

Current debates on harm reduction in Latin America

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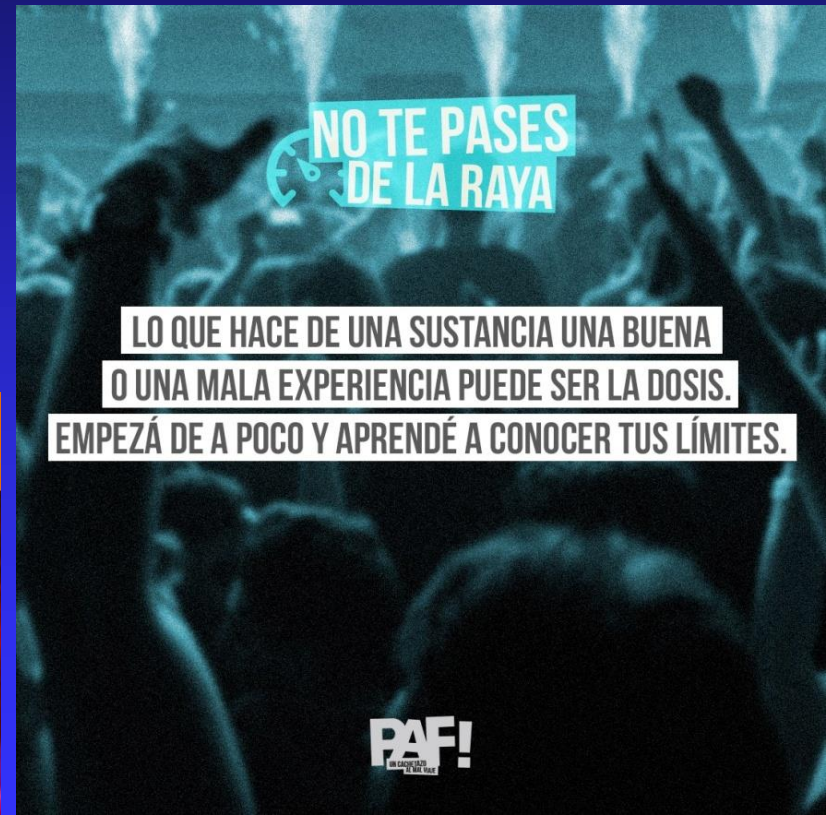
Harm Reduction

- Accepts that drug use has persisted despite efforts to prevent it.
- It does not expect abstinence from drug use, but rather tries to reduce its consequences.
- It does not try to replace abstinence, but it is an indispensable complement.
- Expands the variety of interventions.
- Intervenes on the primary and secondary effects associated with drugs.

Primary Effects

- Produced by the consumption of substances in itself.

TE PODES DIVERTIR SIN CONSUMIR.
SI LO VAS A HACER, QUE SEA CON MENOS RIESGOS



Secondary Effects

- They are those produced by social responses to the use of substances.



A history of harm reduction

Decade '90: Injecting drug use. Impact of the HIV / AIDS epidemic.

Harm reduction **strategy**:

- linked to injectable use of drugs / needle distribution
- HIV / AIDS prevention
- modification of drug use practices
- health care focused on the user of drugs and their consumer networks

Origin

- Health perspective

However...

Only compensatory strategy of the adverse consequences of drug use?

- Demonstrated failure of traditional responses
- Conception of the use and the user of drugs that contradicts the prohibitionist perspective

Working with today's drug problem

- ❑ Changes in consumption patterns.
- ❑ Strong impact of the social construction of the relationship between youth - poor - drug - crime - insecurity.
- ❑ Metaphor that drugs "summarize" the complexity of the problem of social vulnerability.

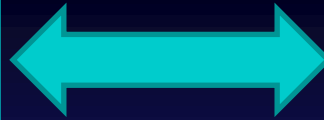
Influence on Latin American harm reduction

- Public education
- Collective health
- Anthropology of health
- Anti-institutionalization fight
- Criminology critical

Current debates in Latin America

Harm reduction can be understood both as a work strategy to intervene in the field of individual and collective, social and health consequences, derived from the use of drugs and their regulatory policies, as a political paradigm to understand the phenomenon of drugs and the control strategies that have governed them.

Political dimensions RD



Key aspects RD

Policies of Recognition of Rights

Overcoming criminalizing paradigm and war against drugs

Politization of the processes of:

- medicalization
- judicialization
- victimization

Diversification of devices

Accessibility to services

Recognition of the subject / participation of users

Territory as anchor for interventions

Key dimension of harm reduction

Extension of instrumental resources based on the principles of :

- **Territory:** The interventions are from the institutions but not only in the institutions.
- **Networks:** No one takes care or harm oneself alone.
- **Process:** Intervening in drugs is more than saying I need it NOW and it is more than saying ALREADY IS.
- **Integrality:** The complexity of the phenomenon requires thinking about interventions that encompass several dimensions at the same time.
- **Singularity:** There are no one-size-fits-all interventions.

Ethical-political dimension of harm reduction

- Definitions and interpretations about the uses and users of drugs and about regulations on consumption.
- It implies a conception of the world and of the subjects
- Ethics of the relationship: drug user as subject and not object of intervention; relationship that fosters power and autonomy.

Politicize interventions

- Harm reduction offers resources for the care and protection of subjects who use drugs and at the same time questions the prohibition against using them.
- Treatment based on the rights of the subjects and in the development of their autonomy.
- Working in the instrumental and political interface forces us to reflect on the instruments we use and commits us politically to contribute to the transformation of the instituted.

In summary...

How do we extend the resolutions of the UNGASS 2016 towards a Risk and Harm Reduction perspective that generates strategies that mitigate the damages associated with the uses of plants and psychoactive substances as well as those caused by the strategy of war against drugs legitimized in the framework of prohibitionism?

Thank you!!!



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