

Dear _____,

My name is _____, and I [brief information about university, work, volunteerism]
I am writing to bring to your attention the importance of harm reduction in addressing the issue of drug use in the Philippines. As we are aware, our country is facing prevalent challenges in terms of drug use. There were an estimated 4.8 million people using illegal drugs in 2019. The high pervasiveness of drug use has led to drastic negative consequences like increased drug-related crime rates, infectious diseases, and deaths due to overdose.

Harm reduction is an evidence-based approach that aims to reduce the health and social harms associated with addiction and substance use. This approach supports people who use drugs to engage with peers, medical, and social services to meet their needs, and as a result of accessing these services, people are more likely to engage in ongoing treatment. Harm reduction services directly benefit people who use drugs, their families, and the community as a whole.

In the Philippines, harm reduction strategies are thought of as a “Western way of thinking” by some political leaders. However, this perspective is not deeply ingrained in Philippine culture. Public opinion on drug use is a construct of colonial influence and does not reflect the true cultural perspective of the Philippines.

Harm reduction approaches and programming are supported internationally by global institutions such as The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the World Health Organization. It is seen as a best practice for engaging with individuals with addiction and substance use issues. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria also considers harm reduction a critical part of a country’s comprehensive HIV response.

In light of these facts, I would like to urge you to raise awareness and implement harm reduction strategies in the Philippines as a necessary and practical approach to address the negative consequences of drug use in the country. The high rates of drug-related crime, infectious diseases, and overdose deaths can be reduced through the implementation of harm-reduction programs. Moreover, by providing access to health and social services, individuals who use drugs will be better able to engage in ongoing treatment and live safer and healthier lives.

I believe that by working together, we can create a safer and healthier Philippines. I look forward to hearing your thoughts and recommendations on this matter.

Sincerely,

[Insert Your Name]