

PRESS RELEASE

Young people present first-ever ‘crowdsourced’ recommendations for AIDS response in UN history

New youth-led recommendations to shape UNAIDS Secretariat’s work on HIV and young people

ABUJA, 24 April 2012—Youth leaders from around the world today presented a set of youth-defined recommendations that will guide the UNAIDS Secretariat’s work on HIV and young people through 2015. The recommendations were received by UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé at an event in the Paiko community near Abuja, organized together with Nigerian youth leaders and government officials.

Based on the voices and views of more than 5000 young people from 79 countries, the recommendations resulted from *CrowdOutAIDS*, an innovative youth-led policy project initiated by UNAIDS. Leveraging crowdsourcing technology and new media tools, the five-month project enabled young people to fully participate in the development of strategic recommendations for the UNAIDS Secretariat’s youth agenda.

“I am so impressed by the dedication, energy and enthusiasm that young people have shown through the *CrowdOutAIDS* initiative,” said Mr Sidibé. “The recommendations they have presented to UNAIDS will help us mobilize a new generation of young leaders and we will work together to stop new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths.”

Presenting the recommendations to UNAIDS, Gabriel Adeyemo, a young Nigerian activist, described *CrowdOutAIDS* as a ‘high level meeting’—but ‘by and for’ young people. “It brought decision-making to the grassroots, to the skilled and unskilled, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, to contribute to an issue that affects all our lives: HIV,” said Adeyemo, who is also the West Africa focal point for the Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS.

Globally, an estimated five million young people (15-24 years of age) are living with HIV. About 3000 young people are newly infected with HIV each day. According to recent surveys in low- and middle-income countries, only 24% of young women and 36% of young men responded correctly when asked questions on HIV prevention and transmission.

Through *CrowdOutAIDS*, young people proposed six key recommendations for the UNAIDS Secretariat, including:

1. Strengthen young people’s skills for effective leadership at all levels of the AIDS response;
2. Ensure the full participation of youth in the AIDS response at country, regional, and global levels;
3. Improve young people’s access to HIV-related information;

[Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths.](#)

4. Diversify and strengthen strategic networks between the UNAIDS Secretariat, youth networks, and other key players;
5. Increase the UNAIDS Secretariat's outreach to both formal and informal networks of young people; and,
6. Increase young people's access to financial support.

"We have worked together, using the simplest tools—each one of us in their own corner of the world—to create spaces of exchange and draft this important document in real-time, public online sessions," said Zahra Benyahia, a *CrowdOutAIDS* drafting committee member. "This is not the end. It's the first step toward revolutionary youth leadership in the AIDS response."

The full set of recommendations are presented in *Strategy recommendations for collaborating with a new generation of leaders in the AIDS response*—the first-ever "crowdsourced" AIDS-related document in UN history. The recommendations, together with an internal organizational assessment on HIV and young people, will inform the UNAIDS Secretariat's New Generation Leadership Strategy.

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UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative United Nations partnership that leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Learn more at unaids.org.