

ASIA-PACIFIC INTER-AGENCY TASK TEAM ON YOUNG KEY POPULATIONS

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



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Cover image: School Rainbow Campaign for International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia at Thammasat University. 14 May 2014
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ABOUT THE IATT

The Asia Pacific Inter-Agency Task Team on Young Key Populations (YKP) was established in 2009 to promote coordinated support from UN agencies and civil society partners to meet the HIV prevention, treatment, care and support needs of YKPs including: young men who have sex with men, young trans-gender people, young people who inject drugs, young people living with HIV, and young people selling sex.

The Task Team is an informal working group that includes as its members a wide range of UN and civil society partners, including a strong contingent of youth-led and youth-focused organizations. Membership is open to any organization interested in working collaboratively to support the HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support needs of YKP. The active members for 2014 were:

- Asia Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health (APCOM)
- Coalition of Asia-Pacific Regional Networks on HIV and AIDS (Seven Sisters)
- Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS (GYCA)
- HIV Young Leaders Fund (HYLF)
- International Federation of Medical Students Association (IFMSA)
- International HIV/AIDS Alliance
- International Organization on Migration (IOM)
- International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)
- Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- Save the Children
- UN Women
- UN Development Programme (UNDP)
- UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
- UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- UN Population Fund (UNFPA)
- UN Organization on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- Youth LEAD
- Youth Voices Count (YVC)
- World Health Organization (WHO)

The Task Team is co-chaired by one UN and one civil society partner and rotates at the end of each year. In 2014, it was jointly chaired by Save the Children and UNFPA.

OBJECTIVES

The broad objectives of the Task Team are to:

- To ensure that capable and effective young leaders from key populations are collaboratively engaged in the response to HIV and AIDS.
- To develop the capacity of policy makers and programmers to address YKP issues in national policies and plans.
- To jointly advocate at the regional level for scaling up comprehensive evidence-informed interventions for YKP by governments and civil society.
- To provide regional guidance on the collection, analysis and use of strategic information (including surveillance data) to support advocacy, policies and programmes for YKP.
- To encourage a coordinated UN/INGO approach toward expanded HIV, sexual health and human rights related responses for YKP across the Asia-Pacific region.

The Task Team meets bi-monthly and promotes:

- availability and use of strategic information on YKPs;
- meaningful engagement of YKPs in relevant strategic processes;
- capacity development of policy makers and programmers to work on YKP issues;
- capacity development among young leaders (including from YKPs) to address YKP issues; and
- advocacy on YKP issues in national, regional and international fora.

Activities for 2014 were developed in line with the following intended outcomes:

- Young people from key populations in the Asia-Pacific region are engaged and capacitated to contribute in national AIDS responses
- Capacity of policy makers and programmers in the Asia-Pacific region developed to address YKP issues in national policies and plans
- Strategic information generated and synthesized and used to support regional level advocacy targeting governments and civil society to promote scale up of comprehensive evidence-informed interventions for YKP
- Advocate for an enabling and coherent policy and legal environment for YKP

OUTCOME 1 | YOUNG PEOPLE FROM POPULATIONS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION ARE ENGAGED AND CAPACITATED TO CONTRIBUTE IN NATIONAL AIDS RESPONSES

ROLL-OUT OF THE REVISED NEWGEN CURRICULUM

Lack of opportunity and capacity for young people from key populations to effectively participate in the response to HIV has been a barrier for youth engagement. The NewGen leadership and communication short-course addresses this concern with a bottom-up and capacity building response. After successful rollouts in Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines in 2012, the NewGen curriculum has been revised to include components on HIV, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Strategic Information (SI). In an effort to integrate HIV and SRHR, NewGen focuses on the importance of linking HIV and SRHR in order to increase the effectiveness of the global response to the HIV epidemic. The original curriculum was revised based on feedback from participants, and the new curriculum was piloted in Brunei in March 2014.

The NewGen curriculum includes monitoring and evaluation, daily feedback reports and individual and collective reflections at the beginning and end of each day. During the NewGen training in Brunei, participants exhibited a systemic shift towards improved leadership skills and heightened confidence while public speaking. Participants praised the curriculum's innovative, engaging and youth-led approach, making it easy to discuss sensitive issues, such as stigma and discrimination, the difference between risky behaviors and risk groups and being assertive. Moreover, all participants reported that NewGen had educated them, giving them a new perspective on sensitive issues and had enabled them to forge new bonds and create new friendships. NewGen is highly successful in bringing young people from key populations together, where participants can collaborate, share ideas and create a joint platform for advocacy and change.

Following the NewGen rollout in Brunei, Youth LEAD's most recent NewGen workshop occurred at the end of April in Bangladesh. Partnering with HIV/AIDS Alliance's Link Up project, Youth LEAD was able to capitalize on the expertise, knowledge and in-country presence of the organization, to mobilize and empower youth. In addition to the presence of Youth LEAD focal points, local Link Up partner, HASAB assisted in culminating an engaging, enlightening and empowering short course. While 30 young people from key populations affected by HIV and AIDS participated in the short course, issues of marginalization, isolation and other cross-cutting themes highlighted the need for vulnerable youth to access HIV prevention and care services. Participants spent five days strengthening leadership and

communication skills, which are vital to meaningful engagement in the HIV response, and components on HIV and SRHR emphasized tangible skills for mobilization and leadership. The NewGen rollout in Bangladesh was successful in strengthening networks and fostering youth-youth and youth-adult relationships, which will surely be used as a roll model in moving forward. The success of NewGen has witnessed the empowerment of YKP and the rise of young leaders, and remains an effective education tool in generating change. Moving forward, participants and youth leaders will strategize and form a group of national activists in Bangladesh to ensure that their voices and concerns are adequately represented in a variety of decision-making forums, such as the New Funding Model process of the Global Fund.

ONGOING ENGAGEMENT WITH AND SUPPORT TO KEY REGIONAL NETWORKS BUILDING YKP CAPACITY AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

YOUTH LEAD

The year 2014 has been quite successful for Youth LEAD. The organization has been registered as Legal Foundation in the Kingdom of Thailand under Ministry of Interior becoming one of the few registered autonomous youth-led networks at regional and global level. Youth LEAD has been strongly engaged in global discussions on YKP HIV programming in the Post 2015 discussions, *Legal barriers* and the Global Fund and through the platform of PACT[1]. YouthLEAD co-leads the thematic groups on *Removing law that prevent young people from accessing services and the resource for young people* in PACT at global level and provides technical and financial support in Indonesia, Cambodia and Nepal to engage in the Global Fund New Funding Model processes, country dialogues and data collection. YouthLEAD is also the only youth-led network that continues to receive funding support from the Robert Carr for advocacy, treatment and engagement in the New Funding Model process of Global Fund. A YouthLEAD focal point gave the opening plenary speech at International AIDS Conference (IAS) 2014 and YouthLEAD was highlighted as a best practice to address the issues of YKPs during the IAS. In 2014, they continued work on rolling out the NewGen training in 5 countries (Nepal, Cambodia, Brunei, Bangladesh, China) and also conducted an evaluation of the NewGen course in Myanmar, Indonesia and Philippines with publication set to be released in 2015. YouthLEAD now has presence in 22 countries with more than 50 focal points who are reaching out to other thousands of YKPs.



Photo Credit, UNESCO

YOUTH VOICES COUNT (YVC)

During the past year, YVC continued to strengthen capacity of young MSM and young transgender persons in communications through bring Loud and Proud to Fiji and Myanmar. Our members in the two countries raised awareness about self-stigma and other self issues through organizing a community event and producing a mini-documentary featuring their stories and experiences. The video from Fiji explored the stigma and discrimination facing the young gay, bisexual, and transgender persons through their personal stories, and their courage to speak up and stand up for themselves. It also introduced audiences to the beauty pageant for transgender women as a statement from the community asking for more visibility and equality. The Loud and Proud community event in Myanmar was organized during the International Youth Day in collaboration with Myanmar Youth Stars, a national network of young key populations, with the attendance of more than 100 young MSM and transgender persons in Yangon and other national partners such as UNAIDS, the International AIDS Alliance, and UNESCO. It was planned and implemented all by our community members in Myanmar. Young MSM and young transgender persons were given opportunities to share their own experience of self-stigma and overcoming it. The struggle of oneself with their self-identity was well portrayed through various performances, which was educational and entertaining at the same time. Moreover, the event was celebrating the diversity of young people, regardless of gender and sexuality, or HIV status, in Myanmar.

ACT!2015 ROADMAP

Youth LEAD, with support from different UN partners, organized the ACT!2015 Regional Advocacy Workshop held in Bangkok from 3-5 October 4-5 this year. The workshop was the second phase of the ACT!2015 strategy to build a united voice of young people and young key populations globally and influence the post-2015 development agenda. The aim of the workshop was to develop a regional advocacy roadmap to guide youth organizations and YKP activists in Asia.

“The ACT!2015 is a great opportunity for young people and young key populations to integrate, invest, and innovate collectively to put forward their interests to achieve a better life in the next 15 years,” Aries Valeriano from UNAIDS Regional Support Team in Bangkok highlighted.

The twenty-seven youth advocates working with 19 youth-led and/or youth-serving organizations in 13 countries in Asia who participated developed a regional advocacy agenda based on priority issues and local needs, identifying both the allies and targets. The four-point agenda focuses on the following areas, with specific goals:

- *Agenda 1. Youth-friendly services. By September 2015, the government will invest in engaging the YKPs in developing indicators and guidelines for quality youth-friendly services for HIV (prevention, treatment, care and support) and SRH and set targets to deliver in the countries.*
- *Agenda 2. Comprehensive Sexuality Education. By September 2015, governments will push for the inclusion of Comprehensive Sexuality Education for YKP using evidence-based tools and guidelines in National Statements.*
- *Agenda 3. Meaningful Youth Participation. By September 2015, governments will actively push forward for inclusion of YKPs in National Policy Processes and creating mechanisms to give agenda-setting ownership to YKPs.*
- *Agenda 4. Legal Environment. By September 2015, governments in countries in Asia and the Pacific will support in their post-2015 positions: equality for young people, including young key populations to create enabling legal and policy environment, which encompasses a rights-based and SOGI-inclusive approach toward providing youth-friendly services in accessing HIV, SRHR, and safe abortion.*

This advocacy agenda feeds into the regional roadmap. Four key international “moments” were selected and activities were identified on each moment, building stronger advocacy for the inclusion of the four-point agenda into the post-2015 development agenda. The advocacy roadmap targets three important meetings

that will feed into the fourth identified moment – the UN General Assembly on the post-2015 agenda in September 2015. These three regional moments are the Beijing+20 Programme of Action Review in November 2014, the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV and AIDS in January 2015, and the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Goals in June 2015.

Task Team members were active participants in the ACT!2015 process and the group is committed to supporting the roadmap and advocacy agenda throughout 2015.



Photo Credit, UNESCO

OUTCOME 2 | CAPACITY OF POLICY MAKERS AND PROGRAMMERS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS YKP ISSUES IN NATIONAL POLICIES AND PLANS

TOOLKIT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS

Injecting drug use among adolescents has been overlooked in responses to HIV yet recent global research presents worrying figures and evidence of restrictive laws preventing young people from accessing harm reduction. Rarely are services developed with adolescents in mind and organizations often lack capacity to attend to this highly vulnerable group. An international working group including Save the Children, the International HIV&AIDS Alliance, Harm Reduction International and YouthRise has collaborated to offer guidance to help organizations.

This tool aims to guide service providers in better addressing the needs of children and young people who inject drugs and present to services (or are reached via outreach modalities). It is intended to help existing or potential harm reduction service providers to work through ethical, legal and practical dilemmas in working with children and young people who use drugs and to put in place child safeguarding and protection policies and structures and ensure access to other required services.

The *Step by Step* tool takes organizations through exercises that help staff think about the critical issues of child rights and protection, evolving capacities of young people and how to balance conflicting ethical and legal issues. The tool helps staff recognize the overlapping vulnerabilities of young drug users and builds knowledge in organizations on how to respond. The tool has been developed and piloted with YPWID and harm reduction service providers in Nepal by Save the Children and its implementing partners.

A workshop to further discuss the aims and objectives of the tool was held in July 2014 at the International AIDS Congress in Melbourne. The learning objectives included:

- Understanding the situation of young people who inject drugs from global research
- How to prepare staff and organizational policies and practices to respond.
- Debating legal and ethical issues that surround the work of providing comprehensive harm reduction to young people who inject drugs.

Further pilots in Romania and Kenya are planned this year with finalization and dissemination of the tool by the end of this year.

ADOLESCENT AND YKPS USING DATA FOR ADVOCACY

To help young people and adolescents (ages 15 – 24) from key populations understand and interpret data, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, WHO, Youth LEAD, Save the Children and partners of the Asia-Pacific IATT on Young key Populations have jointly developed a resource for young people. Designed in the form of a “Comic book”, the handbook is first of its kind in Asia-Pacific that specifically addresses the needs of adolescent/young key populations (A/YKP). Users of the comic book are guided by five young people through the process of understanding, interpreting and using HIV data. Topics they cover include understanding key terms such as incidence and rate; how to read graphs and charts and how best to present data to diverse audience. The knowledge and skills built through the comic book is then tested at the end. Through this process, young people become comfortable with using data for advocacy.

Titled “Helping Adolescent/Young Key Populations at higher risk of HIV exposure to use and understand data” the handbook will serve as a valuable tool to country offices, civil society partners especially networks of young people who are involved in advocacy on adolescents/young key populations at higher risk and living with HIV. It can be used during training sessions, peer education or discussions with A/YKP.

Evidence has shown that HIV programmes are more effective when adolescents and young people are engaged as partners and participate in developing the programmes that impact them. Existing materials or literature are too technical and limited in their capacity to address their specific needs and to equip them with skills to advocate and make a case for adolescents/young key populations in national HIV/AIDS policy and decision-making. The handbook is divided into four key sections:

- Defining and using key terms about data;
- Reading tables and graphs;
- Producing graphs for information-sharing and advocacy; and
- Questioning data based

References are provided for further information.

The handbook will be made available in the Asia-Pacific IATT and websites of regional partners in early 2015.

IN OR OUT: ASIA-PACIFIC REVIEW OF YKPs IN NATIONAL AIDS STRATEGIC PLANS

National strategic frameworks or plans (NSPs) determine a country's national response to HIV and AIDS, guiding allocation of funding, resources and human capacity and are now critical for Global Fund investments.

In the Asia-Pacific region, with low/concentrated epidemics, one would expect that NSPs would prioritize key populations at higher risk of HIV exposure, including men who have sex with men, transgender people, sex workers and their clients, people who inject drugs, and people living with HIV. This includes young key populations (under age 25), who are believed to represent around 95% of new infections among young people and who are experiencing growing epidemics in many countries in the region.

It aims to inform country-based reviews and progress reports of current NSPs, and the development of future plans with greater attention to these populations.

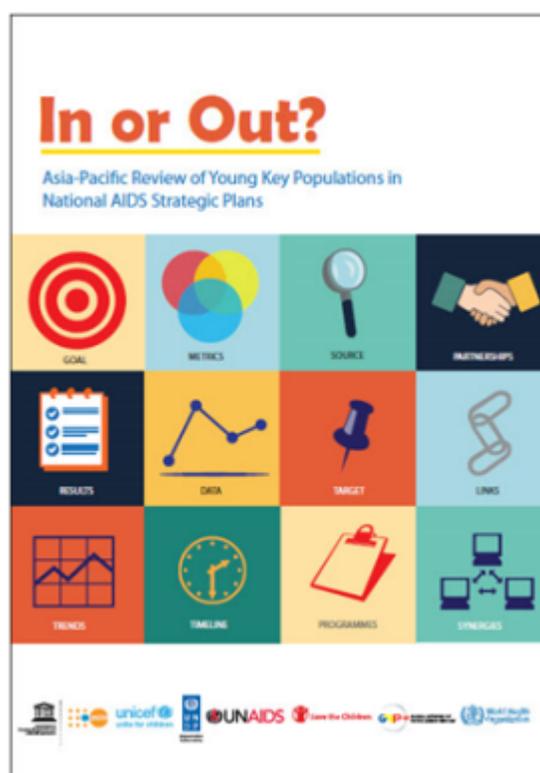


Photo Credit, UNESCO

Methodology

This review analyses attention to key populations, with a particular focus on younger cohorts, in 19 NSPs in the Asia-Pacific region. NSPs were coded by >40 sub-categories in areas of: NSP development and review, content and operationalization of the plan, and by key population/young key population. The analytical tool drew on: existing reviews of NSPs; guidance documents on comprehensive packages for key populations; and the UNAIDS HIV and AIDS Investment Framework.

Findings

While there is attention to KP in Asia-Pacific NSPs, young key populations are off-invisible, whether in situation analyses, NSP development, or identified interventions.

- All NSPs included key populations in NSP development, with people living with HIV (n=12) being most common. 8 reported broad youth engagement (not YKP).
- 11 NSPs include strategic information on YKP (typically children/youth living with HIV), attention is rare to young men who have sex with men (n=4), young people who inject drugs (n=3), and young people selling sex (n=1)
- 6 NSPs specify future research on YKP.
- All NSPs include goals for key populations, and 3 NSPs for young people living with HIV; 9 NSPs had targets for young people living with HIV, 1 NSP had a target for young men who have sex with men.
- Basic programmes identified largely neglected young men who have sex with men and young transgender people, despite emerging epidemics. Only 3 NSPs referred to programmes for young people who injecting drugs, and 2 for young people selling sex.
- Enabling environment interventions for KP most commonly referred to people living with HIV (including young people living with HIV); only 3 refer to other YKP.
- Social/child protection most commonly discussed intervention (N=8, N=7, respectively) for HIV.
- No NSPs specified budgets for YKP.

Conclusions and recommendations

Countries need to take steps to connect the policy, political and financial processes to on-the-ground realities when revising or developing new NSPs. The report concludes with a number of recommendations including to address growing young key population epidemics through:

- Meaningful engagement in the development, review and operationalization of NSPs
- Strengthened strategic information to inform programming.
- Youth-friendly and -accessible prevention programmes which are tailored to YKP, where possible,

- Interventions to create an enabling environment and synergistic development activities to address broader protection issues and risks;
- Targets and allocated budgets.

OUTCOME 3 | STRATEGIC INFORMATION GENERATED AND SYNTHESIZED AND USED TO SUPPORT REGIONAL LEVEL ADVOCACY TARGETING GOVERNMENTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY TO PROMOTE SCALE UP OF COMPREHENSIVE EVIDENCE-INFORMED INTERVENTIONS FOR YKP

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH NEEDS OF ADOLESCENTS UNDER 18 ENGAGED IN SELLING SEX

The HIV Young Leaders Fund (HYLF) published the report Sexual and reproductive health needs and access to health services for adolescents under 18 engaged in selling sex in Asia Pacific in October this year. The research process began in 2013 as part of the “Health Equity for All Initiative” led by HYLF and supported by multiple IATT partners. The initiative included 16 community consultations across six countries and a regional consultation with young people from nine countries to make HIV programme recommendations. The paper argues that adolescents under 18 years engaged in selling sex are not being adequately reached with SRH, HIV and other related services for reasons including: the confusing policy and programme created by discordant national and international legal frameworks; limited knowledge of the available spectrum of interventions and supporting evidence; and the lack of agreed, specific policy and programme guidance. It concludes that comprehensive responses are urgently needed on the principle of “first, do no harm”, taking into account each adolescent’s unique motivations and circumstances in formulating an appropriate response across child protection and health systems, informed by the best practices of both. This includes tailored programmes which address multiple vulnerabilities and are available to adolescents outside of traditional healthcare services. These services should be interwoven with other voluntary services, and supplemented by peer support.

SESSIONS DELIVERED AT KEY INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

WORLD YOUTH CONFERENCE IN COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

Over 1,500 youth from around the world attended the recent World Conference on Youth in Sri Lanka. At the Conference, around 100 countries came together to consult on mainstreaming youth in the post 2015 agenda. In addition to youth, ministers and other senior government officials, development partners including the United Nations (UN), and representatives from civil society organizations, the media, academia, and the private sector participated.

During the Conference, youth reflected on the impact and learning they had had over the last 15 years since the inception of the Millennium Development Goals. They also strongly advocated on the impacts they wanted to have for youth post-2015 in areas such as:

- The empowerment of marginalized youth, including most at risk youth.
- The removal of current punitive laws and policies discriminating against youth based on sexual orientation or on HIV status.
- The improvement of practices and policies around access to HIV services, including measurable indicators disaggregated by age, gender, location, linguistic base, wealth status, level of education, disability, ethnicity and key population status.

The Conference reinforced the importance of working with marginalized youth and taking a rights-based approach towards gender and sexuality, and access to health services. The Declaration calls on the international community to work together to make the commitments, and the vision of youth participation and partnerships in development a reality.

UNESCO Bangkok participated in the Conference, and provided support to a number of sessions and opportunities for exchange. This included contributing to:

- A capacity-building workshop on gender and sexuality, developed by the Inter-Agency Task Team for Women, Girls, HIV and Human Rights. The Gender/Sexuality Process Orientated Tool (GSPOT) was presented as an effective tool for youth networks. The session, co-facilitated with the young and dynamic Youth LEAD facilitators, attracted over 60 participants and was translated in Sinhalese and Tamil.
- The UN Booth, where youth participants could interact with UN agencies. At the booth UNESCO promoted and recruited young people to complete a Youth Opinion Poll which will help inform the United Nations Asia and the Pacific Report on Youth. This report, being developed by the Regional Coordination Mechanism - United Nations Development Group Asia-Pacific Thematic Working Group on Youth, is the first of its kind.
- A Gender Equality panel, where UNESCO emphasized the importance of including transgender people in our efforts towards gender equality, the participation of boys and men, and school-related gender based violence.

YOUTH LEAD AT WYC

Youth LEAD was part of the International Youth Task Force which was instrumental in advising the Sri Lankan government on preparations for the conference, specifically concerning civil society participation and engagement with global youth movements. The IYTF was also responsible for translating youth priorities – discussed by youth delegates in the round-table sessions – into policy in the negotiation room.

With more than 11 representatives from the Youth LEAD team present, young key populations in the Asia Pacific region were well represented throughout the conference. Youth LEADers Jeffry Acaba and Dakshitha Wickremarathne both acted as facilitators in the *Empowering Marginalized Youth, Including Most at Risk Young People* round-table discussions and break-out sessions, where they actively encouraged youth delegates and observers to develop innovative strategies for promoting young people in the post-2015 development framework. Jeffry also spoke on a panel, *Ending Systemic Inequalities*, and organized, with Arushi Singh and Thaw Zin Aye, a parallel event on the GSPOT – the *Gender Sexuality Position Oriented Tool*. In addition to Youth LEAD's active role in the round-table discussions, parallel events and negotiations, Youth LEAD co-hosted a side event with UNAIDS, emphasizing the importance of including young key populations affected by HIV/AIDS in the post-

2015 development context. Throughout the conference, Youth LEAD advocated for the inclusion and active participation of young key populations in the post-2015 Development Agenda.

INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

The 20th International AIDS Conference, AIDS2014 was held in Melbourne, Australia this year. Over 12,000 delegates attended including leading scientists public health experts, policy makers, civil society organisations and HIV-affected individuals. The strong and active presence of YKPs from the Asia-Pacific region was a particular feature throughout this year's conference, with the tone set by Youth LEAD focal point Ayu Oktarini's opening address.

The IATT developed a key messages document to guide a coordinated approach to advocacy during the conference, and roadmap on events for YKPs. Task Team member organisations also facilitated a range of events highlighting the need for programming to address and involve YKPs.

During the International AIDS Conference 2014, Youth LEAD actively participated and engaged in multiple roles.

Ayu Oktariani, one of Youth LEAD's focal points from Indonesia, was invited to speak at the opening plenary. As a young woman, Oktariani emphasized the importance of community engagement in the global AIDS response. During her speech Oktariani stated, "I'm asking all young people living with HIV and those who care about us, to join hands and work together to make a better world, where young people get the information they need and all people living with HIV are treated with respect." In a workshop session hosted by Youth LEAD, *Journey of a New Generation*, focal points from the Philippines, Myanmar and Indonesia shared different success stories of the NewGen Asia Leadership course, which is one of Youth LEAD's key education programs. In addition to actively participating in several sessions, Youth LEAD coordinators and focal points acted as plenary and panel speakers, facilitators and activists throughout the conference.

Youth LEAD was cited as a 'good practices' example in both a plenary on HIV and Adolescents by UNICEF and in the Youth Rapporteur session. Youth LEAD was recognized and commended for its success, since the organization ensures the strategic engagement of young key populations (YKP) in a variety of different platforms of the AIDS response - from programming, to service delivery, to policy development in various countries within Asia.

YVC

Prior to the main conference, YVC joined APCOM and AFAO at the MSM Preconference for the session titled *Linkages for a More Effective HIV Response for MSM and Transgender People in Asia and the Pacific*, where YVC Project Coordinator was highlighting self-stigma issue among young MSM and young transgender persons and the linkages to HIV vulnerabilities that hindered access to HIV prevention and treatment. At the same preconference, our member presented the legal environment for HIV response of the MSM community in Viet Nam through during the session *Government Ratified Homophobia and Transphobia: Strategies for Confronting Punitive Laws, Stigma and Discrimination*.

YVC facilitated two sessions at the MSM Networking Zone and the G'Day Networking Zone called *Self-stigma Among Young People and the importance of Building an Ideal HIV Testing Program and Health Services for Young MSM and Young Transgender Persons* and *Loud and Proud Campaign: Giving a Loud Voice and a Proud Face to the Issues faced by Young MSM and Young Transgender Persons in Asia and the Pacific*. The first session presented recommendations from YVC's policy brief *Hidden Dimension* and identified practical barriers to access

existing HIV testing and health services followed by a panel of a young MSM and young transgender woman sharing their experience of accessing to health services in their own country. The second session featured mini-documentaries from Loud and Proud campaign in Indonesia, Mongolia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, followed by a Q&A session with YVC members who directly took part in the campaign and with YVC members who were planning for Loud and Proud in Fiji and Myanmar.

YVC, members also presented and spoke at various plenary sessions: Beyond 2014: Youth Leadership in the AIDS Response, The Critical Role of Young People in Key Populations, Young People: Epidemiology and Prevention Strategies, Role of MSM communities in rolling out "the WHO 2014 Consolidated Guidelines for HIV prevention, Diagnosis, treatment and Care for Key Populations" in the Asia Pacific, among others.

UN Agency Partners were also active participants in the conference:

- UNICEF EAPRO organized a workshop specifically on how to collect data on adolescents and young people at higher risk of HIV. Participants learnt how to use a method called respondent-driven sampling (RDS) that uses social networks to gather data on a particular group of population.
- UNFPA Headquarters hosted series of networking zone lunches with each day dedicated to a different youth-focused theme each day.
- UNESCO was represented on a number of panels and hosted a number of events including launch of the report “In or Out” on the inclusion of YKPs in NSPs, a workshop on comprehensive sexuality education, presentations on transitions from pediatric to adolescent care for young people living with HIV and legal barriers to young people's access to sexual and reproductive health services. Reports on the profiling of the study on bullying of LGBT students in Thai schools that IATT members were involved in promoting through the chalk rainbow campaign were also presented through multiple conference events.

LAUNCH OF TASK TEAM WEBSITE

The Task Team launched its website in August this year. The site is intended to act as an information hub for people working on YKP issues and has become an important mechanism for sharing the work of the Task Team. The site provides basic information on YKPs, the Task Team, member organizations and our activities. It also contains links to previous annual reports and key publications, allowing the site to act as a single entry point to the latest strategic information. Member organizations submit updates to the sites blog page each month as a means of sharing the work they do throughout the year. Visit the site at www.ap-ykp.org.

OUTCOME 4 | ADVOCATE FOR AN ENABLING AND COHERENT POLICY AND LEGAL ENVIRONMENT FOR YKP

YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE LAW REVIEW: TAKING THE FINDINGS FORWARD

Young people and the law in Asia and the Pacific: A review of laws and policies affecting young people's access to sexual and reproductive health services, was released in 2013. The report found that young people face a range of legal and policy barriers to accessing sexual and reproductive health services including age of consent laws that require parental consent for young people under 18 years of age, laws and policies that orient or restrict services to people who are married, laws that criminalize the activities of YKPs and laws limiting access to harm reduction programs for injecting drug users to people over the age of 18. The report also identified some positive reforms including lowering of the age of consent to HIV testing in a number of countries in the region, provision for social workers in the Philippines to consent to HIV testing persons under 18 and policy in New Zealand allowing young people to independently consent to identified sexual and reproductive health services.



Photo Credit, UNESCO

Development of a legal advocacy toolkit in collaboration with law firm DLA Piper has commenced, with the aim of piloting the product through training sessions in Myanmar, Nepal and Thailand during the first half of 2015. The toolkit is intended for law and policy-makers, youth advocates and healthcare providers. It will cover laws and policies that affect young people's access to sexual and reproductive health services, sexual and reproductive health rights at the international level, how

to effectively engage with young people, and strategic reform and use of evidence to build and advocacy argument.

TASK TEAM ACTIVITIES FOR 2015

2015 will be a busy year for the Task Team, with the Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV/AIDS to be held in Bangkok, the 12th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP12) to be hosted by Bangladesh and advocacy to shape the post-2015 agenda intensifying in the lead up to the release of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Work will continue in our key areas and in relation to a number of initiatives already underway, including:

- support to implement the ACT2015 Roadmap;
- pilot of the legal advocacy toolkit;
- evaluation of the NewGen leadership training course;
- follow-up in relation to the findings of the “In or Out” report on YKP inclusion in NSPs; and
- development and promotion of the task team website as a resource hub for young people, programmers and law and policy makers in the field.

Next year will also present an opportunity to reflect on the work of the Task Team through an evaluation of its HIV-related capacity development initiatives, expected to be finalized around mid-2015.

The Asia Pacific Inter-Agency Task Team on YKPs aims to strengthen consensus and collaboration among UN agencies and key INGO partners at regional and country level to support governments and civil society in accelerating action to achieve the global and national targets to reduce HIV transmission among YKPs.

For further information, please contact the out-going Co-Chairs for 2013:

- Gabrielle Szabo (UNFPA APRO): szabo@unfpa.org
- Scott McGill (Save the Children): smcgill@savechildren.org

Or the incoming Co-Chairs for 2015:

- Shirley Mark Prabhu (UNICEF EAPRO): smarkprabhu@unicef.org
- Niluka Perera (Youth Voices Count): niluka@youthvoicescount.org