

Thank you Madame Chair.

It is an honour to be selected by the Vienna NGO Committee to speak today at the launch of the latest edition of the World Drug Report, especially under the theme of this World Drug Day 'Share Facts, Save Lives'. As an organization led-by and working with young people who use drugs we know the value of sharing information and the importance of ensuring that information can reach as many people as possible.

For young people who use drugs, these facts can unfortunately be quite difficult to access. Engaging with young people who use drugs in order to provide them with information can be challenging. We are a diverse group who often face multiple forms of discrimination, not least due to our age and drug use. While these facts are being shared online and in education settings this can often lead to young people who use drugs slipping through the cracks as they have dropped out of formal education or may not have regular internet access.

Facts about drug use are often also shared in harm reduction services, however for young people who use drugs accessing these services is not always a possibility. To begin with, only 1% of people who inject drugs live in a country with high-coverage of harm reduction services, meaning for many young people who use drugs services are simply not available.

Where services are available, young people are often unable to access them due to age of consent laws or other age-related barriers, including the simple fact that many services aren't able to meet the specific needs of working with young people.

Young people who use drugs are not a homogenous group and it is vital we are sharing information in such a way that we are reaching all young people who use drugs, and we are providing services able to reduce harms associated with drug use for all people regardless of age, what drug they are using, or any other factor.