

REPORT

Share-Net Debriefing 20th International AIDS Conference 2014, Melbourne, Australia

18 September 2014, Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Hague



STEPPING UP THE PACE

“ There will be no end of AIDS without ensuring respect and dignity of all people, equity in access to health services and social justice”

Prof. Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, President of IAS and Nobel prize winner.

Opening and short overview / key themes of the conference – COLIN DIXON (Share-Net International)

Colin Dixon opens the meeting by welcoming everyone to this meeting. After the introduction we take one minute silence to remember our colleagues who died in the MH17 crash.

Colin gave an overview of recent statistics including the fact that 2.1 million people became infected with HIV in 2013 – a rate of 6000 each day and the fact that one third of all people living with HIV are in South Africa, Nigeria and India

Colin also gave an overview of research presented regarding the search for a cure and vaccine. The overall conclusion from the conference is that the cure field will move in the direction of therapeutic vaccines or other immune-based therapies that can be used in combination approaches.

A theme that was very much prominent during the AIDS Conference was that of key affected populations. The Consolidated Guidelines on HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care for key populations by the WHO were presented during the conference. The WHO pleas for more respect and rights for key populations.

During the conference ambitious treatment targets are mentioned: 90/90/90 (UNAIDS discussion paper): 90% of people living with HIV know their HIV status, 90% of people living with HIV are receiving antiretroviral therapy and 90% are retained in care with undetectable viral load.

Please also read Colin's blog on the Share-Net website about the conference:
<http://share-netinternational.org/news/blog-colin-dixon-aids-2014>

The presentation of Colin can be found attached to this report (annex 1).

Reflections on the conference by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – ELS KLINKERT (DSO/GA)

Also Els Klinkert mentions that there is a lot of information on 'key populations' during the conference. Sex workers, MSM and IDUs face criminalization, stigma, and exclusion of prevention, care and treatment. The USA and the Netherlands are among the few donors that directly invest in these groups. 7% of all resources are allocated to key populations.



A second theme that gets a lot of attention during the conference is that of youth or adolescents. HIV is the most important cause of death among this group. A lot of adolescents are withheld from sexual education and sexual and reproductive healthcare. Of all new HIV infections, 40% concerns someone below 25 years. A 'toolkit' is presented to better involve adolescents in national plans and program execution.



Young women are especially vulnerable. The number of new HIV-infections and deaths among young women in Sub-Saharan Africa is unaltered and remains unacceptably high. Insufficient approaches for tackling its structural causes. Many women are not able to sufficiently protect themselves from HIV. Result: almost 60% of all new infections in SSA concerns a young woman.

Thirdly, Els refers to treatment as one of the highlighted topics during the conference. The access to treatment has increased as well as the availability of effective biomedical prevention methods. Now 14 million people are on ARV-treatment (in 2009 this number was 6.6 million.)

Treatment is also used as prevention: the use of antiretrovirals lowers the chances of infecting others with HIV. The downside is that this 'treatment as prevention' perspective hinders the attention for the necessity of education and behavioral change.

Els also mentions that fewer funds for non-biomedical prevention are available and there is a low investment and attention for risk groups.

What is the way forward? Every country has its own epidemics. Therefore, only a unique, suitable approach focused on hot spots can stop AIDS. We should work by means of smart and targeted investments in particular geographical regions and for groups with a high chance of HIV-transmission. The risk related to this method is further discrimination and stigmatization for those involved groups.

The presentation of Els can be found attached to this report (annex 2).

Findings of the criminalisation pre-conference – ROBIN IRWIN (GNP+ / HIV Vereniging)

Robin Irwin attended the criminalisation pre-conference and reports back on the main topics brought up during that meeting. He mentions the discussion around 'anti-social behaviour': if people are indifferent in infecting others with HIV should there still be a law?

With regard to legislation related to the HIV topic: there is no single law that deals with issues like non-disclosure, exposure and transmission. US and Canada are the countries where HIV positive people are criminalized the most. Unfortunately, also in Europe this is rising.



The HIV advocacy group works with different tools in communicating with different levels of society to end criminalisation. Also the global guidelines focus on critical scientific, medical and legal considerations.

Please read Robin's blog about this conference on the Share-Net website:

<http://share-netinternational.org/news/blog-robin-irwin-aids-2014>

Robin's presentation can be found attached (annex 3).

Outcomes of the youth pre-conference and youth related highlights – DARIA ALEXEEVA (dance4life)

Daria Alexeeva starts her presentation with some figures that show the importance of focusing on youth when fighting the HIV epidemics:

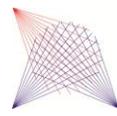
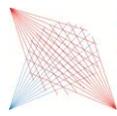
- **2.1 million adolescents** were living with HIV at the end of 2012
- About **2/3** of the infections in adolescents between 15 and 19 years old **are among girls**
- AIDS is the **second leading cause of death** amongst adolescents aged 10–19 globally, and the number 1 cause in Africa.

During the IAC a wake-up news was announced by UNICEF that the only group of population in which the AIDS related deaths have increased was adolescents, and not only increased but doubled. Whereas among all other groups of population the death rates continued decreasing.

When taking one step further, the question arises what is needed for interventions targeted at this group. Of course the availability of resources is important and a continued focus on key affected populations. Specifically, related to prevention, youth should be meaningfully involved. Focus should be on **behaviour change interventions and emerging modern technologies and new prevention ideas.**



Dance4life attended and co-facilitated Youth Pre-Conference which was supported by UNAIDS and UNICEF. During the pre-conference different workshops and sessions took place for people including tools they can use in practice in their countries to advocate towards their governments to make sure that agreements made by them on ICPD are implemented.



For the first time at an IAC a Youth Action plan has been developed with tangible and actionable goals youth will work together towards the end of HIV, focusing on the 4 themes of Treat, Reform, Educate and Love.

Daria's presentation can be found attached to this report (annex 4).

Community Guide to the WHO 2013 consolidated guidelines on use of ART – JENNIFER BUSHEE (STOP AIDS NOW!)

Jennifer presents the above mentioned community guide which was presented during the conference. More information can be found on the website of WHO: <http://www.who.int/hiv/pub/guidelines/arv2013/download/en/>

Female Condom – BEATRIJS JANSSEN (UAFC)

During the conference UAFC launched a new portal which contains technological information on female condoms. When developing its program and learning from the past, UAFC starts to focus more on male involvement. During the conference a presentation was given on male involvement to stress the importance of men accepting female condoms.

UAFC showed 8 video's on the conference and paid attention to the upcoming Global Female Condom day.

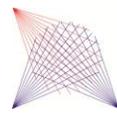
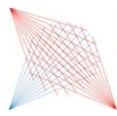
Beatrijs mentions the high attention to Female Condoms during the conference was remarkable. New was the focus on the variety of Female Condoms.

Documentary: 'de tijd daarna' – Erwin Kokkelkoren and Bert Oele

Erwin and Bert inform the group about the documentary they have made and have shown during the conference. Read more information on the website: <http://www.detijddaarna.nl/> or watch it at: http://www.npo.nl/de-tijd-daarna/29-07-2014/VPWON_1229869

Key take-a-ways & way forward

- ❖ Governments should be held more accountable for their political commitment. For example, Australia was highly criticized for their immigration laws and policies regarding PLHIV.



- ❖ Global Fund is growing and viewed more positive under the new leadership.
- ❖ The question arises why mortality under young people, especially young men, is disproportionally high? Suggested is they do not adhere enough to treatment and/or care is not friendly enough.
- ❖ Meaningful involvement of youth is still not happening enough.
- ❖ There is a certain interaction between pre-conferences – e.g. attention is paid to young trans genders, MSM using drugs, etc. The pre-conferences do not feed the main conference, which might be a missed chance.
- ❖ Migrant workers are a very vulnerable group and should get more attention. Also on the political agenda. UNAIDS developed a valuable tool: a virtual map of all health services.
- ❖ There wasn't much integration of SRHR and HIV in Melbourne.
- ❖ Share-Net will be involved in organizing the AIDS impact conference in July 2015, where a track will be organized on integrating SRHR and HIV.