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YOUTH PARTNERSHIPS ALERTS!



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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the second edition of the *Youth Partnerships Alerts!* In this edition you will find up-to-date information on the upcoming International AIDS Conference, key youth events and more.

If you have information on upcoming events or opportunities that are relevant to youth and HIV campaigners, let us know. To make sure that you are getting the information you need, let us know how to improve these alerts. All you have to do is write to: youthalert@worldaidscampaign.org.

UPCOMING EVENT: XVII INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE

From 3 – 8 August 2008, the XVII International AIDS Conference will be held in Mexico City, marking the first time that the conference has been held in Latin America. The AIDS Conference is the largest AIDS forum, bringing together over 20,000 participants. For more information on the conference, visit <http://www.aids2008.org/>

This meeting will be the last International AIDS Conference to be held before 2010, the year by which governments, donors and the United Nations have committed to achieving universal access for all. As such, it represents a unique opportunity to come together in an expression of leadership and commitment, emphasising the urgency of achieving universal access by 2010.

The conference is also a great opportunity for youth to come together and highlight the specific needs of young people, highlight youth leadership, and share specific recommendations for actions to address the challenges and gaps that remain to be able to achieve the youth-related universal access targets by 2010.

* HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

If you will be participating in the AIDS Conference, there are several ways in which you can get involved. Even if you won't be there – don't worry! – you can still receive day-to-day information on what's going on. There will be several blogs being written daily by youth delegates, which you can see online at www.worldaidscampaign.org. Certain parts of the conference will also be webcasted, courtesy of the Kaiser Family Foundation. To access the webcasted sessions, all you need to do is sign up for a free daily email delivered during the week of the conference, by visiting www.kaisernetwork.org/aids2008

Key youth events to be on the look out for during AIDS 2008 include, but are not limited to:

Youth Pre-Conference: To be held from 31 July to 2 July, the Youth Pre-Conference, will bring together over 300 young delegates from around the world. The pre-conference will include a variety of informative and skills-building workshops in English and Spanish, providing youth delegates with an opportunity to work together before the main conference and plan their participation together. Applications to the youth pre-conference are now closed, but if you will be at the conference and have not registered for the youth pre-conference, you can find out about what happened and connect with participants at the Youth Pavilion (see section "How can we connect?" for further information)

Media workshop for young people living with HIV: On 30 July, in the build-up to the conference, this media workshop will support participants in developing knowledge on their specific rights, as well as skills to interact with the media. The workshop is being organised by the World AIDS Campaign, United Nations Population Fund, Young Positives and the Global Network of People living with HIV/AIDS, with Global Media AIDS Initiative as a supporting partner. If you will be arriving in Mexico in time to participate in the workshop, you are still in time to send in your application! Check if you fit the selection criteria and complete the application by visiting <http://youthaids2008.org/en/informed/opportunities.html>

Youth Reception: To celebrate youth leadership in the AIDS

response, the Mexico YouthForce will be hosting a youth reception on the evening of 2 August, from 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. The reception will be held in Museo José Luis Cuevas, where guests will be treated to an evening of key note speakers and performers, including Mexican artist Julieta Venegas. R.S.V.P. is required to <http://youthaids2008.org/en/rsvp.html>

Youth Partnership Initiative: In partnership with the Mexico YouthForce, the World AIDS Campaign, with the support of UNFPA and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will implement this initiative throughout the International AIDS Conference. The YPI will pair youth leaders with established leaders of a wide-range of constituencies, in order to support youth in developing practical leadership skills experientially, as well as for the constituencies to learn from youth leaders and develop partnerships with youth as a constituency. Through a two-way learning process, the YPI will promote mutual understanding, facilitate networking, and enable a transfer of knowledge and skills between participants.

Youth-Adults Commitments Desk: The Commitments Desk, housed at the Youth Pavilion in the Global Village, is an initiative where delegates can make time-bound commitments to prioritise youth issues and youth involvement in their research, funding, policies, and programs. In order to hold these delegates accountable, these commitments will be tracked after the conference by young people. This initiative was successfully undertaken in Toronto at the previous IAC, when 102 out of 344 commitments to youth from 63 countries were honoured.

* WHO WILL BE THERE?

The AIDS Conference is the largest international gathering on a health-related issue, bringing together tens of thousands of delegates from around the world. Delegates come from a diversity of backgrounds and constituencies, included but not limited to: youth, people living with HIV, children, women, men who have sex with men, trade unionists, faith, activists, injecting drug users, sex workers, parliamentarians, academia, donors, business, media, non-governmental organisations, and more. It is expected that approximately 1,000 of the delegates will be young people.

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* HOW CAN WE CONNECT?

There will be many opportunities throughout the conference to connect with youth delegates. The AIDS 2008 Youth Pavilion, which will be located in the Global Village, will be the main venue for youth to connect with one another. The Youth Pavilion is a youth-focused space where meetings, workshops, skills-building sessions, cultural events, forums, evening sessions and more will take place. Activities will highlight youth achievements, and provide opportunities for networking with other delegates. Be sure to check it out!

In addition to the youth pavilion, there will be many other spaces where youth delegates will have the opportunity to connect with others, such as in the main conference session and other zones of the Global Village, such as the human rights networking zone.

Campaigning tools or resources

Key resources in the build up to the International AIDS Conference include, but are not limited to:

Youth Pocket Guide to Navigating International AIDS Conference, an initiative of the Mexico Youth Force, Plan International, International AIDS Society and United Nations Association in Canada, <http://youthaids2008.org/en/index.html>

Mexico Youth Force E-consultation Report; Mexico Youth Force http://worldywcawca.org/index.php/ywca/world_ywca/events/iac_mexico_2008/youthforce_e_consultation_report

Towards the Finish Line: Youth and universal access 2010; World AIDS Campaign, United Nations Population Fund, Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS, Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/campaigns/key_constituencies/youth/youth_and_universal_access_2010

The Criminalisation of HIV; International Planned Parenthood Federation, World AIDS Campaign, United Nations Population Fund, Living Positively <http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/Constituencies/Youth/Resources/What-is-Criminalisation-of-HIV>

Injection Drug Use - HIV and AIDS - Young People: Recognising the linkages; Youth RISE, World AIDS Campaign <http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/Constituencies/Youth/Resources/Fact-Sheets-for-Youth>

Young People and HIV related Stigma and Discrimination; Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights <http://www.youthcoalition.org>

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE LEADERS!

Young people all over the world are leading and participating in amazing initiatives all around the world to halt and reverse the spread of HIV. The leadership of young people is key to the achievement of universal access by 2010. To celebrate and foster such leadership, each issue of the **Youth Partnerships Alert**, features one youth leader who is a living example of just this.

For this issue, meet Saunsuray Govere. Seventeen-year-old Saunsuray Muis d'Entremont Govere is co-founder and current Chairperson of Kijana, an organisation that assists youth impacted by HIV and educates youth around the world about HIV. At the ages of nine and eleven Saunsuray and her sister founded Kijana in response to the numbers of children affected by HIV in their village in Zimbabwe. In time Kijana turned into an international youth helping youth project. Kijana has now educated millions of youth around the world and has helped thousands of HIV affected/infected youth in Africa.

Saunsuray attended her first International AIDS Conference in 2006 where she and her sister had a poster

presentation on Kijana in the 'adult' section of the conference, and in the youth pavilion Kijana was honored by being selected as an African youth best practice model.

At the 2008 IAC Saunsuray will be part of the Youth Partnership Initiative (YPI), organised by the World AIDS Campaign and the Mexico YouthForce. Through her participation in this initiative, Saunsuray hopes to learn from her adult partner and other YPI participants to develop skills that will help her take Kijana into the future. She also hopes that the partnership will increase adults' sensitivity towards youth and their ability to make a difference in their community. Saunsuray is looking forward to networking with other youth at the conference and learning from their ideas, creativity, and experience and at the same time learn about HIV related issues in the main part of the conference. Here is what Saunsuray has to say about youth and HIV in Zimbabwe:

"In Zimbabwe we have some youth leaders that are proactive, for example, Wilbert Majoni, Tapiwa Molife, and Tawanda Chisango, but unfortunately I don't think most youth in Zimbabwe think so much about HIV. Go to any high school or local night spot and see how despite the AIDS epidemic, one of the worst in the world, youth continue to 'hook up' with little thought such consequences as pregnancy and HIV and other STI

infections. I have heard of students that have sex right at school, the same place where school nurses will not even provide condoms to the "A" Level (Form 5 and 6) students who are usually 17 -19 years old because the Ministry of Education and Culture does not allow secondary schools to hand out condoms.

There are Zimbabwe youth who are very concerned about HIV but denied the right to an HIV test unless they are at least 16-years-old. Young Zimbabweans have no access to treatment of STI services or family planning. However, one third of Zimbabweans who get an HIV infection HIV acquire it during adolescents. This is not surprising because only 36% of young women and only 40% of young men indicated on a survey in 2007 that they had correct knowledge on HIV transmission.

What is very scary in Zimbabwe is that youth ages between 15-24 consist of 13.1% of all people living with HIV such laws create a barrier to HIV testing and reproductive services because how many young people want their parents to know they are sexually active. Because of this many youth in Zimbabwe, and really youth around the world have unprotected sex. Youth in Zimbabwe, and from around the world need to speak up, have their voice heard, and demand that they can access HIV testing and reproductive services."

Bibliography

Zimbabwe National Guidelines on Testing and Counselling (2005)

Zimbabwe National Youth Shadow Report (2008)

UNGASS (2008). Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS: midway to Millenium Development Goals.

National AIDS Council et al (2004) The HIV and AIDS Epidemic in Zimbabwe: Background Projections, Impacts and Future Response, National AIDS Council, Ministry of Health and USAID, Harare, Zimbabwe

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

Staying Alive Foundation call for proposals: From 15th of July until 15th of September the Staying Alive Foundation is accepting proposals for its next round of funding. Application documents can be found on their website: www.staying-alive.org/foundation New grants will be announced on World AIDS Day 2008. If you have any questions, you can contact them by e-mail: foundation@staying-alive.org

Stop TB Partnership's Challenge Facility for Civil Society: Applications focusing on all aspects of TB – multidrug-resistant TB, TB/HIV, and neglected populations, for example – are welcome. The Challenge Facility aims to make the voices of vulnerable communities, including those affected by tuberculosis,

heard by local and national policy makers. This facility will support civil society activities designed to attract greater attention from governments to the prevention, treatment and control of this often lethal yet curable disease. For more information please visit <http://www.stoptb.org/bi/cfcs/whocanapply.asp>

Next edition

The next edition of the Youth Partnerships Alert will be issued on September 15th. If you have any additions or contributions to make, please send an email to youthalert@worldaidscampaign.org. Contributions should be received by no later than September 5th 2008.