



The Official Youth Newsletter of the XVIII International AIDS Conference

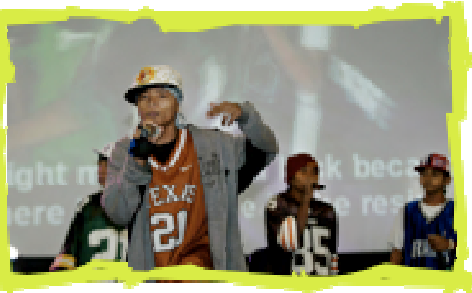
Edition 1 (November 2009)

Welcome to the first edition of the AIDS 2010 Youth Newsletter. Here you will find a quick review of what's going on with the **Vienna YouthForce** and the preparation of the **Youth Programme** for the **XVIII International AIDS Conference** that will take place **18 to 23 July 2010 in Vienna, Austria**.

Read on and partake in AIDS 2010...

In this edition you will find:

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1 Youth at the International AIDS Conferences

Facts: When and Where?

International AIDS Conferences happen every two years and are the biggest gathering of scientific, community and government leaders, UN agencies, donors and the general public committed to finding solutions to end the pandemic. The next conference will take place in **Vienna, Austria, from 18 to 23 July 2010**. We expect over 25,000 participants from more than 100 countries around the world to attend the conference. Many of these will hopefully be young people!

Why do we want young people at the conference?

Because we are greatly affected by HIV and AIDS. Almost half of all new HIV infections in the world are among people under 25! Estimates show that more than 7,400 people become infected with HIV daily, 3,300 of whom are young people. Globally, 5.4 million young people are living with HIV. Young women under age 25 are at an even greater risk for HIV infection and comprise 57.4% of infected youth. Young people remain the most vulnerable to HIV infection due to many factors, including lack of information, education,





societal influences, and inability to access healthcare services.¹

Because we want to mobilize youth networks worldwide and make young people visible at the conference not only as delegates, but also as organizers, speakers, leaders and peers. Young people will have their own areas at the conference but shall be empowered to take part in the larger discussions, too.

Because we want to empower young people, advocate for current and critical issues affecting youth worldwide, and further pinpoint current strategies for effective change. Building youth leadership is crucial to an effective response to HIV and AIDS among young people and by young people, especially for those marginalised youth groups. This includes but is not limited to young people living with HIV, young people who use drugs, young sex workers, young men who have sex with men, young women and young migrants. We are excited to reach out to young people throughout the world, and to focus specifically on issues in Austria and in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region.²

Rights Here, Right Now is the theme of AIDS 2010. It highlights the importance of protecting and promoting human rights, including human rights of young people. The rights of women and girls, the right to dignity and self-determination for affected populations, the right to equal access to health care and life-saving prevention and treatment programmes, and the right to evidence-based interventions driven by science, rather than ideology, are the basis for action and a successful response to HIV.

Rights Here, Right Now!

2 Youth Force at Past Conferences

Mexico 2008 _ *Hola amigos!*

It has been over a year since the XVII International AIDS Conference in Mexico City and things are still hot. The biggest conference on a development issue ever, with almost 25,000 participants from each corner of the world, who came to Mexico at the beginning of August 2008 to share, learn, advocate and have fun. Almost 2,000 delegates were young people and we all had the chance to collaborate and benefit from the Youth Programme. Advocates for Youth, GYCA (Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS), TakingItGlobal, Youth R.I.S.E, the World AIDS Campaign, Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights and COJESS (our Mexican partner) were all part of the Mexico YouthForce, which along with the International AIDS Society (IAS), helped raise the profile of youth issues before and during the conference.



Activities

The Mexico Youth Force had a three-day pre-conference for 300 young delegates who wanted to connect and update themselves before AIDS 2010; a reception to celebrate youth activism with some celebrities in a XVII Century museum in Mexico City; the Mexico Youth Force also contributed to organise the Youth Pavilion in the Global Village, with sessions and workshops; a lounge for young people living with HIV, and the commitments desk where decision-makers and community leaders came to make commitments to youth. We also had many young speakers in panels, sessions, and a plenary and young people also spoke at a

¹ For more information, visit: www.youthaidscoalition.org

² You can read more quick facts at www.unaids.org/learnmore/en/index.html#

press conference and helped many delegates to come to the conference and be part of the global response to HIV.

History, Website and Videos

At the AIDS 2008 Youth Programme website you can get an overview of the activities conducted in 2008 and you can read about the great history of the YouthForce at past conferences.

Since the XIV International AIDS Conference in Barcelona in 2002, the YouthForce has been organizing and mobilizing youth leaders and young people, ensuring their participation and access to key government and civil society leaders. youthaids2008.org/

If you want to take a look of the youth activities please click [here](#) and [here](#) to watch a 15 minute video with the best shots of the Global Village, the conference, the demonstrations on the streets, the parties and the discussions organized by the Mexico YouthForce.

3 Highly affected Youth in Eastern Europe and Central Asia ³

One of the reasons that the City of Vienna was chosen to host AIDS 2010 is because it is the next door neighbour of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, a region with a growing epidemic. You will find some facts on young people living with HIV and young people who use drugs in the region, particularly in Russia:

Russia & Ukraine facts & figures on young people

Eastern Europe and Central Asia remains one of the few areas in the world where HIV prevalence continues to rise. From an estimated 630,000 people living with the virus in 2001, we have seen an increase of 140 percent to 1.5 million in 2007. 90% of people living with HIV in the region live either in Russia or the Ukraine. Meanwhile, in Central Asia and the Caucuses, the number of newly reported HIV diagnoses is rising rapidly, with the highest incidence rate found in Uzbekistan.

- * **FACT:** The majority of young people have no information about HIV and how to prevent an infection. 75% of new cases of people living with HIV are young people between the ages of 15 and 30.



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- *Living with HIV in Eastern Europe and the CIS, Regional Human Development Report, UNDP Bratislava Regional Center, Dec 08*
- *UNAIDS/WHO, 2008 Report on Global AIDS Epidemic*
- *Federal Scientific and Methodological Centre for the Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS, Russia 2008, <http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu/global?page=cr03-rs-00>*

Injecting Drug Use & the responses to HIV/AIDS⁴

The leading cause of new infections in Russia is the use of injecting drugs (66%). It is estimated that about 1,825,000 Russians, which accounts for 2% of the adult population, uses intravenous drugs. Amongst this community, over one-third are also living with HIV.

Discrimination and the social exclusion of people living with HIV are undermining efforts to respond to AIDS. Overall AIDS funding and access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) have been enhanced, whereas harm reduction strategies are not implemented officially.

- * **FACT:** In Russia, the use of methadone in drug dependence treatment is illegal. This over regulation creates barriers and causes suffering.
- * **FACT:** Unprotected sexual intercourse is a growing contributing factor to HIV in the region, and HIV is increasingly associated with women and children. HIV now affects every community of the region.

4 Youth @ Vienna

In Austria, several HIV/AIDS activities are taking place to inform and increase public awareness throughout the year. For example, many people are not aware of the discrimination against PLHIV in everyday life. Besides continuous education workshops and advocacy campaigns to make political leaders accountable, Austrian community leaders will use World AIDS Day (1 December 2009) and the AIDS Memorial Day to raise awareness. Towards AIDS 2010 activists of Vienna Youth Force and local youth NGOs and organisations will try to inform as many young people as possible about the youth programme and involve them in the organisation.



Vienna is especially known for the glamorous AIDS charity event, "Life Ball". Organizers of the Life Ball and AIDS 2010 are cooperating and the date for next year's Life Ball is 17.7.2010, which is just one day before the conference.

5 Get involved!

Are you wondering how you can become a part of this conference? Do you want to know how you can raise your voice regarding HIV and AIDS, go to the conference, and connect to networks of young people around the world? Contact us and we will help you out!

Get informed

At www.aids2010.org you get the overall information about the conference. We want young people to know about the conference and that we're organising a youth programme there. On the homepage of the website, you can click on the "[add me to the mailing list](#)" button to sign up for monthly e-updates from AIDS 2010.

From **December 1st to February 10th** there will be a call for your contributions to the Youth Programme, such as booths, sessions and workshops, performances and exhibitions. Go ahead and think of creative ideas and how to be present at the conference with your youth movement!

In the next Youth AIDS 2010 newsletter we will inform you about how to get involved in organisational teams and how you can register as a volunteer.

⁴ If you wish to read more on youth participation on harm reduction initiatives you can visit <http://projects.tigweb.org/harmreduction?langrand=276114127> and www.youthrise.org

Tell your friends!

Please share this newsletter with friends and youth groups and networks you know! If you have ideas on how to involve people who do not have access to the internet please pass the information on.

6 Who we are?

This newsletter is brought to you by:

AIDS 2010 Youth Programme Working Group: The Youth Programme Working Group (YPWG) is the official organizing body that prepares the youth programme for the conference. The Working Group organizes sessions, workshops related to youth, the youth pavilion in the Global Village, and a lounge for young people living with HIV, amongst other things. It consists of 11 people from different regions of the world who work together to prepare the official Youth Programme for AIDS 2010.

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Vienna YouthForce: The Vienna YouthForce was launched after AIDS 2008 and is a global platform for international, regional and local youth organizations that focus on HIV and AIDS, as well as on youth sexual and reproductive health and rights. We work together and organize youth activities and advocacy campaigns prior to and during the conference, such as the youth pre-conference, youth advocacy campaigns and the youth commitment desk. Ten youth organizations are on the Vienna Youth Force now, including Advocates for Youth, Community Forum Austria, Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS (GYCA), International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA), the World AIDS Campaign, Youth Coalition on Sexual and Reproductive Rights, YouAct, Y-Peer, CHOICE for youth and sexuality and Youth R.I.S.E.

The Youth Programme Working Group and the Vienna YouthForce are working closely together to act as a common body for young people at the International AIDS Conference. If you have particular questions, you may contact us at youth@aid2010.org.

You must be the change you wish to see in the world

- Mahatma Gandhi