

# PILOTING HARM REDUCTION FOR SHABU USERS

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Crystal meth is a popular drug in Indonesia. Recent years have seen an increase in the number of meth users, locally known under the street name shabu. However, so far, harm reduction services don't target meth users. Mainline and local partner Karisma started an innovative pilot in Indonesia to change this.

The reason why Mainline finds it important to develop interventions that target this group of people who use drugs (PWUD) is that the research conducted by the Atma Jaya University in Jakarta shows that Shabu users are at increased risk of HIV infection and other STIs. This is true whether people snort, smoke or inject their drugs. The research also showed that Crystal meth users avoid existing HIV intervention programmes in Indonesia. They associate these services with heroin users and don't identify with them. [Read the full research report 'Crystal meth in Indonesia' on our website](#)

The aim of the new harm reduction pilot is to reach this hidden population and address their health needs. A special peer-driven outreach team will experiment with different outreach strategies to reach the often hidden subgroups of crystal meth users. One can think of Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), sex workers and their clients, people who work night shifts or even students. Experimenting with new ways of outreach work will help to develop best practices on how to provide harm reduction to meth users. By documenting the lessons learned and strong data collection, we hope to develop a set of specific harm reductions interventions that can be replicated in other regions in Indonesia.

This pilot runs alongside a follow-up to Atma Jaya's qualitative study. The new study will look into HIV prevalence with people who use crystal meth in six districts in Indonesia. The outcomes of the study feed into the harm reduction crystal meth pilot and vice versa. It is expected that the harm reduction pilot and the outcomes of the study will demonstrate the need for advocacy and the inclusion of all sub-groups of crystal meth users in HIV prevention programmes. This ambition goes beyond Indonesia; this is important for people who smoke, snort and inject meth all over the world.

At the kick-off of the pilot project in Jakarta, Mainline's trainer visited the selected project sites together with the outreach team. A training was organised to provide information about crystal meth to the newly formed team at Karisma. It addressed the effects and possible routes of administration of the drug and the associated health risks.

### **A short report from Mainline's trainer:**

*"Together with the team, we created a new Harm reduction package for people who use Shabu. In addition, we looked into various way of approaching meth users. Jakarta has many hidden communities and it might be difficult to build the trustful relationship that is needed. It was exciting to see how enthusiastic and open the team was to new ideas and how they used their previous experience to make this pilot a success. This pilot will surely meet many challenges and we won't 'get it right' at the first go. However, having seen the team, working with them and having experienced their flexibility, we are sure that we can reach the clients and provide the help that they need, want and deserve."*