

ANNUAL REPORT



Students for
Sensible
Drug Policy.



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Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Members, Partners and Friends of SSDP,

The year 2025 marked a period of institutional consolidation and strategic positioning for SSDP International. In a global environment characterised by policy volatility, moral panic, and shrinking civic space, the organisation focused on sustainability, depth of engagement, and long-term political relevance rather than rapid or symbolic expansion.

A defining achievement of the year was securing a three-year grant from the Open Society Foundations, providing both core and activity funding. This investment strengthened SSDP International's institutional stability and enabled sustained engagement in national and international drug policy reform processes. In parallel, we secured additional funding from the Amref's Y-Act Programme to advance our tobacco control work, reinforcing our commitment to evidence-based, youth-led public health advocacy. SSDP International also became part of a multi-country consortium that successfully secured a three-year Erasmus+ grant, supporting cross-border collaboration, learning, and youth leadership development in drug policy reform.

In 2025, SSDP International expanded its footprint selectively and strategically. Growth was concentrated in Africa and Asia, with strengthened chapter development and leadership in South Africa and the Philippines. This expansion reflected a deliberate focus on consolidating regions where youth-led drug policy reform is both politically urgent and structurally under-resourced, rather than pursuing diffuse global reach.

Throughout the year, SSDP International continued to operate at the interface between youth movements and state institutions. Our work prioritised technical credibility, policy coherence, and accountability to affected communities, while resisting the depoliticisation of drug policy under the language of risk management or moral regulation. We supported youth advocates to engage governments and regional bodies on decriminalisation, harm reduction, and tobacco control, without relinquishing the organisation's grounding in lived experience and rights-based analysis.

Internally, 2025 was a year of organisational strengthening. We invested in governance systems, monitoring and learning frameworks, and staff sustainability, recognising that political ambition without institutional resilience is unsustainable. SSDP International remains committed to participatory leadership, transparency, and shared accountability with its chapters and partners.

SSDP International's work is made possible through the leadership of its chapters, the stewardship of its board, and the trust placed in the organisation by its funders and allies. The organisation enters the next phase of its work with clarity: youth leadership in drug policy reform is not symbolic, and it is not optional. It is a structural requirement for credible, just, and durable policy change.

Charity Monareng
Executive Director
SSDP International

About Us

SSDP International is a grassroots network of students and young people advocating for sensible drug policies. With chapters in various countries, we work to empower young leaders, engage in advocacy, and promote harm reduction strategies. This strategic plan serves as a roadmap to guide our efforts over the next four years, outlining our priorities, objectives, and strategies for achieving our mission.



Our Vision

A world where youth are empowered to drive meaningful change in drug policy and combat the harms caused by the war on drugs. We neither condone nor condemn drug use, but instead, we promote youth civic engagement as a powerful tool for reform. Our vision is rooted in respect for the diverse experiences and identities of our constituents. We stand against the stigmatisation of people who use drugs and advocate for policies based on justice, respect, compassion, evidence, and human rights. Through leadership development and advocacy, we strive to create a future where young leaders advocate for policy changes that prioritise the well-being of all individuals and communities.

Our Mission

To promote youth civic engagement and develop leaders who advocate for change based on justice, liberty, and compassion. At SSDP, we believe that young people have a critical role to play in shaping drug policy at the local, national, continental, and global levels. Through mobilisation and empowerment, we empower our members to participate in political processes and reduce the harms of counterproductive policies.



Meet Our Team



Charity Monareng
Executive Director



Precious Mtshweni
Programmes & Policy

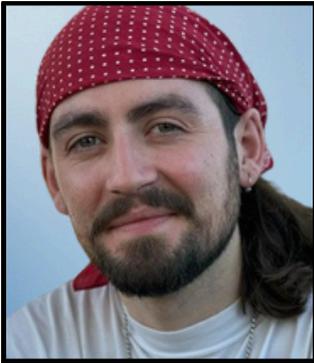


Allistair De Jongh
Communications



HNJ Financial Solutions.
Finance

Meet Our Board



JACOB CHAGNON:
BOARD CHAIR



UCHENNA IMO



FAITHFUL UDO



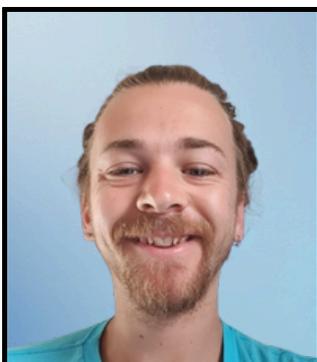
MMESOMACHI OJI:
WEST AFRICA
REPRESENTATIVE



MOLLY OGBODUM



MARVELINE ATIENO:
EAST AFRICA
REPRESENTATIVE



SAM LASHAM:
OCENIA
REPRESENTATIVE



HONEY ANDRES:
ASIA
REPRESENTATIVE



CHICHI CHEWE:
SOUTHERN AFRICA
REPRESENTATIVE

A year in review

In 2025, SSDP International strengthened its role as a youth-led organisation operating at the interface between public policy, community realities, and international advocacy. The year was defined by institutional credibility, strategic partnerships with government, and sustained investment in long-term reform processes rather than short-term visibility.

A major milestone was SSDP International's appointment as an official technical partner to South Africa's Department of Basic Education (DBE). Through this partnership, SSDP International provides technical support to the Psychosocial Support Directorate, with a specific focus on substance use among learners. This includes direct input into the review and development of the National Strategy on Alcohol and Substance Use Among Learners, ensuring that the revised strategy reflects evidence-based, prevention-oriented, and rights-affirming approaches rather than punitive responses.

At the national policy level, SSDP International played a central convening and technical role in 2025. The organisation co-organised the Central Drug Authority's 4th Biennial Summit on Substance Use and Illicit Drug Trafficking, bringing together government departments, civil society, researchers, and community actors to interrogate South Africa's drug policy trajectory. In parallel, SSDP International formed part of a small technical team contributing to the review and finalisation of the new National Drug Master Plan, supporting alignment with constitutional principles, public health evidence, and international best practice.

SSDP International also contributed to broader child- and youth-focused policy reform. In 2025, the organisation was part of a coalition of youth-led organisations that supported the review and development of South Africa's National Strategy to Accelerate Action for Children and Adolescents. SSDP International's contributions were grounded in youth participation, rights-based policy design, and the lived realities of children and adolescents affected by structural inequality. The Strategy was formally adopted by Cabinet on 10 December 2025, marking an important step in embedding youth-informed perspectives within national planning frameworks.

A year in review

Through a three-year grant from the Open Society Foundations, SSDP International expanded its engagement with communities navigating legal and policy transition. In 2025, this included providing targeted support to a cannabis farmers' association in the Eastern Cape, contributing to efforts to address historical marginalisation, regulatory exclusion, and the uneven impacts of cannabis reform on traditional and small-scale producers.

Internationally, SSDP International strengthened its presence in global policy spaces. The organisation hosted a side event at the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) focused on alternatives to incarceration for young people in rural and traditional settings. The event convened traditional leaders and community representatives from Africa, Asia, and Latin America to examine non-custodial, restorative, and community-based responses to drug-related offences. By centring indigenous governance systems and customary justice practices, the discussion challenged carceral dominance within global drug control debates and elevated perspectives often excluded from international forums.

Chapter development remained selective and strategic. In 2025, SSDP International strengthened its presence in Africa and Asia, with particular growth and activity in South Africa and the Philippines. Chapter leaders led national advocacy, community engagement, and digital campaigns, reinforcing the organisation's commitment to locally grounded action within a shared global framework.

Across its platforms and partnerships, SSDP International consistently articulated a clear position in 2025: effective drug policy must be rooted in public health, human rights, and social justice, and young people must be treated as policy actors rather than policy subjects. The year reflects a shift from expansion to consolidation, from visibility to durability, and from parallel advocacy to embedded policy influence.

2025 Activities

Shaping National Policy Frameworks

1

Regional Coordination and African Union Engagement

2

Global Policy Engagement and Agenda-Setting

3

Programmatic Work: Public Health, Regulation, and Community Transitions

4

Youth Leadership and Capacity Strengthening

5

Shaping National Policy Frameworks

In 2025, SSDP International deepened its engagement with national policy processes in South Africa, positioning the organisation as a credible technical and youth-led policy actor. A major milestone was SSDP International's formal role as a technical partner to the Department of Basic Education, where the organisation provided ongoing support to the Psychosocial Support Directorate on substance use among learners. This work included substantive contributions to the development of the National Strategy on Alcohol and Substance Use Among Learners, with a focus on prevention, psychosocial support, and non-punitive responses within the education system.

SSDP International also played a key role in broader national drug policy reform. The organisation co-organised the Central Drug Authority's 4th Biennial Summit on Substance Use and Illicit Drug Trafficking, contributing to national dialogue on policy coherence, implementation challenges, and the limits of enforcement-led responses. In parallel, SSDP International remained part of a small technical group supporting the review and finalisation of South Africa's new National Drug Master Plan, contributing youth-informed and public health-oriented perspectives to a foundational policy framework that will shape the country's approach over the coming years.

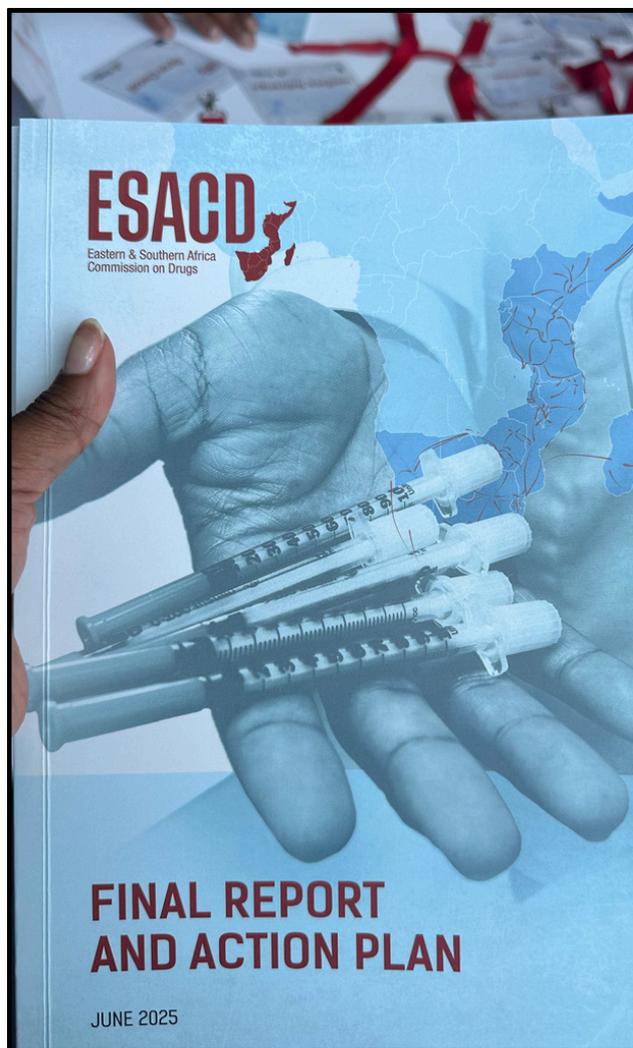




Regional Coordination and African Union Engagement

At the regional level, SSDP International contributed to African drug policy coordination through sustained engagement with continental processes. In 2025, the organisation participated in meetings of the Eastern and Southern Africa Commission on Drugs (ESACD), including the launch of the ESACD Action Plan in Kenya and a subsequent regional consultation meeting held in Johannesburg. These engagements supported alignment between national reform processes and emerging regional priorities, while ensuring youth and civil society perspectives were represented in regional planning.

SSDP International also participated in African Union-related engagements, including representation at an AU side event on behalf of the African Civil Society Forum. Through these platforms, the organisation advanced rights-based, youth-centred approaches to drug policy and contributed to strengthening civil society input into continental drug control and public health frameworks.





Redouble support for evidence-based prevention – including **harm reduction**.



Scale-up the response through partnerships – including **supporting community-led initiatives**.



Improve the currently-dire **availability of controlled substances** for medical and scientific purposes.



Commit to a rights-based approach to ensure dignity and access to services without fear of punishment – including through **decriminalisation**.

Charity Monareng

African Civil Society Forum on Drugs

*Side event: Innovative Approaches and Best Practices in Drug Use Prevention, Treatment, and Addressing HIV and HCV Among People Who Use Drugs in Africa
68th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)
March 2025*



Global Policy Engagement and Agenda-Setting

In 2025, SSDP International engaged selectively in global policy spaces to advance specific reform priorities rather than symbolic presence. The organisation participated in the Brandenburg Forum in Geneva and the 60th Session of the Human Rights Council, contributing to discussions on criminalisation, public health, and the human rights impacts of punitive drug policies.

At the 68th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), SSDP International played a convening role by co-organising a high-level side event in partnership with the Permanent Mission of South Africa and the African Union Commission. The event focused on alternatives to incarceration for children and young people in rural and traditional settings and brought together traditional leaders and community representatives from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. By centring customary justice systems, restorative practices, and community-based responses, the event challenged the dominance of carceral approaches in global drug control debates and amplified perspectives from the Global South that are often marginalised in international forums.

In addition to formal multilateral engagement, SSDP International participated in key global convenings that shape evidence, practice, and movement coordination in drug policy and harm reduction. In 2025, the organisation participated in the International Network of Health and Hepatitis in Substance Users (INHSU) conference and the Harm Reduction International Conference. These platforms provided space for technical exchange, cross-regional learning, and engagement with practitioners, researchers, and advocates working at the forefront of harm reduction and public health responses to substance use. Participation in these conferences strengthened SSDP International's policy positions, informed programmatic work, and reinforced alignment with global best practice while maintaining a clear focus on youth leadership and rights-based approaches.







Programmatic Work: Public Health, Regulation, and Community Transitions

Tobacco control remained a key thematic focus in 2025. Through support from the Amref Health Africa's Y-Act Programme, SSDP International implemented youth-led tobacco control activities that combined public health advocacy, policy engagement, and coalition-building. This work addressed emerging nicotine and vaping products, strengthened youth participation in tobacco regulation debates, and reinforced evidence-based approaches to prevention and harm reduction.

Cannabis Reform and Community Support through a three-year grant from the Open Society Foundations, SSDP International expanded its engagement with communities affected by drug policy reform. In 2025, this included targeted support to a cannabis farmers' association in the Eastern Cape. The work focused on addressing regulatory exclusion, historical marginalisation, and the uneven distribution of benefits arising from cannabis reform, particularly for traditional and small-scale producers navigating legal transition.

The poster features the SSDP International logo (Students for Sensible Drug Policy) in the top left. The main headline reads "SMOKE OUT THE TRUTH THEY HIDE" in large, bold, red letters. Below this, it says "LET'S EXPOSE THE NEW FACE OF OLD HARM." The central illustration shows a pair of human lungs; the left lung is holding a lit cigarette, and the right lung is holding a lit e-cigarette. To the right of the lungs, the text reads "IT'S NOT JUST VAPOR - IT'S DECEPTION IN DISGUISE." Below the illustration is a red-bordered box containing the text "World NO Tobacco Day". At the bottom of the poster, it says "World Tobacco Awareness Day | 31 May 2025". A paragraph of text reads: "The tobacco industry wants you to believe vaping is harmless. But behind the sleek design and fruity flavours is the same addiction, same harm, and same manipulation." The bottom left corner contains the text "This #WorldNoTobaccoDay, SSDP International & Y-ACT calls for truth." The bottom right corner features the Y-ACT logo, which includes a silhouette of a person's head with a red outline of Africa and the text "Y-ACT YOUTH IN ACTION".

Students for Sensible Drug Policy. **SMOKE OUT THE TRUTH THEY HIDE**

LET'S EXPOSE THE NEW FACE OF OLD HARM.

IT'S NOT JUST VAPOR - IT'S DECEPTION IN DISGUISE.

World **NO** Tobacco Day

World Tobacco Awareness Day | 31 May 2025

The tobacco industry wants you to believe vaping is harmless. But behind the sleek design and fruity flavours is the same addiction, same harm, and same manipulation.

This #WorldNoTobaccoDay, SSDP International & Y-ACT calls for truth.

Y-ACT
YOUTH IN ACTION

Students for Sensible Drug Policy.

Y-ACT
YOUTH IN ACTION

YOUR STORY CAN SAVE LIVES

THE SMOKER'S VOICE

HOPE TRANSFORMATION

SDP is gathering stories of people who smoke cigarettes - their struggles, their journey to quit, and their victories

THE SMOKERS VOICE WHY THEY STARTED WHAT KEEPS THEM SMOKING

PORTRAITS CURRENT SMOKING JOURNEY

SHORT VIDEO 30 - 120 SECONDS OF SUCCESS

Started smoking at 15 because it looked cool. Now I tell my kids so they don't see me coughing. I want to quit but the cravings feel stronger than me." - Thandi, 32

Speak out. Sketch loud.

USING THE HARMS OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS TO THE SALE OF CIGARETTES AND VAPES TO MIND

ART & POETRY COMPETITION IS HERE

ABLE STUDENTS FOR DRUG POLICY TOGETHER WITH Y-ACT INVITES ALL GRADE 7 - GRADE 12 TO TAKE PART IN AN ARTS AND POETRY COMPETITION SHOWING YOUR CREATIVITY IN EXPOSING THE HARMS OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

REGISTRATION OPEN: 07/07/2025 - 15/08/2025
COMPETITION REGISTRATION LINK: [HTTPS://BIT.LY/4KNBT](https://bit.ly/4KNBT)

SHOW US YOUR CREATIVITY

CASH PRIZES CERTIFICATES DESIGN INTEGRATION



The 13th International Conference on Health and Hepatitis in Substance Users

Century City Conference Centre, Cape Town, South Africa

Hosted by the Elton John AIDS Foundation and partners, this workshop will explore strategies for developing and promoting policies and laws that protect the health and rights of people who use drugs.

This interactive session will provide space for dynamic discussion, collaboration, and exchange among colleagues in the Global South. Participants will discuss how to develop gender and youth sensitive drug policies, as well as share strategies for building coalitions for reform and how to effectively utilise evidence for advocacy.





Youth Leadership and Capacity Strengthening

Strengthening youth leadership and organisational capacity remained central to SSDP International's approach. In 2025, the organisation co-facilitated a Training of Trainers programme on advocacy and campaigning in partnership with Amref Health Africa. The training supported youth organisations to strengthen strategic advocacy skills, campaign design, and policy engagement, contributing to more effective and coordinated youth-led action across sectors.

Across all regions, SSDP International continued to prioritise leadership development, peer learning, and movement-building, recognising that sustainable policy reform depends on skilled, organised, and politically grounded youth leadership.



Global Policy Engagement and Agenda-Setting

EUROPE

AUSTRIA
GERMANY
IRELAND
UNITED
KINGDOM

OCEANIA

NEW ZEALAND

MIDDLE EAST

ASIA

PHILIPPINES

LATIN AMERICA

AFRICA

BURUNDI
GHANA
KENYA
LIBERIA
NIGERIA
RWANDA
SIERRA LEONE
UGANDA
ZIMBABWE
SOUTH AFRICA



Chapter highlights

SSDP Burundi's 2025 work centred on empowering young people with knowledge and strengthening health-centred, evidence-based responses to drug-related issues. Guided by its vision and mission, the chapter prioritised education, advocacy, and research, grounded in its SAFE values: Support, Awareness, Fairness, and Empowerment.

Across the year, SSDP Burundi delivered a mix of community awareness, capacity building, and policy engagement. Key moments included participation in the Support. Don't Punish campaign in June under the theme "Breaking the taboos: understanding drugs as a health issue," bringing together medical students and diverse experts; A youth leadership conference in July with partners to develop a new generation of African leaders; October community engagement in Ngagara (Bujumbura) focused on harm reduction and reproductive health. The chapter closed the year with a December convening in Bujumbura addressing harm reduction and gender-based violence, while also advocating for fair and neutral legal frameworks.



Chapter highlights

In terms of results, SSDP Burundi reported reaching 1,119 youth through awareness activities and training 117 student leaders in drug policy and public health, alongside increased visibility in local media and stronger connections with policymakers and partners. The report also notes constraints that shaped implementation, including limited funding, persistent stigma, and weak institutional partnerships, while outlining forward priorities such as expanding outreach beyond the capital, investing in youth-led research, deepening collaboration with SSDP International, and using digital and creative approaches to strengthen advocacy.



Chapter highlights

Throughout 2025, Students for Sensible Drug Policy Aotearoa New Zealand focused on consolidating its presence and expanding national engagement, marking a year of steady growth and strategic repositioning. While activities in Dunedin wound down, the Auckland chapter gained momentum, supported by the creation of a nationwide advocacy group that enabled participation beyond campus-based chapters. Early outreach efforts included engagement at the University of Auckland Clubs Expo, where conversations with students centred on harm reduction, informed decision-making, and the need for drug policy reform that better protects health and human rights. These efforts helped strengthen visibility, broaden participation, and reinforce SSDP's role as a credible youth-led voice in national drug policy discussions.

The chapter's advocacy work extended into legislative and public education spaces, with the submission of two written responses to proposed government legislation: the Regulatory Standards Bill, which risked weakening public health interventions, and the Electoral Amendment Bill, which would have restricted voting rights, including for people in prison. Complementing this policy work, SSDP Aotearoa published two in-depth articles addressing emerging drug policy issues – one exploring safe supply as a response to drug harm and organised crime, and another unpacking the implications of roadside drug testing for people who use drugs.



Chapter highlights

Capacity-building initiatives included hosting a free harm reduction training for community peers, focusing on overdose response, mental health first aid, and bystander intervention, as well as signing onto a national open letter calling for reduced alcohol industry influence on policymaking.

Toward the end of the year, SSDP Aotearoa deepened its engagement through public dialogue and international collaboration, hosting its first speaking event at the University of Auckland on psychedelics and contributing to regional knowledge exchange through participation in the Harm Reduction and Peer Workforce Summit in Perth, in partnership with the Harm Reduction Coalition Aotearoa. Looking ahead to 2026, the chapter outlined clear priorities, including expanded speaking programmes, a collaborative 'Drugstore' art exhibition envisioning legal drug regulation, and the launch of a student alcohol and other drug use survey to inform campus-based harm reduction initiatives. Despite operating with limited resources and relying heavily on volunteers, SSDP Aotearoa New Zealand closed the year with strengthened partnerships, clearer strategic direction, and a renewed commitment to youth-led, evidence-informed drug policy reform.



Chapter highlights

Throughout 2025, SSDP Kenya centred its work on education and knowledge-sharing as a foundation for youth-led harm reduction and drug policy engagement. The chapter focused on building informed campus and community spaces through accurate information, respectful language, and peer-driven dialogue. By promoting non-stigmatizing communication and critical discussion, SSDP Kenya strengthened understanding of harm reduction, prevention, and policy reform while encouraging young people to challenge harmful narratives around drug use.

This focus translated into targeted activities across the year. Between March and April, SSDP Kenya introduced a drug-related language glossary on campus, supported by interactive activities and peer discussions exploring stigma and the impact of language.



Chapter highlights

In June, the chapter partnered with AGYW Health and Wellness to engage young women who use drugs through community conversations on safety, discrimination, and support, while documenting participant perspectives. Work continued in September with the development of the S³ (Safe, Smart, and Supported) campus framework, shaped through student consultation, and in November, through collaboration with Maida during the 16 Days of Activism, engaging students and civil society on gender-based violence and youth policy participation.

Together, these efforts contributed to increased awareness of harm reduction, improved language use on campus, stronger understanding of the support needs of women who use drugs, and greater student participation in peer-led dialogue. Despite challenges related to access to policy spaces, limited resources, and institutional resistance, SSDP Kenya closed the year with clear priorities: expanding creative advocacy, strengthening documentation, deepening partnerships, and establishing additional campus chapters. With continued support from SSDP International, the chapter remains well positioned to scale its work and amplify youth voices regionally and globally.



Chapter highlights

In June 2025, the SSDP Lafia Chapter marked the Global Day of Action for the Support. Don't Punish. (SDP) campaign through a one-day Civic Town Hall and Stakeholder Accountability Dialogue on Harm Reduction and Decriminalisation. The dialogue convened approximately 50 participants, including law enforcement representatives, healthcare professionals, civil society actors, student leaders, media practitioners, and community stakeholders. The event was hosted at O2 Innovation Hub in Lafia, with support from the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC).

The activity aimed to shift local drug policy discourse in Nasarawa State from punitive prohibition towards a health- and human rights-based approach grounded in harm reduction principles. The campaign responded to rising drug-related enforcement statistics in the state and the limited integration of harm reduction and decriminalisation messaging within local policy and community conversations.

Context and Rationale

Lafia, the capital of Nasarawa State, occupies a strategic geographic position near Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Recent enforcement data reflects significant drug seizures within the state, with a substantial concentration in Lafia. Despite these trends, stakeholders acknowledged that punitive enforcement has not translated into sustainable public health outcomes.

The dialogue highlighted several contextual factors shaping the local drug landscape:

- A high concentration of tertiary institutions and off-campus student housing, increasing vulnerability among young people.
- Limited rehabilitation and counselling infrastructure relative to need.
- Socio-religious dynamics influencing public perceptions of substance use.
- Proximity to the FCT, contributing to transit and consumption patterns.

These realities underscored the urgency of introducing evidence-based harm reduction messaging and strengthening collaboration between enforcement, health, and community actors.

Chapter highlights

Dialogue Outcomes and Institutional Engagement

The town hall was followed by a multi-stakeholder roundtable designed to secure concrete institutional commitments. Discussions centred on expanding counselling services, reducing stigma, and fostering safer pathways to care for people who use drugs—particularly students.

Key areas of focus included:

- Strengthening non-punitive counselling services within existing enforcement structures.
- Establishing safe spaces in community pharmacies to enable confidential access to support and harm reduction information.
- Peer-led advocacy and mindset change initiatives led by students and youth actors.
- Sustained policy advocacy to promote decriminalisation and counter regressive legislative trends.

The engagement also acknowledged broader national policy tensions, including punitive legislative developments, and reaffirmed the need for rights-based advocacy at both state and federal levels.

Barriers Identified

Participants identified structural barriers to effective harm reduction implementation:

- Limited funding for sustained advocacy and policy engagement.
- Persistent mistrust between communities and law enforcement, deterring individuals from seeking medical support.
- Gaps in specialised care infrastructure and rehabilitation capacity.
- Addressing these barriers was framed as a shared accountability responsibility among institutions, civil society, and youth leaders.

Strategic Significance

The 2025 SDP activity in Lafia represented more than a commemorative event; it served as a structured accountability mechanism linking global drug policy reform principles to local implementation realities. The dialogue formalised commitments, strengthened cross-sector relationships, and expanded SSDP's footprint in northern Nigeria.

The Lafia Chapter's intervention demonstrates SSDP's continued expansion into under-engaged regions, reinforcing youth leadership, evidence-based advocacy, and community-driven reform. The initiative further contributes to SSDP International's broader strategy of advancing harm reduction and decriminalisation messaging through locally rooted, stakeholder-driven processes.



Chapter highlights

In 2025, SSDP chapters at the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS) strengthened campus-based public health advocacy through structured education, dialogue, and collective action on tobacco and vaping regulation. Chapter activities moved beyond awareness-building toward direct civic participation, positioning students as active contributors to national policy debates.

Health talks, campus forums, and petition-signing events translated information into mobilisation. Students engaged with the public health risks associated with tobacco and electronic delivery systems while also participating in organised advocacy in support of the Tobacco Products and Electronic Delivery Systems Control Bill. These activities linked scientific evidence, regulatory reform, and youth political agency within the university environment.

Structured youth forums and dialogues formed a central component of chapter work. Discussions hosted at UCT and WITS examined vaping and nicotine marketing within broader socio-legal and economic contexts, including advertising practices, constitutional rights, poverty, and public health governance. These forums created space for critical engagement with the structural drivers of substance use and regulatory gaps, enabling students to interrogate policy choices rather than simply receive health messaging.

Through coordinated education, dialogue, and advocacy, SSDP university chapters in South Africa strengthened student participation in public health policy processes and reinforced the role of higher education spaces as sites of informed civic engagement.



Chapter highlights

From June 2025 to February 2026, Students for Sensible Drug Policy Philippines (SSDP Philippines) strengthened its role as a youth-led advocate for human rights-based drug policy reform across national and regional platforms. Through invited engagements, policy dialogues, and legislative advocacy, the chapter advanced public health, dignity, and evidence-informed approaches as alternatives to punitive drug control strategies, positioning young people as active contributors in shaping reform.

Throughout the reporting period, SSDP Philippines emphasised the interconnectedness of drug policy with broader struggles for bodily autonomy, youth empowerment, and social justice. Participation in reproductive justice dialogues and ASEAN regional consultations elevated youth voices in discussions on preventive education, law enforcement, and treatment systems. Across these engagements, SSDP Philippines consistently advanced health-centered, rights-based frameworks grounded in lived realities.

Transforming drug education and institutional practice became a central focus. Through consultations, writeshops, validation workshops, and facilitator trainings, SSDP Philippines helped develop the ACCEPT Drug Education Modules, promoting compassionate and evidence-based alternatives to punitive and abstinence-only narratives. Engagement with researchers and policymakers also strengthened evidence challenging mandatory drug testing in tertiary institutions, encouraging more holistic and health-oriented responses.

Legislative advocacy further reinforced SSDP Philippines' impact. By contributing to the refinement of child rights-based drug policy reforms, including harm reduction and psychosocial support for Children Affected by the War on Drugs (CAWOD), the chapter expanded cross-sector alliances and support for restorative, accountable approaches. Together, these efforts reflect a sustained commitment to rights-centered reform that protects young people, strengthens democratic participation, and advances social justice.

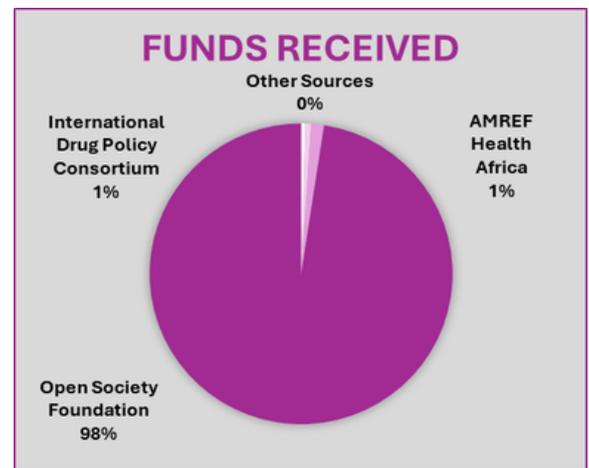


Financial Overview

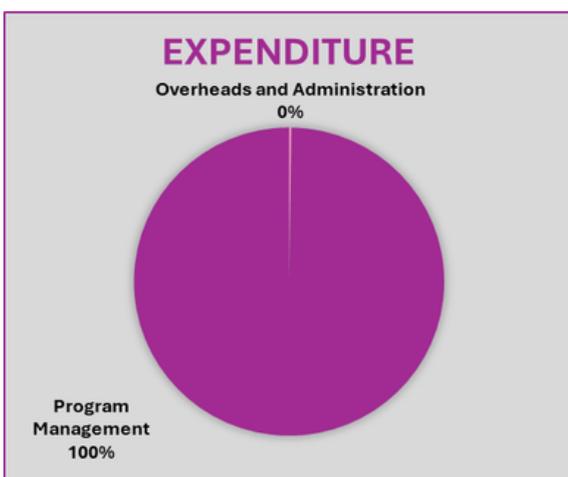
Sensible Drug Policy International NPC envisions a world where youth are empowered to drive meaningful change in drug policy through justice, compassion, and evidence-based reforms. Our mission is to mobilize young leaders, challenge harmful drug policies, and promote harm reduction strategies. Through advocacy, education, and international collaboration, we strive to eliminate stigma, support decriminalization, and ensure policies prioritize human rights and well-being.

The organization has secured financial support from three key sources:

·International Drug Policy Consortium	R 57,054
·NACOSA	R 14,831
·Youth Rise International	R 25,296
·AMREF Health Africa	R131,880
·Global Commission On drugs	R3,116
·Open Society Foundation	R9,334.170
·Total Funding Received	R9,566,347



These funds are crucial in supporting the organization's mission and operational activities.



The funds were allocated across various operational and activity expenses, including:

Overheads and Administration	
·Bank Charges	R 7,634
Program Management	
·Consultant Fees	R 41,468
·Office Relates Costs	R 88,887
·Activity Costs	R 1,416,952
·Staffing	R 996,329
·Travel & Accommodation	R 75,575
The total expenditure amounts to	R 2,656,845

The organization maintains a surplus of R 6 962,616, ensuring financial stability and the ability to continue its advocacy work.

The Financial Audit will commence in April for the last two completed financial years, ending Feb 2025 & 2026

Future Outlook

SSDP International enters the next phase of its work with a clear strategic orientation shaped by the lessons of 2025. The organisation's focus will remain on depth, durability, and institutional relevance, rather than rapid expansion or episodic advocacy.

Over the coming years, SSDP International will prioritise sustained engagement in national and regional policy reform processes. This includes continued technical support to government partners, active participation in the implementation and monitoring of the National Drug Master Plan, and ongoing contributions to education, child, and youth policy frameworks. The organisation will work to ensure that policy commitments translate into practice, with particular attention to prevention, psychosocial support, and non-punitive responses to substance use.

Internationally, SSDP International will deepen its collaborative work through the Erasmus+ consortium and other multilateral platforms, strengthening cross-border learning and coordinated youth-led advocacy. The organisation will continue to engage global drug policy spaces with a focus on alternatives to incarceration, community-based responses, and the inclusion of perspectives from rural, traditional, and historically marginalised communities.

Chapter development will remain selective and strategic. SSDP International will focus on strengthening existing chapters and supporting leadership development in regions where youth-led drug policy reform faces structural barriers and heightened political risk. Emphasis will be placed on governance, accountability, and alignment between local action and shared organisational principles.

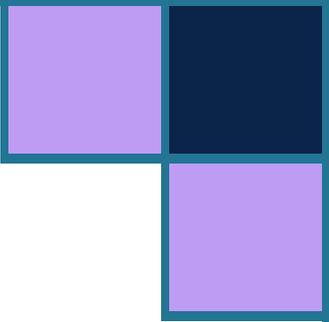
Programmatically, SSDP International will continue to integrate drug policy reform with related public health and social justice agendas, including tobacco control, education, and youth wellbeing. The organisation will prioritise approaches that resist criminalisation, centre evidence and lived experience, and challenge policy frameworks that reproduce exclusion and inequality.

Future Outlook

Institutionally, SSDP International will build on recent investments in governance, monitoring and learning, and staff sustainability. Strengthening internal systems remains essential to maintaining political credibility and ensuring that growth is both ethical and sustainable.

Looking ahead, SSDP International's position is deliberate and uncompromising: youth leadership in drug policy reform is not transitional or symbolic. It is a structural requirement for effective, just, and durable policy outcomes. The organisation will continue to advance this position through disciplined strategy, principled partnerships, and sustained engagement across policy, community, and international arenas.

Acknowledgments



SSDP International's work in 2025 was made possible through the collective efforts, trust, and collaboration of many individuals and institutions committed to advancing evidence-based, rights-affirming drug policy reform.

We extend our sincere gratitude to SSDP International's chapter leaders and members across regions, whose leadership, organising, and advocacy continue to anchor the organisation's work in lived realities and local contexts. Your commitment to principled, youth-led action remains the foundation of SSDP International's credibility and impact.

We acknowledge and thank our Board of Directors for their governance, strategic oversight, and stewardship during a year of institutional consolidation and growth. Their guidance has been critical in strengthening organisational sustainability while maintaining political clarity and accountability.

We are grateful to our funders and partners for their continued trust and investment. In particular, we acknowledge the Open Society Foundations for their multi-year support providing core and activity funding, Amref Health Africa's Y-Act Programme for advancing youth-led tobacco control advocacy, and the Erasmus+ programme for supporting international collaboration through a multi-country consortium. These investments have enabled SSDP International to pursue long-term, strategic engagement rather than short-term or project-bound interventions.

SSDP International also acknowledges the government departments, statutory bodies, and public institutions that engaged constructively with the organisation throughout 2025. We extend our appreciation to the Department of Basic Education, the Central Drug Authority, and all partners involved in national policy reform processes, including the National Drug Master Plan and the National Strategy to Accelerate Action for Children and Adolescents. These engagements reflect the value of inclusive, youth-informed policy development.

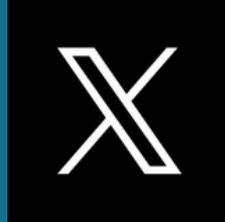
We further recognise our civil society allies, community partners, traditional leaders, researchers, and advocates across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and beyond, whose collaboration and insight strengthened SSDP International's work at national and international levels. Your contributions continue to challenge punitive orthodoxies and expand the possibilities for just and humane drug policies.

Acknowledgments

Finally, we acknowledge the SSDP International staff team for their professionalism, integrity, and sustained commitment. Their work behind the scenes, often under complex and demanding conditions, ensures that the organisation remains effective, accountable, and aligned with its mission.

This report reflects a shared effort. SSDP International remains committed to advancing this work in partnership, grounded in youth leadership, community accountability, and evidence-based reform.

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