



PRESS RELEASE

Ten community-based organizations receive prestigious Red Ribbon Award for innovative response to AIDS

WASHINGTON, DC, 25 July 2012—Ten community-based organizations, which have shown exceptional and inspiring action on AIDS were honoured with the 2012 Red Ribbon Award in a special session of the XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) on Wednesday. The Red Ribbon Award is the world's leading award for innovative and outstanding community work in the response to the AIDS epidemic.

The 2012 winning organizations are from Egypt, Haiti, India, Iran, Kenya, Mexico, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, the Russian Federation and Uganda. Over 1400 nominations from more than 120 countries were received by the Red Ribbon Award secretariat, which is hosted by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in partnership with other UN organizations, AIDS 2012, the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS, STOP AIDS NOW!, the Global Network of Women Living with HIV/AIDS and the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations. A technical review committee of civil society representatives selected the winners. Each of the winning organizations will receive a US\$10,000 grant and international recognition for their innovation and leadership and have been invited to participate in AIDS 2012 in Washington D.C.

“The winners of the Red Ribbon Award 2012 have accomplished so much with so little. They work at the grassroots level in very challenging situations to ensure that vulnerable groups and people living with HIV get the information, services and opportunities they need,” said UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé. “Communities are where the response to AIDS started and it is their energy, innovation and leadership that have set us on the course to end of AIDS.”

At the Red Ribbon Award special session the winners were congratulated by many eminent personalities including Mr. Sidibé, UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador HRH Crown Princess Mette-Marit of Norway, U.S. Congressman Jim McDermott, Minister of Health and Social Affairs of France, Marisol Touraine and International Coordinator and CEO GNP+, Kevin Moody.

Crown Princess Mette-Marit presented the award to the winners and said, “I am proud to give the awards to these outstanding organizations, whose actions in the communities they serve truly make a difference to people affected by HIV. The community response to HIV is at the heart of the AIDS response.”

Nobel laureate and General Secretary of Myanmar’s National League for Democracy, Aung San Suu Kyi delivered her remarks through a video. She stressed the importance of

community-based organizations and said, “By strengthening the community we strengthen our chances of achieving democracy and of building up strong democratic institutions. “

The Red Ribbon Award was first presented in 2006 and since then has been handed out every two years at the International AIDS Conference. This year there were five award categories and the ten winners are listed below by category:

1) Prevention of sexual transmission

The Help, Myanmar focuses on prevention, care, support and advocacy for men who have sex with men (MSM) and works to ensure that the voices of MSM are heard and their issues taken up at the national level. All members of the HELP are MSM and almost half are living with HIV.

SEROvie, Haiti, focuses on the health and rights of Haiti’s sexual minorities and became a vital source of aid, support and advocacy for sexual minorities following the January 2010 earthquake. SEROvie conducts HIV prevention, health referrals, and psychological and social support, as well as home-based care visits, vocational training and a micro-credit programme.

2) Prevention among/by people who use drugs

Afraye Sabz Association, Iran is in Kermanshah Province, which has increasing numbers of people living with HIV, specifically among young people who inject drugs. The association promotes HIV awareness, especially among youth, by providing educational and other complementary services, as well as support to PLHIV and their families.

Espolea, Mexico offers a space where young people feel free to think, create and perform and focuses on three central issues for young people: HIV, gender, and drug policy. The group works for a consolidated, comprehensive national agenda for young people, that encourages their participation locally, nationally and internationally.

3) Treatment, care and support

The Kenya Hospices & Palliative Care Association (KEHPCA), Kenya represents all of the country’s palliative care service providers. Its mission is to scale up palliative care services and ensure those in need receive the services. Approximately 27% of Kenyan hospice patients receive palliative care for HIV and AIDS and KEHPCA has advocated extensively for the integration of palliative care into health services in Kenya.

Positive Women’s Network (PWN+), Sri Lanka works to empower its PLHIV members and reduce the discrimination and stigma that women living with HIV face when accessing health services. The group also advocates for global and national policies and runs two drop in centres operated by PLHIV for PLHIV to provide safe, secure, confidential and stigma-free environments for counselling services, financial and emotional support.

4) Advocacy and human rights

Initiative Group ‘Patients in Control’, Russian Federation is a grassroots initiative started in 2010 that now involves about 50 leading activists from across Russia. It organizes street actions, press conferences and roundtable discussions focused on issues such as drug stock-outs and the absence of HIV treatment guidelines. The group has achieved significant results in terms of government action on these issues.

Delhi Network of Positive People (DNP+), India seeks to improve the treatment and facilities for PLHIV and provides a platform to help empower patients to make informed treatment decisions. Over the years the group's work has expanded from a support group to service delivery and human rights advocacy.

5) **Stopping new HIV infections in children and keeping mothers alive, women's health**

Giramatsiko Post Test Club, Uganda, is an organization for and run by rural women living with HIV. The organization provides skills and knowledge for HIV prevention, care, support and treatment. It advocates for the rights of women living with HIV and their families and empowers women by increasing their livelihood skills. The organization has established 19 Post Test Clubs.

Global Youth Coalition against AIDS (GYCA) Egypt is a group of young activists working to raise community awareness around health issues, specifically taboo topics such as sexual and reproductive health and rights, and advocating for a human rights-based approach to HIV/AIDS interventions that includes accurate information, condoms and needle exchange for young people. They have an initiative which works with women from low-income communities.

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About the Sponsors

UNAIDS

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners to maximize results for the AIDS response. Learn more at unaids.org and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.

UN Partners

The UN Partners involved in the Red Ribbon Award initiative bring together the efforts and resources of nine UN system organizations. These partners include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO.

AIDS 2012

The XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) is the premier gathering for those working in the field of HIV, as well as policy makers, persons living with HIV and other individuals committed to ending the pandemic. It is a chance for stakeholders to take stock of where the epidemic is, evaluate recent scientific developments and lessons learnt, and collectively chart a course forward. AIDS 2012 will be held in Washington DC, United States

from 22 to 27 July 2012. (www.aids2012.org). The International AIDS Society is the convener and custodian of the conference.

Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS

GNP+ is the global network for and by people living with HIV. GNP+ advocates to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV. Driven by the needs of people living with HIV worldwide, GNP+ supports people living with HIV through their organizations and networks. GNP+ works to ensure equitable access to health and social services, by focusing on social justice, rights and more meaningful involvement of people living with HIV in programme and policy development – the GIPA principle. (www.gnpplus.net)

STOP AIDS NOW!

STOP AIDS NOW! is a partnership between Aids Fonds and four Dutch organizations providing international development aid. The mission of STOP AIDS NOW! is: 'working together towards a world without AIDS' and its objective is 'more and better'. 'More' refers to increasing the number of activities of organizations in the south--local NGOs, CBOs, or FBOs--focusing on prevention and providing information, support and treatment to people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. 'Better' refers to improving the quality of the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic through improved working methods and forms of cooperation. Linking and learning, capacity building and innovation are strongly encouraged. (www.stopaidsnow.org)

International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS

ICW Global emerged to look for answers facing the desperate lack of support, information and services available for women living with HIV. The organization promotes the leadership and involvement of women living with HIV in spaces where policies and programmes are developed and implemented and where the decisions that affect the life of thousands of people who live with the virus are made. The vision is for a just world where women living with HIV are leaders in HIV programmes and policy and realize their universal rights. They dream of a world where women, young women, girls, adolescents living with HIV have full access to care and treatment and enjoy all of their rights: sexual, reproductive, legal, economic and health, regardless of culture, age, religion, sexuality, race or socio-economic status. (www.icwglobal.org)

International Council of AIDS Service Organizations

Founded in 1991, the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations' (ICASO) mission is to mobilize and support diverse community organizations to build an effective global response to end AIDS. This is done within a vision of a world where people living with and affected by HIV can enjoy life free from stigma, discrimination, and persecution, and have access to prevention, treatment and care. The ICASO network operates globally, regionally and locally, and reaches over 100 countries internationally (www.icaso.org).