

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2027





OUR VISION IS:

"Drug policies that advance social justice and human rights."

OUR MISSION IS:

"To amplify and strengthen a diverse global movement to repair the harms caused by punitive drug policies, and promote just responses."

“CASE FOR SUPPORT”

“We must stop the war on drugs. Instead, let us focus on transformative change, crafting drug policies which ultimately improve the lives of the millions of individuals affected”

Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2023)

IDPC is the global civil society network focused on drug policy reform

With our ambitious new strategy we will drive a historic change that will place human rights front and centre of global and national drug policies, improve peoples’ lives and health, and advance social justice for some of the most marginalised people in the world.

Drug policy reform is a priority on a global scale

Punitive drug policies, which rely on repression, prohibition and punishment, are destroying millions of lives. This is one of the greatest global policy failings of all time, inflicting long-term damage on individuals, communities and the environment. It is responsible for widespread human rights abuses, public health crises including a global overdose epidemic, prison overcrowding, a rise in violence and organised crime, and the inaccessibility of pain relief for billions of people in the Global South. Yet governments continue steadfast in a “war on drugs” approach which

is proven to be harmful, ineffective and counterproductive, and which urgently needs to be consigned to history along with other artefacts of colonialism.

In its place, a new framework must be forged based on human rights as well as social justice, anti-racism and equality – a framework which places people first, eliminates stigma, and embraces harm reduction, decriminalisation and responsible legal regulation. At the same time, progressive steps to better protect rights, health and well-being need to be defended from roll-backs and divisive politics, and robustly evaluated to prove their value and refine their implementation.

The IDPC network is uniquely placed to drive this reform

To be successful, those most affected, marginalised and discriminated against – including people who use drugs, Black, Brown and Indigenous people and other racialised groups, women, LGBTQ+ people, young people, displaced communities, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, and those living in poverty –

must be placed at the centre of this new framework, allowing them to hold the global drug control regime accountable. IDPC's extensive and diverse network brings credible, collective and representative voices that change the narrative around drug policies, that protect and strengthen civic space, that advocate for sustainable and increased funding for the entire drug policy reform movement, and that create solidarity with the feminist, anti-racist, pro-climate movements and other parallel sectors.

Why now?

The global consensus on how to respond to drug-related challenges is falling apart irreversibly, creating a breakthrough moment of opportunity for reform. Support for progressive approaches such as harm reduction, decriminalisation, responsible regulation and safer supply is growing in all corners of the world. The IDPC network will continue to be front and centre, seizing on these gains and resisting the backlash from those heavily invested in the status quo.

Working together across sectors, we can secure a historic change of direction towards a better world – one where collective well-being, solidarity, evidence and compassion shape how we respond to the complex realities of drug use, cultivation, production and supply.

IDPC plays a vital role in bringing together a diverse range of organisations promoting health- and human rights-based drug policy approaches at the global and national levels. IDPC is a highly compatible partner of the Global Commission on Drug Policy which is also committed to an end to prohibition. Helen Clark, Former Prime Minister of New Zealand, Chair of the Global Commission on Drug Policy

For us at Centro de Convivência É de Lei, being part of IDPC means being more connected with other people and organisations who are fighting for the same world as us, with harm reduction as an answer to the 'war on drugs' which has been a war on people". Ana Luiza Uwai, É de Lei (an IDPC member in Brazil)

ABOUT IDPC

IDPC is a not-for-profit organisation with offices in Ghana, the Netherlands, Thailand and the United Kingdom. IDPC was founded in 2006, and has since grown into a network of nearly 200 civil society organisations from across the world – all uniting to push for more humane and more effective drug policies. Our diverse membership (including grass-roots organisations, community-led networks and major international stakeholders) has fundamentally shaped the drug policy conversation at the international, regional and national levels.

OUR OBJECTIVES

IDPC has rapidly become a widely recognised and respected source of expertise and assistance on drug policies, trusted by policy makers, civil society and affected communities, partners, the media, and other audiences. Over the next four years, we will continue our established and successful models of work, while delivering against five priority areas identified by our network as key to seize upon the opportunities for reform. Through this Strategic Plan, and with the support of partners and funders, we will achieve the following by the end of 2027:

01. Increase the number of countries **decriminalising drug use** and possession – an approach proven to reduce harms and inequalities, while redirecting valuable state resources away from punishment and criminal systems and into life-saving health and social services.
02. Increase the number of countries adopting **responsible legal regulation** for cannabis and other controlled substances – thereby placing irresistible pressure on the international drug control system to change.
03. **Change the international drug control system** so that drug policy reform becomes a UN-wide priority across agencies and de-linked from the crime agenda – including through our advocacy across various decision-making bodies and the creation of a dedicated UN mechanism to report on the human rights impacts of the “war on drugs”.
04. **Bring new, sustainable funding to the drug policy reform movement** by working with existing, new and potential donors and partners to demonstrate the cross-cutting impact we can collectively achieve.
05. **Increase public support for drug policy reform through the media** – using both traditional and social media as powerful catalysts for change at the global, regional and national levels, and to spread the word of the harms caused by current drug policies and the urgent need for reform.



*IDPC Members Meeting at the 67th session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, March 2024.
Credit: Rights Reporter Foundation*

More information:

www.idpc.net

[Progress Report 2022-2023](#)

[Meet the Team](#)

[IDPC's core Policy Principles](#)

[IDPC's membership](#)

[The Support Don't Punish campaign](#)

[The Global Drug Policy Index](#)

WHAT WE NEED

To achieve the full scale of change possible in the next four years, IDPC needs to grow and strengthen, as well as enhance the capacities of our members. Failure to do so would mean missing a pivotal window for reform, and the risk of the global response back-sliding into securitisation and repression.

We need USD 11.8 million over four years to successfully deliver this ambitious Strategic Plan. Together we CAN create a more humane and just world and improve the lives of millions.

TECHNICAL ANNEX

BACKGROUND

The global “war on drugs” is underpinned by three international drug control conventions which are almost universally ratified by countries, and a powerful UN drug control architecture based in Vienna. Championed for decades by geopolitically powerful governments, this system has been promoted, and reinforced by, a global paradigm based on prohibition, criminalisation and punishment. Furthermore, at a time when civic space is shrinking in most parts of the world, and where funding remains scarce, the essential role of civil society and affected communities such as people who use drugs in holding governments and the UN accountable for failed policies is at risk.

Yet the opportunities for real, meaningful drug policy reforms, and for decolonising the entire drug control regime, are greater than ever before – and they need a coordinated, collaborative and capacitated movement to drive home the changes that can improve millions of lives worldwide.

Against this backdrop, the IDPC Strategic Plan 2024-2027 is the latest in a series of multi-year plans developed in consultation with our membership and partners to guide the work, direction and priorities of the network. Like its predecessors, this Strategic Plan is built around five pillars of work that have been successfully used to structure the efforts of the IDPC secretariat for many years:

- Networking and communications

- Capacity strengthening (such as organisational development support, e-trainings and the **Support Don't Punish** campaign)

- Research, publications and tools for advocacy

- International advocacy (including across the UN)

- Regional and national advocacy (when called upon by our members)

PRIORITY AREAS AND ASPIRATIONS

Following consultations across the network, the following 'priority areas' have been identified for the period 2024-2027. These are specific areas of work where our members and partners believe that IDPC's focus, engagement, collaboration and contributions will bring added value and impact. For each area, the IDPC secretariat will develop a roadmap

for progress towards our goals and aspirations by 2027. Crucially, however, our core work outside of these 'priority areas' will continue too – fully acknowledging the complex and multifaceted nature of drug policy reform and the need to ground all of our efforts in social justice, gender equality, human rights, anti-racism and decolonisation.

01. Promoting the best models of decriminalisation

Criminalising people who use drugs exacerbates inequalities, racial and social injustice, and fuels incarceration, violence, human rights abuses and drug-related harms. Until this approach is changed, the world cannot meet its targets to end HIV and hepatitis, nor the Sustainable Development Goals (especially those related to health, equality and justice). IDPC has outlined a '[gold standard](#)' of decriminalisation and our aspiration is to see this model in policy and practice in an increasing number of jurisdictions by 2027. At the same time, stronger guidance and strategies are needed at the UN, regional and national levels to continue endorsing and defending effective decriminalisation models. IDPC will continue to advocate for this, to build connections with parallel efforts to decriminalise other marginalised populations, and to increase the capacity of the drug policy reform movement to promote this approach (including through the [Support Don't Punish](#) campaign).

Measure of success (2024-2027): Number of new jurisdictions adopting decriminalisation policies, as captured by IDPC in our global mapping and the Global Drug Policy Index.

02. Promoting responsible, ethical and equitable regulation

Almost 300 million people currently live in jurisdictions with legally regulated markets for internationally controlled substances (mainly cannabis), and many other countries are poised to follow soon. The acknowledgement and understanding of these markets and their impacts has to increase at the UN level, including an objective assessment of the tensions they create for the international drug control system and how these can be resolved. However, not all models of legal regulation are equal, and the IDPC network mobilises to push back against markets being captured by big corporations – instead promoting models grounded in social, racial and gender justice. IDPC aspires to pave the way for [responsible legal regulation](#) for all drugs – stepping-up our work alongside our network and partners, to explore how regulation can be better accommodated within a new international framework on drugs.

Measure of success (2024-2027): Number of new jurisdictions adopting or proposing legal regulation models with social justice components, as captured by IDPC in our global mapping.

03. Mobilising the whole of the UN to change the drug control system

The UN System Common Position on drugs was hailed as a step towards reform of the international drug control system, but much more work needs to be done to ensure the entire UN speaks with one progressive voice on this topic. The Vienna-based UN drug control architecture remains deeply invested in the “war on drugs” approach, but recent gains made at UN bodies on human rights (in Geneva) and at the General Assembly (in New York) demonstrate how change could be achieved. Adopting a new drug control framework is the long-term goal – one built around human rights, social justice, harm reduction, decriminalisation, responsible legal regulation, and the elimination of stigma. Through this Strategic Plan, and with the support of partners and funders, IDPC will step up our work across all relevant UN spaces to catalyse and lay the foundations for this generational change, including by demonstrating changes at the national level, and elevating the voices of those most affected by the “war on drugs”.

Measures of success (2024-2027): Creation of a dedicated UN mechanism to report on the human rights impacts of the “war on drugs”; Number of UN member states calling for system change and convention reform in UN forums, as captured by IDPC in our global tracking such as the CND Blog.

04. **Bringing new, sustainable funding to the drug policy reform sector**

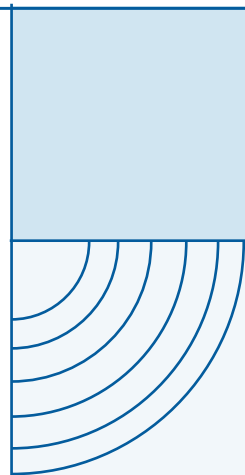
There is an [ongoing global crisis](#) in funding for harm reduction and drug policy reform, while vast sums continue to be invested in punitive, criminalising responses. This means that civil society is under increasing pressure, at exactly the time when we are at the cusp of major breakthroughs. IDPC's aspiration is to work collaboratively to bring major new donors and funding sources into this sector by 2027, at the global and regional levels. We will work with existing, new and potential supporters for reform, including governments, philanthropists and foundations, to place drug policies firmly on their agendas and demonstrate the cross-cutting impact we can collectively achieve. We will also strengthen our own capacity to fundraise, the benefits of which will be felt across the network and the broader drug policy reform movement.

Measure of success (2024-2027): Number of major new funding sources in the global drug policy sector, against a baseline gathered from the membership in 2024.

05. **Enhancing public support for drug policy reform through the media**

In an era where public opinion significantly influences political decisions, media engagement is crucial to achieving all of our aspirations outlined above over the next four years. Both traditional and social media can be powerful catalysts for change – but much work remains to secure rich, balanced and informed discourse on these platforms. IDPC will meet the needs of our network in this regard through our [Support Don't Punish](#) campaign, capacity building and fostering strong media relationships. We will continue to convene a communications working group of partners, while providing the network with media and social media tools around key events, launches and opportunities. We will continue to create space to honour and uplift the experiences and expertise of those most impacted by punitive drug control, such as people who use drugs, to tackle stigma and shift the public discourse on drug policy. In parallel, we aspire to build our own capacity for proactive and strategic media engagement, while continuing to direct media queries to our local members in a way that further enhances the network's reputation as the go-to source of expertise.

Measure of success (2024-2027): Increased support from the media, as reported by members in our biennial surveys.



ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the pillars of work and priority areas in this Strategic Plan, IDPC will continue its growth as a sustainable and effective organisation. Over the coming four years, IDPC will complete a transition from legal registration in the United Kingdom to a new charitable foundation in the Netherlands – in response to the 2016 “Brexit” decision and our commitment to maintain strong relationships with institutions and partners in Europe and beyond. At the same time, we will continue to enhance the regional work led by existing hubs in Africa (Ghana) and Asia (Thailand), and to welcome new members from all around the world and from a range of different sectors and movements.

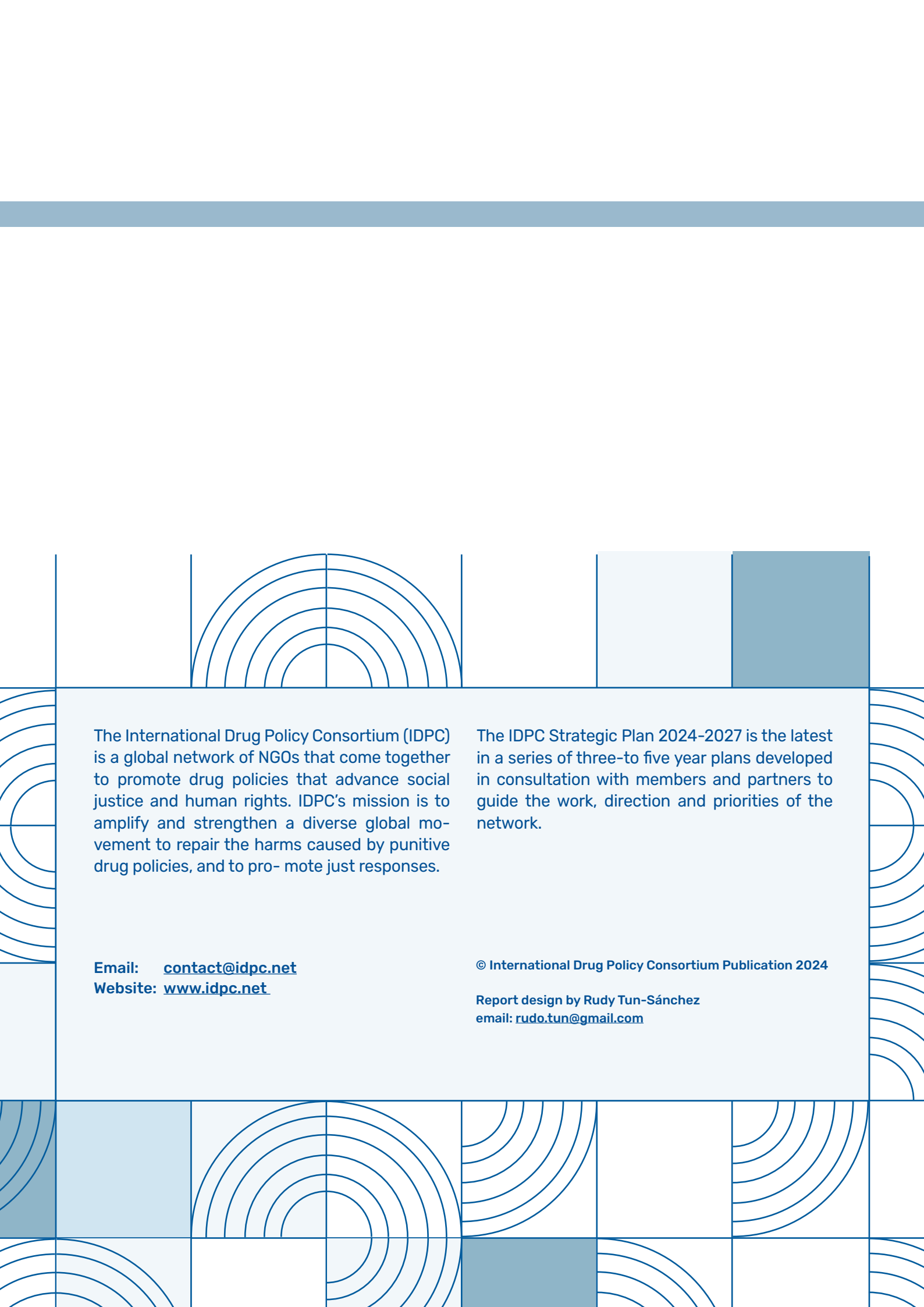
Fundraising will remain a key area as outlined above, with the aspiration to expand the donor portfolio for IDPC as an organisation as well as bringing new funding to the sector more broadly. Additional funds are required for IDPC’s core team of staff and consultants, as well as to strengthen our capacity to meet the needs and priorities of the network. Our well-functioning, two-tier governance system – comprising an appointed Board of Directors and a Members Advisory Council elected by the membership – will also continue to provide the legal, financial and strategic oversight needed to maintain IDPC’s organisational health.



*Members of the IDPC team, March 2024.
Credit: IDPC*

THE FIVE PILLARS OF OUR WORK

	NETWORKING AND COMMUNICATION	CAPACITY STRENGTHENING	RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS AND TOOLS FOR ADVOCACY	INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY	REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ADVOCACY
PROMOTING THE BEST MODELS OF DECRIMINALISATION	Sharing news and examples of the reforms happening around the world. Promoting positive international developments and guidance. Identifying new allies and linking to parallel decriminalisation efforts from other sectors.	Reaching the widest possible audiences through our Drug Decriminalisation [e]Course and other trainings, workshops, webinars and events. Using the global Support Don't Punish campaign to empower partners to promote 'gold standard' decriminalisation.	Mapping the global uptake of varying decriminalisation models. Ongoing promotion of IDPC's 'gold standard' model. Generating evidence, including use of the Global Drug Policy Index to track trends and progress.	Direct advocacy for new normative guidance from the UN on drug decriminalisation, and new resolutions. Promotion of UN entity support for decriminalisation, and advocacy for cross-UN endorsement and promotion.	Direct support to governments, regional bodies and local members upon request, such as technical advice, trainings and resources. Using the Support Don't Punish campaign as a vehicle for advocacy at the local level.
PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE, ETHICAL AND EQUITABLE REGULATION	Sharing news and examples of the reforms happening around the world. Ensuring the equitable participation of the most affected populations. Finding new allies from parallel movements such as racial justice, Indigenous rights, feminism and environmentalism.	Development of new (e)trainings, workshops, webinars and events to promote models of responsible regulation which ensure equity and social justice.	New resources, research, analysis and communications to promote models of responsible regulation which ensure equity and social justice. Monitoring, with partners, of positive developments and the risks of corporate capture in different settings.	Direct advocacy for new normative guidance from the UN on responsible regulation. Ensuring that UN debates openly and objectively address these trends and their implications for the global drug control system, and that they include Global South voices, including those of affected populations and Indigenous Peoples.	Direct support to governments, regional bodies and local members upon request, such as technical advice, trainings and resources. Enhanced work to ensure that the voices of affected and Indigenous populations are heard in all debates and discussions.
MOBILISING THE WHOLE OF THE UN TO CHANGE THE DRUG CONTROL SYSTEM	Communicating and disseminating developments at the UN level. Facilitation of network-wide discussions on the road map towards a new international framework based on health and human rights.	Directly supporting civil society engagement in UN debates across Vienna, New York and Geneva. Workshops, webinars and events to build knowledge and advocacy strategies that leverage international developments.	High-quality studies, analyses and publications, such as "Shadow Reports", around key UN milestones – including the 2024 midterm review and the 10-year anniversary of the 2016 UNGASS on drugs.	Strategic engagement at the UN in Geneva, New York and Vienna to align the response and end the latter's monopoly on drug policies. Advocacy for a new mechanism to report on the human rights impacts of punitive drug policies.	Promotion of the UN Common Position, and other key guidance and recommendations from the UN, as tools for reform. Work with key regional groups and support debates to help create a new international framework on drugs.
BRINGING NEW, SUSTAINABLE FUNDING TO THE DRUG POLICY REFORM SECTOR	Assessing and communicating the needs of our members and how IDPC can support. Pursuing joint funding applications, or supporting member fundraising, wherever possible. Sharing new opportunities and developments.	Create a new mentoring scheme across the network to connect partners and promote learning and support – including on the pivotal issue of fundraising. Onward granting to civil society partners wherever possible including via the Support Don't Punish campaign.	New research into the funding portfolio at UNODC vis-à-vis drugs, health and crime. Supporting the existing work of other partners to document the funding gaps for harm reduction and drug policy reform.	Direct engagement and advocacy with existing, new and potential donors – on behalf of the membership and the wider sector. Ensuring that drug policy reform remains a donor priority at the global level.	Direct engagement and advocacy with existing, new and potential donors – on behalf of the membership and the wider sector. Ensuring that drug policy reform remains a donor priority at the regional and national levels.
ENHANCING SUPPORT FOR DRUG POLICY REFORM THROUGH THE MEDIA	Strategic media engagement to demonstrate the impacts of new policies. Expand our database of supportive, informed journalists. Finding new allies from various sectors. Enhanced social media reach in multiple languages.	Assessing the needs of our members and how IDPC can best support. Development of new (e) trainings, workshops, webinars, tools and events – both aimed at the media and to help members engage with the media.	Ensuring that key research, analysis and publications from IDPC are accompanied by a media and dissemination plan, to ensure impact on the wider narrative. Support to members to do the same.	Exposing failures and inertia within the UN drug control system, and building a media narrative and pressure for change. Using Support Don't Punish and the Global Drug Policy Index, among other tools, to garner international media interest.	Supporting the media engagement of members – including localising global stories, and elevating local developments and the voices of affected communities. Using the Support Don't Punish campaign as a vehicle for quality media engagement and coverage.



The International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) is a global network of NGOs that come together to promote drug policies that advance social justice and human rights. IDPC's mission is to amplify and strengthen a diverse global movement to repair the harms caused by punitive drug policies, and to promote just responses.

Email: contact@idpc.net
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The IDPC Strategic Plan 2024-2027 is the latest in a series of three-to five year plans developed in consultation with members and partners to guide the work, direction and priorities of the network.

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