

## **PELUANG CSO Pledge**

**As friends of PELUANG, we share the following common principles:**

1. **The punitive “War on Drugs” in Malaysia has led to many unintended consequences**—including prison overcrowding—destroying families and future livelihoods. A more evidence-based community approach is required as the punitive status quo is not working.
2. **By sharing resources where we can**, we aim to support and not punish families hurt by the harmful “War on Drugs”, people who use drugs, people with substance use disorders, people formerly incarcerated, people in prison, and the wider community at large.
3. **By collectively utilizing social media to share stories and amplify the facts**, we aim to break stigmas and discriminations against people who use drugs, people with substance use disorders, people in prison, people formerly incarcerated, and the B40 community at large. We aim to actively refute myths, false claims, and statements about drugs and people who use drugs, and people living with substance use disorders intended to fear-monger or mislead the public;
4. **By advocating for criminal justice reform, rooted in human rights and science**, we bring all stakeholders to the table for dialogues on evidence-based approaches to health, social welfare, security, law enforcement, sentencing, and justice.
5. **By recognising that drug use and addiction are not the same thing**, we prioritize facts and science. 1 out of 10 people who use drugs will develop a substance use disorder, whereas 1 out of 6 people with substance use disorders will access treatment.
6. **By treating all people with kindness and compassion**, we aim to break labels and emphasize a “people first” approach.
7. **By empowering communities and supporting linkages to services**, we aim to re-integrate people released from prisons back into society and ensure awareness of public services is widely known to those who need it most.

8. **By understanding decriminalisation and legalisation are different**, we aim to educate the public on the common goal for an evidence based drug policy.

9. **By agreeing to the definitions of the terms below**, we aim to have synergy with all collaborators and partners.

**Addiction** - a chronic relapsing medical disorder characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use despite adverse consequences—influenced by biological and environmental factors.

**Harm reduction** - refers to policies, programmes and practices that aim to minimise negative health, social and legal impacts associated with drug use, drug policies and drug laws. Harm reduction encompasses a range of health and social services and practices that apply to illicit and licit drugs. These include, but are not limited to, needle and syringe programmes, non-abstinence-based housing and employment initiatives, drug checking, overdose prevention and reversal, psychosocial support, and the provision of information on safer drug use.

Harm reduction is grounded in justice and human rights. It focuses on positive change and on working with people without judgement, coercion, discrimination, or requiring that they stop using drugs as a precondition of support. Approaches such as these are cost-effective, evidence-based and have a positive impact on individual and community health.

**Decriminalisation** - Removal of criminal penalties for the personal possession of a small amount of drugs or paraphernalia for personal use. Individuals are offered voluntary community support and treatment. Under decriminalisation civil or administrative penalties may be introduced instead. A policy of decriminalisation needs to be considered alongside investment in treatment services to be successful, recognising that it does not increase rates of drug use in the long term.

**Legalisation** - No penalties if regulations are complied with. Drug possession and use are legal. Regulations control production, distribution and supply—similar to Alcohol.

### **Decriminalisation is not legalisation**

**By submitting your contact details to us to be a partner of the PELUANG Initiative, your organisation hereby AGREES that you have read, understood, and support these terms.**