

HLM 2021 Virtual Side Event

Sharing case studies for change: Celebrating and learning from civil society-led responses to HIV and COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific

Background

2020 marks the 40th year since the first documented case of AIDS was recorded. Over the ensuing decades, affected communities, including people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV, have been central to effective responses around the world. In particular, the voices of those most marginalised, including gay and other men who have sex with men, sex workers, people who use drugs and transgender people, have led the way in reforming policy and legislation and developing and leading responses that meet the needs of these communities.

Several countries in the region have experienced a decline in new HIV infections of more than 50% between 2010 and 2019. A cornerstone of this success has been strong leadership that has facilitated successful and diverse models of differentiated HIV service delivery, including HIV self-testing, multimonth dispensing of ARVs, and key population-led health services. The region has also seen increased adoption of innovative approaches such as telehealth, take-home opioid substitution therapy, needle-syringe services and PrEP services.

However, there is still work to be done. Between 2010 and 2019, new HIV infections fell by only 12% across the region as a whole, and increased by between 17% and 207% in seven countries. The vast majority of new HIV infections in the region are among key populations and their partners or clients. In particular, young people are falling behind. In 2019, around a quarter of total new infections occurred among people aged 15–24 years, with 99% of all new HIV infections among young people from key populations and their partners.

An increased focus on HIV prevention is critical in the region to keep the HIV epidemic under control. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to threaten the gains made in the HIV response and has brought inequalities to the forefront. Despite this, COVID-19 has proven that, once again, civil society and community-led responses have a vital role to play in addressing public health challenges. Civil society organisations were quick to respond to the situation by coming out with innovative courses of action, mobilising volunteers and partners to assist those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic—many of these responses built upon the years of experience responding to the HIV epidemic.

This side event provides an opportunity for countries in Asia and the Pacific to celebrate these innovative and effective responses and share and discuss lessons learned that could support ongoing program and care delivery.

Focus and Objectives

Ahead of the 2021 UN High-Level Meeting on HIV and AIDS, regional key population networks and civil society organisations from Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with AFAO and UNAIDS Asia Pacific, will showcase best practices of community-led responses to COVID-19 and HIV prevention from Asia and the Pacific region. In addition, the panel will highlight the way the full, equal and meaningful participation of affected communities within the HIV response offers evidence for the mutually reinforcing frameworks of human rights and public health.

An opportunity to mark the successes and reflect on what is yet to be achieved, the panel will contribute to understanding how community leaders have been translated into specific actions and better health outcomes in HIV and how these learnings can strengthen the world's response to COVID.

Organizer information

Co-organizers: AFAO, UNAIDS, ANPUD, APN+, APTN, APCOM, APNSW, ICWAP and Youth Lead will jointly organize the side event. AFAO will be the focal point.

Objectives

The side event aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Showcase KP-led initiatives in the region. The event will offer examples of KP leadership and their contributions to the HIV and COVID-19 responses;
- Share lessons learned from innovative HIV prevention programmes including PrEP.

DATE: 7th June, 2021

TIME:

- 7:30am – 9:00am (New York/EDT)
- 6:30pm – 8:00pm (Bangkok, Thailand)
- 9:30pm – 11:00pm (Sydney/AEST)

Platform: UNAIDS AP zoom and streamed live via UNAIDS AP Facebook page. This side event will be conducted in English and available in Thai.

Event Format:

Time	Session	Methodology	Facilitator/Speaker
15 min	<p><u>Session 1:</u> <u>Introduction and opening (5min each speaker)</u></p>	Plenary	<p>Moderator: Darryl O'Donnell (AFAO)</p> <p>H.E. Mr Mitchell Fifield, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and PR of Australia to the United Nations</p> <p>H.E. Mr Vitavas Srivihok, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations</p>
35 min	<p><u>Session 2:</u> <u>Community-led responses to the COVID-19 pandemic</u></p> <p>Preventing disruption to HIV prevention and treatment services during the COVID-19 pandemic</p>	<p>Talk show style with one moderator and 4 speakers followed by Q&A</p> <p><i>(5 minutes per each speaker plus 15 minutes of Q&A)</i></p>	<p>Moderator: <u>Raine Cortes</u>, Senior Project Manager, APTN</p> <p><i>Community-led harm reduction services for people who use drugs</i> <u>Francis Joseph</u>, ANPUD</p> <p><i>Responding to the challenges facing sex workers during the COVID-19 pandemic: findings from a regional report on sex-workers led responses to COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific</i> <u>Kay Thi Win</u> - Regional Coordinator Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers, APNSW</p> <p><i>Ensuring access to ARV treatment and enrolment in care during the COVID-19 pandemic</i> <u>Asghar Satti</u> National coordinator of the Association of People</p>

			<p>Living with HIV in Pakistan (APLHIV-Pakistan)</p> <p><i>Initiatives led by women living with HIV during the COVID-19 pandemic</i> <u>Sita Shahi</u>, Regional Coordinator, International Community of Women Living with HIV Asia Pacific (ICWAP)</p>
30 min	<p><u>Session 3: Innovation and HIV prevention</u></p> <p>Spotlight on innovative services and programs, including PrEP</p>	<p>Talk show style with a moderator and 3-4 speakers</p> <p><i>(5 minutes per each speaker plus 15 minutes of Q&A)</i></p>	<p>Moderator: <u>Sonal Indravadan Mehta</u>, Regional Director, International Planned Parenthood Federation</p> <p><i>Community-led HIV responses in Australia</i> <u>Matthew Vaughan</u>, HIV Technical Expert and Civil Society Leader, AFAO</p> <p><i>Strengthening HIV prevention and testing in Asia and the Pacific</i> <u>Midnight Poonkasetwattana</u>, Executive Director, APCOM</p> <p><i>Innovative prevention strategies for young key populations using the digital space and new delivery models,</i> <u>Azvian</u>, Inti Muda Indonesia</p>
10 min	<p><u>Session 5: Wrap up and closing</u></p>	<p>Key messages, recommendations and way forward</p>	<p><u>Mr Eamonn Murphy</u>, UNAIDS Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific</p> <p><u>Jules Kim</u>, MSTF and UNAIDS NGO PCB</p>



Total time:

1.5 hours

Materials:

PPT slides from the speakers, premium zoom platform with webinar facility, resource person from interpretations (TBC)