INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE

2016

YOUTH CALL ON ACTION

We the young people at the International AIDS Conference 2016, came together as united, inspired, and convinced youth leaders who believe that youth should be centered in the core of the HIV response. We recognize the importance of this AIDS Conference as a crucial milestone in the HIV prevention movement, thus more than 100 young people from around the world gathered together in Durban, on the 16th and 17th of July 2016 to develop this call on action.

We believe that the programmes addressing HIV prevention and providing SRH services should not only be designed based on the assumption that young people are the beneficiaries but do not deserve to be part of the policy and programmes formulation.

We also recognize the steps taken by the governments and the UN, however these progress cannot be sustainable if young people are not put in the core of the HIV response.

Thus we recall the Bali Youth Declaration 2012, the AIDS 2014 Youth Call on Action, the HLM Political Declaration and the 2030 Development Agenda.

Based on this we call on governments to ensure:

Assess to Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in formal and non-formal settings

Young people are in desperate need of stable and a healthy life in order to sustain prosperous living and ensure development among their societies. Actions need to be taken in order to prevent social, cultural, regulatory and discriminatory barriers which exist in the accessing of quality and youth friendly health services, specifically as it relates to sexual and reproductive health and rights to information, services and comprehensive sexuality education in and out of school and furthermore reaching out also YKPs and marginalized YP, adolescents and young girls.
Governments must develop policies and programmes to ensure that young people have access to comprehensive sexuality education, delivered in formal and non-formal settings.

Governments must monitor and evaluate these programmes to ensure effective and consistent delivery.

Governments must adequately resource comprehensive sexuality programmes, and invest in building the capacity of teachers and trainers to deliver programmes to a high standard.

Government should ensure free, equal, age-appropriate youth-friendly services that provides access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services for all young people.

Leaving no one behind

Recognizing that sustainable societies rely on empowered individuals who are able to exercise their rights to obtain the highest possible levels of education, decent employment and quality health services, and live free of all forms of stigma, discrimination and violence, governments must integrate human rights principles throughout all laws, policies and programmes, particularly population and health-related policies and programmes.

Young people who belong to one or more of the key populations – or who engage in activities associated with these populations – are made especially vulnerable to HIV by widespread discrimination, stigma and violence, combined with the particular vulnerabilities of youth, power imbalances in relationships and, sometimes, alienation from family and friends.

However, in many cases, young people from key populations are made more vulnerable by policies and laws that demean, criminalize or penalize them or their behaviors, and by education and health systems that ignore or reject them and that fail to provide the information and services, including treatment they need to keep themselves safe.

Governments have a legal obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of children to life, health and development, and indeed, societies share an ethical duty to ensure this for all young people. Thus specific steps to lower their risk of acquiring HIV are needed.

Accountability in the framework of the 2030 Development Agenda

We call upon governments to recognize and emphasize the right of young people to meaningfully participate in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda and to acknowledge the SRHR of young people and adolescents worldwide. Politicians and decision-makers must ensure political will to address our needs and commit to making our voices heard on all levels. We call on governments to remember that young people must be both beneficiaries and partners in this process. It is only with the meaningful participation of young people that we can successfully achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda.
Governments must include young people in the implementation of the new development agenda not only at international but at national level ensuring effective mechanisms for meaningful youth participation.

**Education, entrepreneurship and employment**

Sadly, our educational systems are somewhat outdated. The gaps which exist are, unfortunately, not being effectively addressed, and as a result youth are not being able to adapt themselves with real world problems. It is also clear that the current structure is aimed at producing job seekers rather than job creators.

We demand that partnerships be formed among youth, governments, the private sector and all educational institutions to review their educational curriculum and ensure it is inclusive of those transferable skills all youth need to maintain sustainability within our communities.

If young people are not effectively and meaningfully included in the HIV response and the implementation of the SDGs, no sustainability shall be possible, youth will not be able to be the “torch bearers” since today’s and the generations that come are the ones who have the mission to become the positive change makers and bring peace, health and prosperity for all.

*The Young people at the Youth-Pre Conference of AIDS 2016!*