



**Guide for
National Youth Reports for
the 2006 Roundtable Review of the
United Nations General Assembly
Special Session
Declaration of Commitment on
HIV/AIDS
(UNGASS +5)**

Table of Contents

- I. Background
- II. About this Guide
- III. Gathering Information
- IV. Report Preparation
- V. Key Questions
 - 1. Political Commitment
 - 2. Financial Commitment
 - 3. Access to information and services
 - 4. Youth Participation
- VI. Annex – Glossary of Terms

I. Background

On 25–27 June 2001, heads and representatives of State and Government met for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS), which resulted in the issuance of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (DoC). The Declaration outlines what governments have pledged to achieve –in international and regional partnerships, and with the support of civil society – to halt and begin to reverse the epidemic. The Declaration is not a legally binding document; however, it is a clear statement by governments concerning what should be done to fight HIV/AIDS and what they have committed to doing, often with specific deadlines¹.

The following paragraphs outline the targets in the Declaration of Commitment relating to young people:

- *(Article 37) By 2003, ensure the development and implementation of multi-sectoral national strategies and financing plans for combating HIV/AIDS that (...) involve partnerships with civil society and the business sector and the full participation of people living with HIV/AIDS, those in vulnerable groups and people mostly at risk, particularly women and young people (...)*
- *(Article 47) By 2003, establish time-bound national targets to achieve the internationally agreed global prevention goal: to reduce, by, 2005 HIV prevalence among young men and women aged 15 to 24 in the most affected countries by 25 per cent.*
 - *to reduce, by 2010, HIV prevalence among young men and women aged 15-24 globally.*
 - *to intensify efforts to achieve these targets as well as to challenge gender stereotypes, attitudes, and inequalities in relation to HIV/AIDS, encouraging the active involvement of men and boys.*
- *(Article 53) By 2005, ensure that at least 90 per cent, and by 2010 at least 95 per cent of young men and women aged 15 to 24 have access to the information, education, including peer education and youth-specific HIV/AIDS education, and services necessary to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection, in full partnership with young persons, parents, families, educators and health-care providers.*
- *(Article 63) By 2003, develop and/or strengthen strategies, policies and programmes:*
 - *which recognize the importance of the family in reducing vulnerability, in educating and guiding children and take account of cultural, religious and ethical factors,*
 - *to reduce the vulnerability of children and young people by ensuring access of both girls and boys to primary and secondary education, including HIV/AIDS in curricula for adolescents;*
 - *ensuring safe and secure environments, especially for young girls;*
 - *expanding good-quality, youth-friendly information and sexual health education and counseling services;*
 - *strengthening reproductive and sexual health programmes;*
 - *and involving families and young people in planning, implementing and evaluating HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmes, to the extent possible.*

As part of the monitoring process of the DoC) progress made towards attaining the targets will be reviewed at the UN General Assembly in New York on May 31- June 2nd, 2006. The participation of young people in this review process is critical. This year marks five years since the UN agreed on these goals in the 2001 DoC.

¹ For more information, see UNAIDS (www.unaids.org).

To ensure that the voices and concerns of young people are heard in the monitoring process of the UNGASS Declaration of Commitment, we are asking you, young people from around the world, to report on the progress made towards achieving the UNGASS targets related to young people in your country. You will be able to comment on where progress has been made, express your concerns about the gaps and shortfalls for achieving the targets relating to young people, and make recommendations based on your own knowledge, experiences and research findings.

We will endeavour to showcase and disseminate outstanding national reports at the UNGASS +5 review and possibly create a statement and/or press release based on all national reports we receive. We are however not able to publish a compilation of all reviews as a result of time and funding constraints, and cannot publish individual reports (but can design a cover page for excellent reports and put the report into PDF format).

Due to staff constraints we can only accept reports in English that have full citations and are between 5-15 pages. Please do not include statistics without full citations as we will not be able to support undocumented assertions with GYCA's name. We will be checking statistics so it is imperative that you provide information on where you found your data.

Example of a correct citation:

More than half of people infected with HIV each year are between the ages of 15-24.²

You can make a footnote by going to "Insert," "Reference," "Footnote."

If you are using a website, your footnote should look like this:

Title of Article or Page, Organization or Author. <http://www.....> Date.

II. About this Guide

The purpose of this Guide is to assist you in gathering information and reporting on your country's progress in reaching the UNGASS targets for young people.

This Guide is divided into the following sections, as follows:

- **Gathering Information:** This section provides a brief overview of monitoring methods and concrete tools to enable youth organizations to undertake the assessment. There are numerous ways for you to monitor country actions - pick and choose the right methods for you.
- **Report preparation:** This section provides you with the outline for the report. The deadline for the report is 11 April 05.
- **Key questions:** This section provides key questions for monitoring and assessing national youth policies, programmes and/or services undertaken by your government and civil society since the UNGASS DoC.

III. Gathering Information³

Gathering information is a way of monitoring progress. Monitoring is used to identify successes and problems as early on as possible (in relation to programmes or projects), in order to make any necessary corrections.

What is monitoring for? It is important to know beforehand why you are undertaking a monitoring exercise. In this case, GYCA will be working with you in monitoring your country's progress in achieving the goals relating to young people agreed upon in the DoC. This guide includes key questions you can use to gather the information.

² *State of the World Population Report*, UNFPA, 2004.

³ This section draws on the *Making Commitments Matter: A Toolkit for Young People to Evaluate National Youth Policy*, UN DESA (New York, 2004).

Who will do it? In order to make the task easier and more fun, you need to assemble a team of people experienced in research and writing who will work together, and divide up key tasks. If necessary, provide training to the team members on gathering information and keeping records. We suggest that your team consists of five people- one overall editor and four people to write each section.

Preparations: Make sure you develop a process and timeline for collecting information before you begin. You may wish to gather information on your country's policies and programmes before you begin. It is also important to set objectives for your monitoring exercise.

Information collection: There are many different ways to gather information, and to answer the questions laid out in this tool (see Section V for the key questions you will use). There is no single way to gather your information, and it can often be helpful to use several methods. Some methods include:

- **Review of existing documentation:** It is important to review existing documentation, in order to avoid duplication of efforts. It may be useful to put together a team of people who can collect relevant information. This information can then be reviewed, analyzed and summarized. After reviewing existing information, it will be easier to determine what additional information you may wish to find out. Here are some sources that may be able to provide you with relevant information:
 - Government ministries, such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance or the Youth Ministry
 - Newspaper and online articles about the HIV/AIDS situation in your country; articles are a good source to find quotations from government leaders and sometimes their commitments.
 - NGOs working with young people, or NGOs that carry out programmes related to HIV
 - National AIDS Commission/Unit/Programme
 - Youth organizations and networks
 - Demographic and health surveys
 - Academic and research institutions
 - Country and Regional offices of UN and other international agencies.

- **Focus groups discussions with young people:** a focus group is an informal discussion to obtain opinions from a small group of people who have special knowledge about the target population's problems and needs. It might be helpful to choose a moderator and assistant to work together to try to obtain responses from everyone in the group, and make sure that everyone's opinion is respected and acknowledged.

- **Individual interviews with young people:** personal interviews can also be valuable, to obtain in-depth information from an individual. Here are some ideas for short interviews that you may wish to undertake in connection with collecting your information:
 - Idea #1: Interview a young person about their experience using a health service**
 - Was the health service easily accessible? Were the location and the opening times convenient? Was it affordable?
 - Was it *youth friendly*⁴? Did the health service provider treat you with respect?
 - Was there information available on HIV prevention?

 - Idea #2: Interview a young person about their school-based HIV education programme**
 - At what age were they taught about HIV and SRH?
 - Does the school provide *life skills-based education*?
 - Is it an established part of the school curriculum?
 - Does it address gender issues?

- **Individual interviews with government or civil society policy makers and programme managers:** in-depth interviews with policy makers and programme managers from the government and civil society can also be conducted. They can provide insight on how a programme or project is being implemented, its

⁴ Italicized terms are defined in the Annex – Glossary of Terms

successes and constraints. You may want to set up a meeting with the Minister of Health or her/his office for an interview. They could provide you with informational resources that can help.

- **Field visits to project sites:** conducting a field visit is a good method for finding out firsthand the impact of a programme or project. During a field visit, the programme manager, and other programme staff can be informally interviewed. If the project is providing direct services to young people, it will also be helpful to interview them as well.
- **Case studies:** Case studies can be used to highlight “good practices” or particular challenges or constraints by describing a specific project, programme, or personal experience. The purpose of drafting good practice case studies is to highlight the achievements that have been made, in order that others can learn from the example, and perhaps even replicate parts of it for their context. A good practice thus allows for lessons learned, reflection and analysis of what has and hasn’t worked.

Here are some ideas for short case studies you may wish to undertake in connection with collecting your information:

Idea #1: National youth and HIV mechanisms

- Is there a national youth policy? Does the national youth policy effectively address HIV/AIDS issues? Or are youth included in the national HIV/AIDS policy? Does it have specific, time-bound objectives? What about evaluation mechanisms?
- What type of youth department or youth ministry exists in your country? Is it involved in policies related to HIV and young people? Does it coordinate with other ministries?
- Does any department/ministry conduct research and data collection on youth-related issues? How are these findings distributed? Is the information easily accessible?
- What is the involvement and participation of youth and youth organizations in the existing institutions and mechanisms?
- What have been the successes and constraints?

Idea #2: Highlighting the work of a youth organization in scaling up HIV prevention programmes

- What makes this particular organization worthwhile?
- Does this organization fully represent youth? Is it gender balanced?
- What type of successful programmes does this organization implement?
- What have been the successes and constraints?

Idea #3: Highlighting an HIV prevention intervention for marginalized youth

- Describe the intervention - What makes this particular project worthwhile?
- How do youth participate in planning, implementation and evaluation of the project?
- How does this intervention succeed in reaching out to marginalized youth?
- What have been the successes and constraints?

Analysis of information: After you have gathered the information, it is important to analyze it, by looking for trends and summarizing main points under the key issues. Discuss the implications and impact of your results, and relate them to targets and benchmarks that have been set by your country or in the Declaration of Commitment.

IV. Report preparation.

The next step then includes preparing a report based on your results. The report should include recommendations for actions to take, based on your results. It is important to write the report in a reader-friendly format - make it interesting, so include pictures, profiles of young people, short interviews or anything else that would make it more lively! Please limit your report to **5-8 pages, font 12, single spaced** and throughout the report indicate the source of your data and results with full citations.

Please use this outline for your report.

- I. Cover page
- II. Table of Contents
- III. Introduction
 - a) one paragraph describing the HIV situation in your country, especially relating to young people
 - b) one paragraph describing the methodology used in gathering information for this report
 - c) one paragraph highlighting the key findings and recommendations
- IV. Results
 - a) Political Commitment - based on the presented questions:
 - Description and analysis of the existing policies relating to HIV and young people
 - Identification of major achievements and gaps in policies
 - Recommendations for action at national level. What policies and programmes need to be created to fill these gaps?
 - b) Financial Commitment – based on the presented questions:
 - Description and analysis of the allocation of funds made at the national level for HIV prevention in young people
 - Identification of major achievements and gaps in funding
 - Recommendations for action. What specific types of programmes need to be funded?
 - c) Access to information and services – based on the presented questions:
 - Description and analysis of information and services provided for young people
 - Identification of major achievements and gaps
 - Recommendations for action
 - d) Young people’s participation
 - Description and analysis of formalized structures young people’s participation in HIV prevention programmes, policies and plans
 - Identification of major achievements and gaps
 - Recommendations for action
- V. Summary of major achievements and gaps
- VI. Summary of major recommendations for action
- VII. List of documents and sources consulted

Make your report interesting and lively! **Add pictures**, case studies or short interviews. Please send your report as a Word document (not PDF or rich text).

Deadline for submission of your report is April 11th, 2006, to Dabesaki Mac-Ikemenjima, dabesaki@youthaidscoalition.org.

V. Key Questions

To ensure that all of the country reports address the same issues, we have put together a number of questions to guide your research. These are based on the indicators suggested by UNAIDS to monitor progress made on the UNGASS targets⁵ and on the e-discussion conducted by authors of the 2005 UNGASS report, “Our Voice, Our Future.”⁶

⁵ For more information, see *National AIDS Programmes - A guide to indicators for monitoring and evaluating national HIV/AIDS prevention programmes for young people*, UNAIDS (2004).

⁶ *Our Voice, Our Future: Young People Report on Progress Made on the UNGASS Declaration of Commitment*. Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS and Global Youth Partners, <http://www.youthaidscoalition.org/resources.html>, 2005.

Political Commitment

1. Does the national strategic plan on HIV/AIDS address young people? Is HIV prevention among young people an issue and priority within the plan?
2. Is a *multi-sectoral approach* to HIV prevention among young people proposed in the national HIV/AIDS strategic plan?⁷
3. Are there policies or strategies to promote HIV information, education and communication (IEC) / behaviour change communication (BCC) for young people either within the national strategy or other policy documents?
4. Is there a policy promoting *life-skills-based education* in schools? Are there policies promoting the provision of information related to sexual and reproductive health specifically?
5. Do a large proportion of young people not attend school? Is there a policy addressing the provision of information and services to out-of-school youth?
6. Do policies addressing young people view them as a homogeneous group? Are specific subgroups addressed and differentiated for instance by sex, age, religion, race, school attendance or marital status?
7. Which groups of young people are particularly vulnerable to HIV in your country? Do any policies exist that address the provision of information and services to these vulnerable groups?
8. Do young people living with HIV face stigma and discrimination? Is there a policy in place to combat stigma and discrimination?
9. Is there a policy that allows young people to access services and to ensure health services are *youth-friendly*?
10. Is there a policy promoting young people's access to condoms? Are there any age restrictions?
11. Are there national policies on abstinence for adolescents?
12. Are there any specific policies related to age of consent for access to preventive interventions, including voluntary testing and counseling and condoms?

Financial Commitment:

1. What percentage or amount (in a year) of government funds has been committed to HIV/AIDS?
2. Of these funds, how much has been allocated to HIV prevention efforts among young people, including *life-skills-base education* through schools, IEC campaigns targeted at young people, and programs for the provision of *youth friendly services*?
3. Are most youth-related HIV programmes funded by the government, by NGOs, or by international organizations?

NB: If you have difficulties finding specific figures, an estimate is better than no figure at all! Explain why you were not able to determine specific figures.

Access to information and services:

1. Do young people have access to information and education about HIV/AIDS? In what venues/formats? Why do some young people not have access to information and education?
2. Is the information provided age-appropriate, easy to understand, and relevant for young people?
3. Has young people's access to information and education improved over the last years?
4. Is participatory *life-skills-based education* part of the curriculum in schools? Is it being taught? At what levels? Does it specifically address HIV and sexual and reproductive health? Does it specifically address gender issues?
5. Are there any programmes in place to provide information to out-of-school youth, and other vulnerable groups?
6. Do most young people have access to *youth-friendly health services*? Do these services include reproductive health services, including low-cost or free condoms, voluntary counseling and testing, and diagnosis and treatment of STIs?
7. Are young people aware of the available health services? What are the constraints for accessing such services? Are the services managed by the government or by NGOs?

⁷ See Annex (page 10 of this guide) for a glossary of terms.

8. How much do young people use specified health services? Do young women and men use them to the same extent? Has young people's access to services improved over the past years?
9. Are there programs in place that provide services to vulnerable groups? Do they have access to these services?
10. Are condoms available to young people in locations that they can access regularly and easily?

Youth participation

1. Are young people, including young people living with HIV/AIDS, involved in planning, implementation and evaluation of HIV prevention and care and support services?
2. Is their participation formalized within a structure (e.g. member of an advisory board, committee etc)? Is this structure operational? In practice, are young people active participants?
3. Is the participation of young people meaningful? Give examples. Are their views respected and incorporated? Do young people make a significant contribution? Have young people created or changed any policies or programmes?
4. Has the extent of young people's participation improved over the last years?

Thank you for contributing to this important review! Your reports help to enforce the commitments made and inform governments of progress needed from a youth perspective. Dabesaki is available to assist you with any questions or concerns that may arise.

Dabesaki dabesaki@youthaidscoalition.org

V. Annex: Glossary of Terms

Life skills: This term refers to a large group of psycho-social and interpersonal skills, which can help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively, and develop coping and self-management skills that may help them lead a healthy and productive life. Life skills may be directed toward personal actions and actions toward others, as well as actions to change the surrounding environment to make it conducive to healthy living.

Life skills-based education: LSBE refers to an interactive process of teaching and learning which enables learners to acquire knowledge and to develop attitudes and skills which support the adoption of healthy behaviours. Not all programme content is considered "health-related." For example, life skills-based literacy and numeracy, or life skills-based peace education, or human rights.

Multi-sectoral approach to HIV/AIDS: involves all sectors of society - governments, business, civil society organisations, communities and people living with HIV/AIDS, at all levels - in addressing the causes and impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

What makes health services youth-friendly:

Service providers:

- Are specially trained staff
- Respect young people
- Honour privacy and confidentiality
- Provide adequate time for client-provider interaction
- Have peer counselors available

Health Facilities have:

- Separate space or special times set aside for youth
- Convenient hours and locations
- Adequate space and sufficient privacy
- Comfortable surroundings.

Programme design:

- Youth are involved in design, service outreach and delivery, and continuing feedback
- Drop-in clients are welcomed or appointments are arranged rapidly
- No overcrowding and short waiting times
- Affordable fees
- Publicity and recruitment that inform and reassure youth
- Boys and young men welcomed and served
- Wide range of services available
- Necessary referrals available

Other possible characteristics:

- Educational material available on site to take
- Group discussions available
- Delay of pelvic examination and blood tests possible
- Alternative ways to access information, counseling and services