The Lost Decade -
Neglect for harm reduction funding and the health crisis among people who use drugs

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Funding for lifesaving harm reduction services in low- and middle-income countries is just 13% of what’s needed.

$188 million for harm reduction funding in 2016

$1.5 billion required annually to prevent HIV among people who inject drugs

This funding gap threatens the global HIV response.
Overall harm reduction funding in LMICs has flat-lined

- Overall level of harm reduction funding in LMICs is the same as in 2007
- Just 1% of US$19 billion donor and government spend on HIV in 2016
- Just 4 cents per day is spent per person who inject drugs in LMICs
- Most funding for harm reduction still comes from international donors (64%), however it is one-quarter less than it was a decade ago
- National governments are not stepping in to scale up funding for harm reduction
The majority of people who inject drugs live in upper middle-income countries

55% in UMICs

Yet, harm reduction funding is lowest in these countries

$0.09 per person per day in low and lower middle-income countries

$0.02 per person per day in UMICs
People who use drugs are being left behind

New HIV infections among people who inject drugs increased 33% from 2011-15

Donor funding for harm reduction has fallen 24% since 2007

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Recommendations

• International donors increase harm reduction funding in line with epidemiological need and do not withdraw or reduce funds without adequate transition plans in place.

• National governments invest in their own harm reduction responses. They should track, and critically evaluate their drug policy spending and redirect resources from ineffective drug law enforcement to harm reduction.

• International donors, including donor governments, invest in multilateral funding mechanisms such as the Global Fund and ensure that UNODC is sufficiently funded.

• International donors ensure financial support for overdose prevention, including naloxone and opioid substitution therapy.
Thank you!

See full report, ‘The lost decade: Neglect for harm reduction funding and the health crisis for people who use drugs,’ at:

www.hri.global/harm-reduction-funding

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