

# Reimagining Harm Reduction in Latin America

Centering Community, Social Justice & Feminist Ethics

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# Setting the Stage

- Originated as health-based alternative to punitive drug policies
- Mainly evolved in the Global North
- Reduction in HIV transmission among people who inject drugs
- Decrease in overdose deaths through supervised consumption sites
- Improved health and social outcomes
- Problem in LATAM: Imported models reinforce social control - Lack of contextual fit



# A Call for a Latin American Model

## Core principles

Community empowerment, social justice, feminist ethics

## Key shift

From health outcomes to equity and collective agency







# Harm Reduction as an Ethic of Justice

## Reframing Harm Reduction

Not just health tool but moral-political stance

## Focus areas

- Address structural inequalities
- Rooted in lived community experiences



# Community-Led Approaches

## Why community?

Local ownership and cultural competence

## How it works

- Mobilization and grassroots organizing
- Building resilience through active participation



Foto: Fundación Procrear





# Feminist Ethics in Practice



## Gendered Impacts of Drug Policies

Disproportionate harm to women and marginalized groups



## Key concepts

- Safety, agency, intersectionality
- Inclusive, non-punitive care spaces



# Epistemic Injustice & Extractivism

## Recognizing community knowledge

Pushback against silencing of lived experience

## Risks

External actors exploiting 'community-based' language for funding



Foto: Festival Arte Callejero Todo Copas



# Toward Social Innovation

## 1 Call for prototypes

# Adaptive models prioritizing cohesion and violence reduction

## 2 Vision

## Broaden metrics beyond health outcomes

### 3 Regional leadership

## Position LATAM as pioneer in ethical harm reduction



Foto: Bosque de la Memoria



Thank  
you!