

01

June 2008

1/4

YOUTH PARTNERSHIPS ALERTS!



YOUTH PARTNERSHIPS ALERTS!

01

June 2008
2/4



IN THIS EDITION:

1. **Focus event: high level meeting on hiv/aids**
 - A. How to get involved
 - B. Who will be there?
 - C. How to connect
2. **Campaign resources and tools**
3. **Young people are leaders –article by Caitlin padgett – Youth R.I.S.E. network**
4. **Fundraising opportunities**

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first edition of the *Youth Partnerships Alerts!* Born out of a youth consultation held by the World AIDS Campaign in January 2008, these alerts will provide youth led and youth-serving organisations up-to-date information on what each of us are doing. These alerts will highlight events where youth organisations will be participating, opportunities for collaboration, as well as possibilities for joint fundraising. In order to make these alerts as useful as possible, we need your support! 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: HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON HIV/AIDS

On 10-11 June 2008, a High-Level Meeting (HLM) will be convened in New York by the United Nations General Assembly to undertake a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in realising the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS. For more information on the review, visit <http://www.ua2010.org/en/UNGASS>.

The HLM provides a great opportunity for youth to come together and hold governments and United Nations agencies accountable for the commitments they have made. The urgent need to achieve universal access by 2010 must be re-emphasised, and youth specific issues must be addressed at the HLM review. While the review meeting will look at progress, it must also acknowledge the challenges, gaps and, actions that must be taken to overcome these and fulfil the commitment to universal access by 2010. As a youth movement, we need to come together to ensure that our specific realities and needs are taken into account and addressed in a way that respects our rights.

* HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

If you will be going to the HLM, there are several ways to link up with other participants. For example, you can:

Participate in the progressive youth caucus: The Youth Coalition (www.youthcoalition.org) will convene a half-day meeting immediately prior to the HLM for progressive young HIV and AIDS and sexual and reproductive rights advocates from diverse countries to strategise for collaborative advocacy efforts to use throughout the review process. This meeting will build on the success of the 2006 progressive youth caucus meeting that the Youth Coalition organised in collaboration with CHOICE and YouAct. Caucus participants will also look at ways to build on the outcomes of the 2008 review on the national, regional and international levels moving towards other key youth events. During the initial caucus, participants will determine a time and place for daily youth caucuses to be held throughout the HLM. The progressive youth caucus will be held on the 8th of June, from 1 to 6 p.m. For more information, please contact office@youthcoalition.org.

Participate in the civil society orientation and caucus meeting: Immediately prior to the HLM, the Civil Society Task Force, which has been convened by the Office of the President of the General Assembly, will host a civil society orientation and caucus meeting to jointly strategise. This meeting will aid participants in understating how to get the most out of the HLM, network, plan and make recommendations for future reviews. The pre-meeting will take place on the 9th of June, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., in conference room 2 of the United Nations building.

Participate in the civil society daily caucuses: During the HLM, from 10 to 11 of June, the Civil Society Task Force will hold daily morning and evening caucuses in order to share information and strategise. The morning caucuses will be held from 8:15 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. in conference room 1 of the UN building, while the evening caucuses will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on the 10th floor of the Church Centre. All members of civil society are welcome.

UNGASS Youth Blog

During the review we are aiming to keep as many young people informed on day to day outcomes, activities and information. If you want to keep up-to-date on issues pertaining to youth visit the daily blog at:

<http://www.ua2010.org/UNGASS/Youth-Perspective-UNGASS-2008>

* WHO WILL BE THERE?

Though civil society participation in this HLM is expected to decrease in comparison to 2006, youth delegates from the following organisations have confirmed their participation: AIDS 2031; Advocates for Youth; CHOICE for youth and sexuality; Gay Men's Health Crisis; GESTOS; Guttmacher Institute; Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS (GYCA); Hope's Voice International; International Planned Parenthood Federation Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF WHR); International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC); Living Positively; Population Action International (PAI); World AIDS Campaign; YouAct; Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights (YC); Youth R.I.S.E.; Youth Vision Zambia; Y-Peer; Youth Empowerment Against HIV/AIDS. In addition to these organisations, there are bound to be many more youth there, so keep your eyes open! You can also see the list of accredited civil society organisations at http://data.unaids.org/pub/BaseDocument/2008/20080423_HLM_CivilSociety_a62crp1_en.pdf.

01

June 2008

3/4

* HOW CAN WE CONNECT?

If you're not already in touch with other youth delegates going to the HLM, don't worry! We're bound to run into each other in New York! In advance, you can also write to ahumadac@worldaidscampaign.org to find out more about where youth delegates will be meeting, and how you can join!

Campaigning tools or resources

Key resources in the build up to the HLM include, but are not limited to:

Organisational notes issues by the Office of the President of the General Assembly:

<http://www.unaids.org/en/Conferences/2008HLM/default.asp>
http://data.unaids.org/pub/BaseDocument/2008/a-res-62-178_en.pdf
<http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/letters/letter110408.pdf>
<http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/issues/HLMonHIV.shtml>

National reports (by country) and shadow reports by civil society:

<http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/CountryProgress/2007CountryProgressAllCountries.asp>

Information note for people living with HIV travelling to the United States:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/laws/telegrams/telegrams_1446.html
http://www.gmhc.org/programs/legal/immig_meeting08.pdf

Secretary General's Report:

<http://www.unaids.org/en/Conferences/2008HLM/default.asp>

Upcoming resources...

The World AIDS Campaign will soon be developing a series of youth resources, such as a fact sheet on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and HIV, as well as a Youth Campaigning and Mobilisation Kit. If your organisation is interested in contributing to the production of these resources, please contact youthalert@worldaidscampaign.org.

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE LEADERS!

Whoever thinks young people aren't leaders are sorely mistaken. Young people are the future, the present; we are here today and in action to achieve universal access 2010! In each issue of the *Youth Partnerships Alert*, we will feature one youth leader who is a living example of just this.

For our very first issue, meet Caitlin Padgett. Caitlin is one of founders and coordinators of the Youth RISE Network. She has been working for almost 10 years in peer based, youth-led sexual health, HIV/AIDS and harm reduction programs. As a peer volunteer and then project coordinator with YouthCO AIDS Society, Canada's only youth-driven HIV/AIDS prevention and support agency, Caitlin became increasingly committed to the principles of young engagement. Caitlin became Vancouver's first Youth Advocate Mentor, a position that reported directly to Mayor and City Council on the needs and rights of children and youth in the city. She also coordinated Crystal Clear, a youth-led harm reduction project for young, street-involved methamphetamine users. Since 2006, Caitlin has been involved in including youth and peers

in the annual International Conferences on Drug-Related Harm, and was a co-recipient of the National Rollston Award, for her work with the conference's 'Drug User Advisory Group' (DUAG), which formed in May 2005 in order to take an active role in the conference planning process. She has been involved in several national and international committees, such as the Youth Advisory to the Public Health Agency of Canada and is the Co-Chair and a participant in several sub-committees for the International AIDS conference in Mexico City 2008.

Hear what Caitlin has to say about the upcoming HLM on HIV/AIDS, and the links between harm reduction and HIV and AIDS.

This year's UNGASS High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS marks a landmark opportunity to speak to the needs of young people affected by drug-related harm that have been largely under-represented. Youth RISE will advocate for the rights of young people who use or are affected by drug use, and their inclusion in the efforts to achieve Universal Access.*

Many young people live in a world where access to illicit drugs is more readily available than the education, resources, or treatment necessary to reduce drug related harms. Often, drugs are available where social services are not. Up to 10% of all new HIV infections worldwide are

attributed to injection drug use and many are young people. Yet young people who use drugs are some of the most marginalised, stigmatised and criminalised individuals in society. They are systematically excluded from life-saving prevention services and support, and proven harm reduction strategies are deemed too controversial.

When the resources and support young people need to reduce drug-related harms are unavailable, when sexual and reproductive health services do not address the link between substance use (including alcohol), and sexual health risks, our right to the highest attainable standard of health is being denied. When young people who use injection drugs or are affected by drug use are excluded from global and regional HIV/AIDS policy making, our right to participation is being denied. And when education fails to honestly address drug related harm and sexual and reproductive health, our rights to education and to freely access information are not being respected.

Proven examples of effective and comprehensive services include: provision of safe and accessible syringe exchanges, youth-friendly harm reduction and health services, reproductive health services geared towards young people who inject drugs and their sexual partners, access to detoxification and treatment

centers and substitution therapy, and voluntary and confidential HIV testing and counselling. Furthermore, young people everywhere must have access to reality-based drug education that includes information on the sexual health risks associated with intoxication.

It is through this High Level Meeting that Youth RISE hopes to effectively engage and advocate with UN agencies and member states on the implementation and support of harm reduction programs. Beyond the efforts that have already been undertaken by UN agencies, there must be a greater collaborative and holistic response to ensure that all young people are assured our fundamental right to be free from drug related harm. We have the right to the services required to achieve this. We have the right to the information we need to connect with those services and we have the right to be adequately educated so that we can take measures to protect ourselves.

Written by Caitlin Padgett and Kyla Zanardi,
Youth R.I.S.E. Coordinators

*For more information on Youth RISE, and for Kyla Zanardi's bio, please visit www.youthrise.org.

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

The Fund for Global Human Rights, request for proposals: This RFP invites proposals from human rights organisations based in Guatemala, Mexico, Philippines and Thailand. Grants will be for one year (January – December 2009) and may be renewed in 2010. Grants will range from \$5,000 to \$30,000. For more information, please visit <http://www.globalhumanrights.org>.

The Overbrook Foundation, letters of inquiry: The Overbrook Foundation supports projects in the United States, Latin America and South Africa. The Foundation supports policy development, advocacy, coalition building, research, legal and other strategies. To see if your organisations is eligible to submit a letter of inquiry, visit <http://www.overbrook.org/apply/apply.html>.

Next edition

The next edition of the youth Partnerships Alert will be issued on July 15th with special attention to the Youth Involvement, activities for the International AIDS Conference in Mexico. 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 July 10th 2008.