

Self Injury Awareness Day and Zero Discrimination Day

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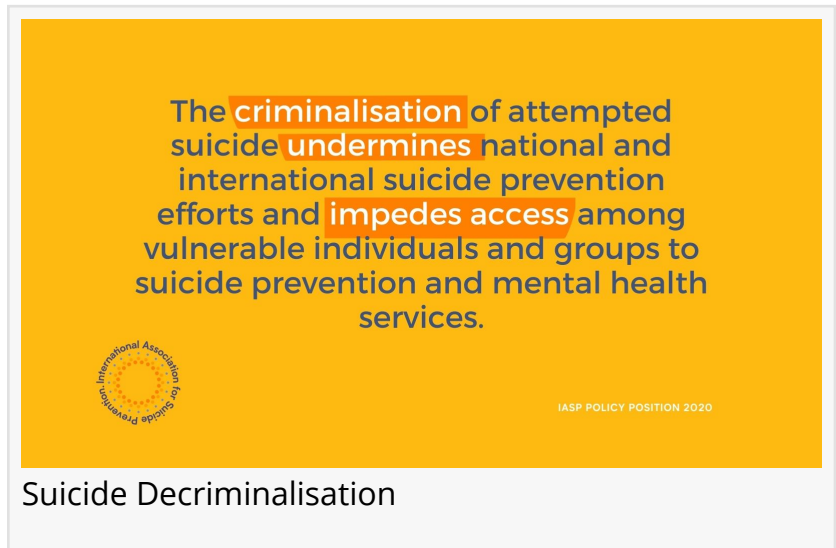
Discrimination creates barriers and ostracises the most vulnerable, creating heard-to-reach populations

that are more difficult to engage with and support. The negative impact of discrimination is compounded by the enforcement of penal laws that [criminalise suicidal behaviour](#); laws which remain in place in least 20 countries worldwide. The intention of such harsh legislation is to deter individuals from taking their life, but evidence proves criminalisation to be counterproductive in preventing suicidal behaviour, instead creating huge obstacle for vulnerable individuals in crisis.

This day of observation offers us an opportunity to promote the work of CSOs, politicians, policy workers and communities advocating and campaigning for the decriminalisation of suicidal behaviour in countries where it remains a criminal offence.

To achieve a more inclusive and accepting society, it is vital that we break down the major barrier of stigma to support those individuals suffering alone to come forward for the help they desperately need.

Although progress has been achieved in recent years, we still have a long way to go. Our mission will not end until every nation in the world acknowledges the importance of mental health by providing equal and adequate care to their citizens, free of prejudice. We know that decriminalisation of suicidal behaviour has a positive impact on help-seeking by acknowledging suicidal behaviour as a major public health issue, rather than prohibition. It is vital to suicide prevention efforts that vulnerable individuals can exercise their human right to access mental



health care without fear, shame or judgement. For this reason, it is essential that progressive, rights-based mental health legislation and policies are enacted globally to ensure that all individuals are protected against discrimination, victimisation, and marginalisation.

We all play a role in ending discrimination. Collectively, we can create a world where no one feels alone.

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