

Women and gender diverse people who use drugs experience gender-based violence (GBV) at up to 25 times the rate experienced by women in the general public. This violence includes, (but is not limited to) extra judicial killing, capital punishment, forced and coerced sterilisation and abortion, rape, sexual harassment, loss of child custody, bashings, imprisonment for personal possession or use, penalisation for drug use in pregnancy, along with other types of gendered violations, stigma and discrimination.

State-driven stigma, criminalisation, harmful gender norms, and corruption act as barriers for women and gender diverse people who use drugs in accessing critical harm reduction and GBV services. Woman and gender diverse people who use drugs around the world can face arbitrary detention, extortion, police violence, torture and ill-treatment, with the incarceration of women for drug offences spiking globally since 2000 and well over a third of women in prison for drug offences. Due to the so-called “war on drugs”, survivors have little recourse and often no support, particularly in cases of violence from police, prison guards and ‘treatment’ centre staff. The experiences of violence against women who use drugs are even more extreme for those facing intersecting oppressions such as women of colour, sex workers, or trans women.

WHRIN *(and your organisation name/s)* and partners note that, by collaborating with groups of women and gender diverse people who use drugs and documenting peer led actions and services, the appropriate responses to these inequities and violations are clear:

- Sexual and reproductive health must be incorporated within the harm reduction suite of services for people who use drugs, integrating comprehensive GBV services.
- Meaningful community involvement must feature as the cornerstone to all good practice responses. The right to safety, access to harm reduction and other essential health services is primary. This means that resourcing and scaling up community-led, gender responsive harm reduction services is mandatory.
- Decriminalisation which removes all sanctions and punishment, including coerced or court-imposed treatment programs, for all people who use drugs and all types of drugs is also imperative. Properly implemented decriminalisation with regulated supply will reduce gendered stigma and violence associated with the “war on drugs”.

(Insert your organisation name/s) and WHRIN call for an end to the “war on drugs” to eliminate violence against women and gender diverse people who use drugs. Legislation, procedures and programmes relating to criminal justice must be modified to end gender based violence against our community.



Please join us in ensuring adequate resources and legislative frameworks uphold the safety and human rights of women and gender diverse people who use drugs

