



Setting the scene: a new wave of activism on AIDS

The UNAIDS Secretariat (Secretariat) launched the New Generation Leadership Project (NGL) in the fall of 2011 to successfully integrate the principles of meaningful youth participation and leadership into the Secretariat's work, methods and approaches, to make the Secretariat more responsive to the needs and challenges faced by young people, youth networks and organizations on the ground in the AIDS response.

A two pronged approach was developed: i) an online youth-led policy project, CrowdOutAIDS¹, where social media tools and crowd-sourcing technology were used to enable young people from around the world to develop recommendations on how the Secretariat can work more effectively with young people; and ii) an organizational assessment of the Secretariat's current and past engagement and work with youth.

The outcome of the NGL project was the establishment of a UNAIDS Youth Programme with a nine member youth team across the regions and at the Secretariat headquarters.

The aim of the UNAIDS Youth Programme is to contribute to achieving the bold targets set in the *2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS* by increasing youth leadership, ownership, and mobilization in the AIDS response at the country, regional, and global level by 2015 and beyond.

To achieve this aim, the Secretariat is looking to work closely with organizations and networks of young people living with HIV and young key populations at higher risk, to create broad alliances for social change within the broader health, development and social justice movements. This work will have a particular focus on high impact countries where legal, policy and/or programmatic reform is needed to advance the AIDS response.

Supporting young activists to increase demands on their political leaders for progressive change strengthens national ownership and can help shift political positions on controversial-yet-important issues such as sexuality, sexuality education and LGBT rights.

¹ For more information on the CrowdOutAIDS process and the related recommendations, please see http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2012/JC2338_CrowdOutAIDS_en.pdf

A kick-off meeting for social transformation

As the foundation for the Youth Programme and in response to the youth-led CrowdOutAIDS strategic recommendations and the internal assessment on youth policy within the organization, the Secretariat will develop a short, succinct **Youth Policy and Action Plan** in consultation with civil society youth organizations and the UNAIDS cosponsors.

Based on a request from youth-led organizations, the Secretariat's Youth Programme also seeks to support greater alignment of efforts between existing youth-led and youth-serving organizations working on HIV and the broader health, development and social justice agendas.

This is particularly crucial, since many small organizations lack the time, resources, and strategic space to reflect on their work, forge new alliances, discuss duplication of activities and strengthen the overall movement. It is also critical for young leaders to understand how the youth movement can strategically leverage and mobilize its constituency ahead of the post-2015 development framework negotiations.

To solidify the partnerships with youth organizations, support a process which ensures that global and regional youth organizations are better coordinated and strategically focused on country results, as well as align the UNAIDS Youth Programme with the youth movement, the Secretariat will convene a strategic meeting from the 20-22 of May, in Hammamet, Tunisia.

What do we hope to achieve?

- 1 Develop a strategic policy and advocacy agenda for the next three years among youth-led and youth-serving organizations that is transparent, accountable and inclusive;
- 2 Align programmes and activities, including division of tasks and removal of duplication between youth-led organizations, and to improve collaboration and communication to make the youth constituency more effective; and
- 3 Refine and validate the UNAIDS Secretariat's Youth Policy and Action Plan.

Who will attend this meeting?

There are three groups of young people attending this meeting: 1) global and regional youth organizations working in the AIDS response and adjacent agendas, who have requested a UNAIDS to support a "free-space process" for the youth movement. These organizations have been nominated through a selection process developed by UNAIDS and a working group of youth organizations; 2) members of the UNAIDS Youth Advisory Forum; and, 3) staff members of the recently formed UNAIDS youth team. The final day of the meeting is also open to UNAIDS Cosponsors and development cooperation agencies.

Expected outputs

- 1 A common advocacy and policy platform for the global youth movement on AIDS;
- 2 A PACT for social transformation incorporating the commitments among the youth constituency, as well as between the youth constituency and the UNAIDS Secretariat, through 2015;
- 3 A work plan for the UNAIDS Youth Advisory Forum; and
- 4 A strengthened and endorsed UNAIDS Youth Policy and Action Plan.

Expected outcome

A cohesive, solution-oriented and coordinated global youth movement on AIDS, that is committed to joint action as a youth movement, as well as with the UNAIDS Secretariat to reach the goals of the *2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS* by 2015, and mobilized for the post-2015 negotiations.

Commitment required of participating organizations

To ensure the Youth and UNAIDS meeting in Hammamet is as productive and creative as possible to move the youth movement forward in a solution oriented direction, a set of criteria for participation as well as pre-meeting work-streams have been designed.

Participating organizations must agree to send someone in a leadership position, preferably the Executive Director or Coordinator, to the meeting. If an organization wishes to send someone who is not in a leadership position, the participant must have the mandate to be able to make reasonable commitments on behalf of the organization during the meeting. The following pre-meeting work streams have been designed:

Survey and interviews

Global youth organizations to share annual activity plans and strategic direction, and participate in a short survey and Skype interview, and engage in the process with an open mind towards better alignment of shared long-term goals.

Shared vision, key principles and draft advocacy agenda

All participants take part in an online process to develop the draft vision, key principles, and advocacy agenda to arrive with shared expectations and vision, to the extent possible.

UNAIDS Youth Advisory Forum

Members of the Youth Advisory Forum are requested to take part in an online discussion on its work plan via the *TALK* space on crowdoutaids.org

Follow-up: Global and regional youth organizations must agree to follow up on commitments made post-meeting, which will likely include: a) information sharing; b) programmatic collaboration; c) joint advocacy; d) possible joint funding requests; and e) evaluating individual and collective impact at the country-level.

Final note: a youth-led process

The Youth and UNAIDS: A pact for social transformation meeting has been conceptualized by UNAIDS youth programme in full partnership with an ad-hoc youth working group ahead of the establishment of the UNAIDS Youth Advisory Forum.