

**APN
PLUS
POSITIVE CHANGE**

STRATEGIC PLAN

2017 - 2021



PLHIV Free Trade Agreement Protest (FTA), New Delhi, India, 2011.

Vietnam Vanuatu Timor Leste
 Thailand Taiwan Sri Lanka South
 Korea Singapore Samoa Papua
 Philippines New Guinea Pakistan
 New Zealand Nepal Myanmar
 Mongolia Malaysia Laos Japan
 Iran Indonesia India Guam Fiji
 Cook Islands China Cambodia
 Bhutan Bangladesh Australia

Our vision:

A better world for People Living with HIV.

Our mission:

Working together to improve the quality of life for all people living with HIV in our region through peer led advocacy, leadership, network strengthening, communication and capacity building activities.

Positive Change is the Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS (APN+) Strategy for 2012 - 2016. It describes our ambitions, our priorities and the differences we want to make over the next five years. APN+ was established in 1994 as a collective voice for all HIV positive people in the Asia Pacific region.

We are a peer led organisation and all country representatives to our Board are positive leaders. We are committed to non-discrimination and gender equity and we continue to work to encourage and support the active participation of women in our networks, as well as positive people from marginalised populations such as people who use drugs, men who have sex with men, transgendered people, sex workers, and mobile and migrant people

Our Bangkok based Secretariat aims to be responsive and supportive to our network members and represent their interests regionally. Over the past twenty years we have grown in strength and numbers and now have thirty member country networks spread across the entire Asia Pacific region working together to improve the quality of life for all people living with HIV.

Introduction



Opposite: PLHIV FTA protest at ICAAP Korea, 2011.

APN+ Values

APN+ and its member People Living with HIV (PLHIV) networks include a diverse group of people and organisations, however, we share many common values that help guide our actions.

- We will be accountable to our members
- We will be inclusive of all PLHIV
- We recognise and accept diversity in our communities
- We support the dignity of all PLHIV and their right to make decisions about their lives
- We will continue to advocate for GIPA - the greater and more meaningful
- Involvement of PLHIV - in all aspects of the HIV response

A changing world

By 2016 life for PLHIV in our region will have changed. We believe some of these changes will include:

- More PLHIV as a result of new infections and positive people living longer
- Broader health needs for PLHIV
- Better but more expensive treatments
- Threats to access of second and third line HIV medications and diagnostics
- Less bilateral and donor funding for HIV and more pressure on national government budgets
- Less stigma and discrimination as governments and communities come to terms with HIV
- Continuing hostile legal environment
- As the overall health of positive people on treatment improves, they will continue to face another challenges in their lives beyond HIV

We believe that by implementing our APN+ Strategy 2012 - 2016 we will create a better world for all PLHIV and prepare for the many opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

APN+ 5 NEW Strategic Directions

The first APN+ Strategic Plan 2006 - 2011 focused on the key areas of advocacy, capacity building, network development and knowledge sharing. In 2010 we reviewed our progress, key limitations and challenges, and also future opportunities.

ADVOCACY

The review process included consultations with APN+ Board Members and Secretariat, key people linked to APN+ and representatives from partner organisations. We consulted with nearly seventy people during the process and the review report is available at www.apnplus.org

NETWORKS

Overall the review confirmed the relevance of our objectives and provided us with many ideas for our future direction, all of which have been considered in the development of our new Strategy.

LEADERSHIP

COMMUNICATION

SECRETARIAT



A Changing world

Since 2012 when the previous APN+ Strategy was developed there have been many changes, some good and some bad. They dramatically affect our constituency of PLHIV of Asia and the Pacific, and the environment in which we operate and inform the development of this Strategy.

There are many more of us on treatment. We now know that with effective treatment and undetectable viral load we are no longer infectious. This should translate into lessening the fear around HIV and lowering stigma and discrimination, which remains a serious issue and major barrier. It means that getting people onto treatment as soon as possible and with undetectable viral load is the best contribution we can make to prevention. There are better and more robust treatments that have been developed. Many of us are living longer and better lives. And yet, we grow in numbers more and more as the rate of new infections only decreases slightly, and in some countries and in some populations it is on the rise again.

We have seen HIV fall off the international agenda, partly through complacency and a general shift to more conservative values. HIV had its own MDG (Millennium Development Goal) but now is relegated to a sub goal of a more general health goal, SDG 3 (Sustainable Development Goal).

The Declaration from the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly of the UN was disappointing in its backsliding on language and firm commitment.

The political will and funding required to achieve 90/90/90 let alone the end of AIDS is lacking.

UNAIDS 2016 report shows that Asia Pacific is the second largest epidemic and indicators comparing 2010 and 2015, such as percentage increase in people on treatment, reduction in new infections, decrease in mortality, are far worse in this region than in Africa. In Asia Pacific only 40% of those who should be on treatment are compared to 60% in Eastern and Southern Africa, and 55 % in Latin America and the Caribbean.

As international donors retreat from Asia, partly due to the transition of many high burden countries to Middle Income status, concerns are that governments in the region will not step up to fill the gap and neither will they work with or fund the community organisations that in Asia and the Pacific are central to a successful HIV response. The epidemic in Asia continues to be concentrated in Key Affected Populations which are highly stigmatised and often criminalised. More than ever there is a need for community organisations, such as APN+, and their members to be centrally involved in the HIV response if we are to deliver on 90/90/90, a Test and Treat strategy, and get the best results from Treatment as Prevention.

Viral load testing is not the norm in many countries in the region and second and third line drugs are not generally affordable or available to those who need them. There continue to be stock outs. Treatments for co-infections such as TB and HCV,

which are the most common causes of death among PLHIV are often unaffordable. Intellectual Property barriers to treatment remain a huge obstacle to access and are likely to increase in the face of the so called Free Trade Agreements under negotiation in the region. which are the most common causes of death among PLHIV are often unaffordable. Intellectual Property barriers to treatment remain a huge obstacle to access and are likely to increase in the face of the so called Free Trade Agreements under negotiation in the region.

Meanwhile our in-country networks struggle to find funding to even survive let alone contribute to the HIV response. It is hard to have our voices heard, whether it be by governments or on CCMs. It is clear that there is much to do, not only to ensure the well being of our constituency, but also to be central to the HIV response. The time has come for renewed activism! This strategy is therefore a "Call to Arms", not just for the benefit of PLHIV but for the sake of the HIV response in our region.

APN+ and its in-country networks are ready for the challenge - and we need the support of donors and governments to join us in the fight.

Strategic Pillar 1 :

ADVOCACY



The need for advocacy is greater now than at any time since the start of the treatment access campaigns twenty years ago. Yet advocacy and activism in HIV has waned, partly as a result of progress made in numbers of PLHIV on treatment. Our old guard activists will train and mentor the next generation of advocates and activists, and invigorate them to address the many challenges we now face. APN+ will advocate directly at the regional and global levels and work with our in-country networks on their advocacy agendas. We will use an evidence and rights based approach, making recommendations and providing solutions.

We will develop arguments based on cost effectiveness and science. We will advocate not only for the benefit of people living with HIV in Asia Pacific, but also for what will best contribute to the HIV response in the region to achieve 90/90/90. Our advocacy will support the UNAIDS Fast Track strategy and work to maximise the effect of Treatment as Prevention.

We will support our in-country networks through capacity building, and technical support, we will share best practice and coordinate advocacy work across the network. We will work to ensure funding is available at the regional and country level for advocacy work.

We will advocate for full adherence to the latest World Health Organisation (WHO) Guidelines on treatments for HIV as well as for co-infections such as HCV and TB. In particular we will advocate for HIV treatment immediately after diagnosis for all PLHIV no matter what their CD4 count is. We will advocate for more robust and less toxic first line regimens, and affordable access to second and third line treatments. We will advocate for routine viral load testing twice a year as the standard practice for HIV management for everyone.

In order to encourage those people with HIV who do not know their status, estimated at up to 50%, we will advocate with governments and donors to fund and promote community based testing and treatment. Given the high loss to follow up and retention in care of PLHIV in many jurisdictions, leading to poor health outcomes and more new infections, we believe that community based treatment and care will assist in increasing the percentage of PLHIV retained in care.

We will advocate for laws and regulations that are consistent with the UN Declaration on Human Rights, and are based on science and sound public health principles, and for these laws and regulations to be fully enforced to address any form of stigma and discrimination, and to foster well being through access to housing, work and education, and the right to sexual and reproductive health. We will work in partnership with all stakeholders and the broader community to eliminate stigma and discrimination, which continues to be a barrier to adequately addressing HIV, and was the hardest to achieve of the Three Zeroes in the UNAIDS Strategy.

We will work in partnership with like-minded others, and form strong strategic alliances. We will use modern technology and social media to mobilise our communities and deliver our messages. We will advocate loudly on the regional and global stage, raise our profile at international meetings, and work to ensure positive voices are heard and listened to in a meaningful way. We will work with our in-country member networks to provide support and capacity building, co-ordinate advocacy campaigns and provide evidence and materials for our advocacy arguments. We recognise that it is what happens at the national level that most affects the lives of PLHIV in any given country, and APN+ will support its member networks to achieve their advocacy goals in country according to their individual plans.

Our voices must be raised, for all our sakes!



We will demand continuity of supply of medicines, and as external donors retreat from some countries, that their governments step up to meet their treatment obligations. We will seek to ensure a continuum of care, including addressing the total health needs of those who are living longer with HIV.

We will advocate to have mental health issues addressed, and in particular the underlying causes for and treatment of depression which is ubiquitous in our communities.

We will do everything in our power to challenge and break down the barriers to the availability of affordable generic medicines for treatment of HIV and co-infections, in particular HCV. This will require a group of determined advocates who are knowledgeable on issues of intellectual property and patents on medicines, to enter into dialogue with their governments and other bodies to push for full use of TRIPS flexibilities and patent reform that protects the interests of individuals and public health.

We will advocate for direct funding of our networks from governments and other donors, without which our ability to contribute to the HIV response and our ability to work to improve the lives and well being of our constituencies is severely compromised. We will demonstrate the value and cost effectiveness of the work we do and the necessary centrality of PLHIV groups in supporting 90/90/90 and the UNAIDS Fast Track strategy and consequently the National AIDS Strategies of the countries of our member networks. We will advocate to ensure our voices are heard on CCMs and that we are centrally involved in the development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of our own governments' national AIDS programmes.

Strategic Pillar 1 :

ADVOCACY

Strategic Pillar 2 :

STRENGTHENING OUR NETWORKS

It is our network members who are at the front line of the positive response to HIV. Without effective and sustainable in-country networks the vision and mission of APN+ and the regional community of PLHIV will not be met. They are also critically central to the overall HIV response and the achievement of 90/90/90 by 2030.



Network members are under threat to their very existence through reduction in funding and a move towards funding project work only. APN+ will work to firmly establish the critical importance of PLHIV in-country networks to the HIV response, and support them to improve their governance, leadership, financial management and operational effectiveness, and equip them to work in true partnership with governments and other stakeholders.

Strategic Pillar 2 :

STRENGTHENING OUR NETWORKS

APN+ will support its member networks build credibility and stature through capacity building, technical support and mentoring in critical areas of their operations, and thus place them in a better position to obtain funding and be sustainable. These include financial management and reporting, Board operations and governance, management structures, and performance assessment frameworks that include work planning and monitoring and evaluation.

We will seek to assist member networks in developing their skills to play a key and meaningful role in country CCMs and government advisory and policy platforms, and will promote their right to do so.

APN+ will work to improve their skill levels in technical areas such as treatment literacy and best practice care and support, addressing intellectual property barriers to treatment access, human rights issues and rights that should be conferred by international agreements.

APN+ will work with member networks to address difficulties in retaining PLHIV in treatment and care, and improving treatment adherence. It will support networks in their in-country advocacy campaigns, especially around treatment access and viral load testing, by providing advocacy training, supporting material and technical assistance.

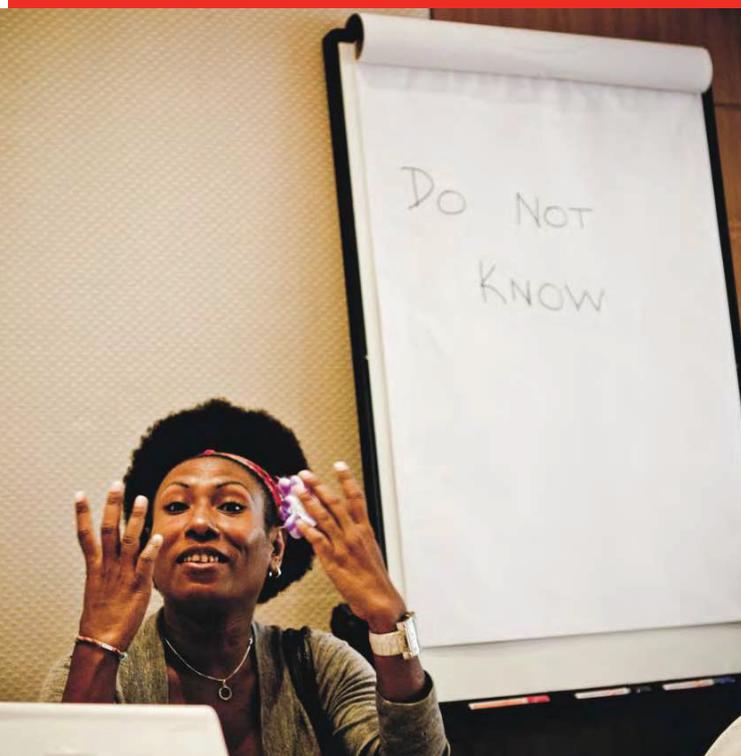
It will assist by providing advice and support on gathering of evidence within country by mapping and through peer research to support their advocacy arguments. APN+ will share best practice between networks.

To strengthen networks and ensure that their own voices are representative of the diversity of the PLHIV population, and all minorities and Key Affected Populations are represented, APN+ will encourage gender equity and inclusion at all levels of network operation. Nobody should be left behind. In particular as the founders and key players in many organisations step aside for younger voices, APN+ encourages networks to involve youth and together develop a much needed new generation of advocates and activists.

Most importantly APN+ will work at the global level, the regional level and with its members in-country to obtain secure and sustainable funding. It will advocate with multilateral donors, governments, INGOs and others to allocate funds for positive community organisations, and it will seek to identify opportunities as they arise and support individual members and coordinate members in submitting proposals.

Strategic Pillar 3 :

COMMUNICATION



APN+ GNP+ Strategic Plan Consultation Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand, 2011.

Although the key determinants of what happens with PLHIV depend on the country context of where they live, the challenges we all face in the region have many things in common. A key role of APN+ therefore is to facilitate communications to member networks so that they are informed of external issues that affect them, from member networks so that APN+ understands what are the overall priorities and issues and can communicate those to the wider world, and between networks so that they can share knowledge and best practice. Through effective communication the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

APN+ recognises the diversity of languages spoken in the region and the challenge this represents for communication between us. It commits to minimising this barrier through clear and simple communications in English, by promoting the use of electronic translation where available and by making provision for translation of key materials into other languages where possible.

Strategic Pillar 3 :

COMMUNICATION

A key communication platform is the APN+ website which APN+ will continue to develop and update. The fast increasing access to email and smart phone technology in the region opens up many more possibilities for communication, and we see this as gradually replacing printed material such as the APN+ Newsletter. We will avail ourselves of this technology wherever possible by holding more virtual meetings and conversations. We will promote e-discussion forums, social positive networking sites and blogs, which can be adapted to focus on the diversity of sub groups within the positive family such as MSM, PUD, women, TG, sex workers, youth and those living longer with HIV.

APN+ will facilitate the exchange of information, sharing of skills and knowledge, best practice and what works, evidence, and progress made towards goals. We will coordinate campaigns, approaches to advocacy, funding opportunities, mapping and research.

Given that many PLHIV are in rural areas, or isolated for various reasons, we will encourage and support member networks to develop their own communication and outreach strategies to ensure all PLHIV from every community are included. Current and emerging mobile phone technologies and usage will be central to this strategy.

As the representative voice of PLHIV in Asia and the Pacific APN+ will communicate with governments, donors, multilateral stakeholders and others about PLHIV issues with a view to influencing policy and funding, and additionally with the public with a view to lessening stigma and discrimination.

Strategic Pillar 4 :

LEADERSHIP

As the momentum in the HIV response has slowed and the challenges to finish the job are many, leadership is required more than ever before. As the peak body for country networks from 30 countries of Asia and the Pacific, the regional leadership of the PLHIV community falls to APN+. APN+ accepts this role and seeks to be a role model for others, and to foster and develop leadership within its member networks. It will take initiative, build effective partnerships, promote accountability and ensure that key issues affecting the well being of PLHIV, and contributing to the HIV response, are acted on.

APN+ will identify and focus on the key priorities on which leadership is required, drawing strongly on this Strategy. In noting the wane in activism and advocacy in recent years, APN+ will reinvigorate activism, identify, develop and strengthen new and younger leaders within the networks. In particular APN+ will encourage youths to be empowered to speak out and take on leadership positions. As the epidemic continues in Asia Pacific to be concentrated in certain Key Populations, and as these populations continue to be stigmatised and often criminalised, APN+ will ensure its voice is heard in support of the rights and inclusion of marginalised populations, and encouraging PLHIV from these communities to speak out and demand their rights.

Leadership relies on many complex skills, and it often requires courage. APN+ will build the skills of leaders, and provide support and mentoring. It will establish forums for leaders to share and work together.

APN+ will work with its leaders to mobilise communities to create a groundswell of movement designed to address the needs of PLHIV and contribute to the overall AIDS response. It will lead by example in political engagement. APN+ will identify strategic partners with whom we can work as a community in the achievement of our objectives.

APN+ will set the benchmark for the qualities of leadership of the PLHIV community through the relevance of its work, and with transparency, accountability, responsibility, passion, innovation and fairness.

Strategic Pillar 5 :

SECRETARIAT CAPACITY BUILDING

Achieving the four core objectives of this Strategy under Advocacy, Leadership, Network Strengthening and Communication will not be possible without an effective, sustainable, funded, well managed and skilled Secretariat. APN+ will continue to develop the capacity of the Secretariat in the areas of governance, management, communications, systems and policy that enable the efficient and effective implementation of key regional initiatives, and support network members to achieve their own goals and aspirations, and furthermore contribute to the regional HIV response.

The APN+ Secretariat is made up of the management, staff and consultants that work for APN+, under the direction of the APN+ Steering Committee, who are elected by and act on behalf of the APN+ Board.

APN+ will ensure that the Secretariat is trained in and abides by the principles of good governance, and that the governance structure of APN+ reflects the changing needs and demographics of the PLHIV constituency for whom it works and represents.

It will develop work plans for the implementation of this Strategy and will monitor and report progress towards their achievement. It will audit and develop the skills of its staff to enable them to implement the strategy, promote self development, and will assess staff performance against agreed KPIs based on the achievement of the Strategy. APN+ will promote a learning culture within the Secretariat and the member networks.

APN+ will ensure it has the capacity in research and mapping to develop evidence based arguments to support advocacy and the ability to find solutions and recommendations.

APN+ will avail itself of the latest technology in communication and mobilisation, using social media and other emerging communication mechanisms, and develop its skills in messaging and advocacy.

It will ensure its staff have the required interpersonal, presentation and negotiation skills to show leadership and have the voices of PLHIV heard at all levels of representation from global meetings and forums to local level.

So that it can play a leadership role in the regional and global HIV response and support its network members in country, APN+ will continue to build strong policy development and political engagement capacity, and ensure its technical knowledge and skills are cutting edge especially in areas such as treatment, including barriers to treatment access such as intellectual property barriers, and social and structural impediments.

Above all APN+ will strive to obtain the funding necessary for its own effective operation, without which none of these aspirations will be possible. APN+ not only requires funding for the projects that will underpin this Strategy, but it needs a strong core operation to carry the PLHIV agenda forward, to provide support to its network members and contribute to the regional HIV response.

Never has this been needed more than now!

APN PLUS POSITIVE CHANGE

APN+ would like to thank all those who contributed so openly and honestly to the development of our new Strategy, especially all our positive sisters and brothers.

APN+ would also like to thank those organisations who provided financial support to our strategic planning process, including; UNAIDS RST (Regional Support Team, Bangkok), Technical Support Facility Asia Pacific (TSF), GNP+ (Global Network of PLHIV)

APN+ thanks John Rock who facilitated the development and writing of this Strategy

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