dianova
20 YEARS OF NETWORKING

Campaign – Stigma to an End
#QuitStigmaNow
BRIEFING

dianova | SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 BACKGROUND

During the last decade, Dianova has focused on education and health advocacy through the implementation of international campaigns aimed at increasing social awareness about the risks associated with substance and non-substance addictive behaviors among youth, parents/families and people facing an addiction problem.

June 26 marks the third International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The 193 member states of the United Nations reached a consensus to implement a new sustainable development agenda, titled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." This document includes a commitment to leaving no one behind in the implementation of these goals.

Goal 3 - Health and Well-being- (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) It explicitly includes measures to strengthen prevention and treatment programs for the abuse of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and narcotic drugs. (Goal 3.5). In addition to problems associated with substance abuse, such as the risk of overdose, suicide, or the development or aggravation of mental disorders, it is necessary to consider that people who use or have used drugs, whether injectable or not, are more vulnerable to HIV and Hepatitis C transmission. In addition, they encounter **difficulties when seeking treatment, harm reduction, and reintegration services due to the stigmas** and prejudices associated with substance abuse.

Goal 5 - Gender Equality (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) points to a need for drug-related policies to recognize that there are important differences between men and women with substance abuse problems with regard to their consumption patterns and associated vulnerabilities.

Goal 10 – Reduced inequalities (reduce inequality within and among countries); it is important to note that not recognizing the addiction problem as a public health issue contributes to the cycle of marginalization that affects people with substance abuse disorders, thereby compromising treatment and social reintegration opportunities. **The stigmatization** of people who use drugs **can hinder their access to health services**.

Goal 16 - Peace and Justice (promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies) primarily aims to reinforce the rule of law and access to justice. It also seeks to combat corruption and organized crime. The informal drug economy generates unparalleled levels of violence and corruption, whether related to organized crime, street crime, or **even crimes perpetrated by some states or governments.**

It should also be noted that the outcome document of the United Nations Special Session (UNGASS) on the world drug problem defines the drug problem as a public health issue. This document acknowledges that **substance dependence** is a "health disorder" of "a chronic a recurring nature" that **should be addressed as a health and social issue and not as a criminal justice issue.**

Lastly, Resolution 61/11 of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, adopted during the March 12th through 16th 2018 session in Vienna, recognizes that marginalization, **stigmatizing attitudes**, discrimination and the fear of social, labor, or legal repercussions, **can refrain many of those who need help from accessing the services they need.**

2 CURRENT SITUATION

Many people with substance-related disorders experience social isolation and must face stigma and discrimination

Stigmas have the potential to negatively impact various areas of a person's life including employment, housing, social relationships and **physical and mental health**. They lead to delays in getting treatment, recovering, and ultimately reintegrating into society. Furthermore, they increase the chances of becoming involved in risky behavior. Many studies have shown that **stigmas are a significant barrier to accessing health and treatment services**.

Hundreds of thousands of people are criminalized, given long prison sentences, or, in some countries even sentenced to death for having used illegal drugs. In some countries, the rule of law leaves these people with the burden of possessing a criminal record that prevents their access to certain jobs.

Through its Manifesto, the Dianova International network supports the implementation of **policies based on public health and human rights**. The organization **calls for an end to these repressive policies** that only serve to marginalize drug users and reduce their access to the services they need.

Populations concerned

- **Women who use or have used addictive substances.** They are subjected to a double stigmatization, both as women and as users or ex-users of addictive substances – a situation that may worsen when they have children. This can result in denying their problem and a reluctance or inability to seek necessary support and access treatment services. In addition, treatment services rarely take their specific needs into account. Gender violence is also widespread among this population. The 2015 World Drug Report shows that despite the fact that women account for one in three drug users worldwide, they only account for one in five people in treatment.
- **People who have recovered from abusing addictive substances.** The stigma attached to people with addictive disorders may persist for years after they have recovered. Those who are genuinely trying to rebuild their lives are subject to bias and stereotypes based on the fear of people who use drugs. Our society continues to praise the importance of overcoming alcohol and other drugs and becoming "productive citizens" without giving those concerned the opportunity to do so. This aspect is especially important with regards to social and vocational integration, a key factor in complete recovery.
- **People with substance-related disorders** - They are seen by society as vice-driven people with low morality who are responsible of their condition. The multifaceted nature of the problem as well as the presence of biopsychosocial factors is still not widely understood. Stigma, repressive policies,

and exclusion prevent access to treatment, harm reduction and other health services; they prevent people from enjoying the full extent of their rights.

3 STRATEGY

This campaign's objective is to reduce the stigma attached to people with substance-related disorders and to promote treatment and prevention services that are more respectful of their rights.

Through various images and messages, the target audience is invited to follow a series of recommendations geared toward combating stigma. Likewise, they are encouraged to share this material with third parties through their own channels.

4 TARGET AUDIENCE

The targets have been defined according to the socio-political environment of the Dianova network's ordinary members.

- **Health professionals** - they may hold negative beliefs about patients with addiction disorders. These patients are often considered unpredictable, unable to follow recommendations, or even violent. Being so branded can hinder their access to treatment services.

- **Decision-makers** - the negative image of people with substance-related disorder in society leads fewer and less meaningful political initiatives in this area. Moreover, this initiatives are often biased by ideological positions.

- **Businesses** - rather than considering addiction as a problem to be solved to promote the well-being of employees and therefore their engagement for the company, many employers choose to hunt down "drug addicts", thus generating intolerance and discrimination.

- **Mass media,** in certain situations, mass media uses a stigmatizing language to describe people who use drugs. Moreover, by connecting drug use to violence, they encourage discrimination and prejudice.

5 CREATIVE CONCEPT

Key messages:

- Stigmatization prevents people who face substance-related disorders from accessing treatment and harm reduction services.

- Stigmatization makes social and vocational integration more difficult for recovering people.

- The double stigmatization that exists for women based on gender and their history of substance abuse, reduces their access to treatment and harm reduction services.

We created two images that represent groups of people who may experience stigma. Their purpose is to invite the target audiences to think about the importance of respecting these people's rights, as human

beings and as citizens; the images are also a call for action to stop differentiating between people who need help and support.

6   CAMPAIGN

The campaign will be launched by the ordinary and associate members of the Dianova international network in the following countries:
Canada, Chile, Uruguay, Nicaragua, USA, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia, Kenya, Pakistan, India
Proposed launch and end dates: June 19 to July 31.
Languages: Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, Italian, Swedish, Slovenian, Norwegian.
Each member organization should select one or more target audiences: health professionals, decision makers, businesses, or the media.
Once the target is selected, each country will receive the images and resources described in point 7.
Each participant can write a text, story or testimonial, while adapting the message to their target audience.

7   MEDIA - RESOURCES

Resources - Paper - Recommendations
- Decision-makers
- Health professionals
- Businesses
- Media

Editorial content
- 2 Press release. In charge: OID.
- 4 online articles. In charge: OID.
- Reports, data, best practices. In charge: OID.

Digital media
Hashtag: #QuitStigmaNow
- Image for standard posts on social networks, 302 x 302 px.
- Twibbon.

Image adaptations for emailing campaigns through Mailchimp, GetResponse and others.
Traditional media
- A3 Poster

8   METRICS – GLOBAL INDICATORS

In order to show the global impact of the campaign both online and offline, we will use the following indicators as found in the attached template.
- Size: number of publications, posts, tweets, number of online visits
- Visibility: scope, number of people impacted

- Influence: number of interactions, likes, shares, comments, retweets

Offline impact

- Number of posters displayed/potential audience.
- Number of articles published in the press/potential audience.
- Other actions with an offline impact.