



RED RIBBON AWARD 2008

Celebrating Community Leadership and Action on AIDS

Background

Community-based organisations are central to the response to HIV, displaying extraordinary courage and resilience in addressing the different development challenges created by the AIDS epidemic. Using creative and sustainable solutions to meet the unique needs of people living with HIV and vulnerable groups, community leadership demonstrates how to practically address a multifaceted crisis, often in the face of deepening poverty and escalating stigma and discrimination.

Community-based organisations participate in the global AIDS response by empowering their members to promote positive change, increasing awareness and education about the epidemic, and mitigating the effects of HIV on individuals and entire communities. They teach us in practical ways how to respond to a global epidemic – one community at a time.

Inspired by the red ribbon, the global symbol in the movement to address AIDS, the Red Ribbon Award: Celebrating Community Leadership and Action on AIDS recognizes the outstanding work of community-based organisations in helping to curtail the spread of HIV. The Red Ribbon Award is presented at the International AIDS Conference with the aim of providing a global platform for community-based organisations to display their work and shining a light on the effectiveness and pivotal role of grassroots action worldwide. This year, the Red Ribbon Award received over 550 nominations from 147 countries.

The Red Ribbon Award 2008 honors a strong and diverse group of 25 organisations that are exceptional in the innovation they represent, the impact they have achieved, and the populations they serve.

The Red Ribbon Award recognizes outstanding leadership and action at the community level in the following areas:

- Providing access to treatment, care and/or support for people living with HIV.
- Promoting human rights and addressing social injustices such as homophobia, sexism and any other form of stigma and discrimination.
- Empowering women and girls and addressing gender inequalities that fuel the spread of HIV.
- Promoting HIV prevention programmes and services.
- Providing support to children orphaned by AIDS and other vulnerable children.



Photo: Johnny Fernandes

Eligibility

Community-based organisations, community-based initiatives and non-governmental organisations are eligible for the Red Ribbon Award. Awards are presented to communities, not individuals, and special consideration is given to nominations from developing countries.

Selection Criteria

Selected community initiatives will demonstrate:

1. **Impact** - Substantial impact at the community level in addressing the range of challenges presented by HIV and AIDS including in improving access to prevention, care, support and treatment.
2. **Community Empowerment** - Empowerment of all groups within the community including marginalized and vulnerable groups to take action to address HIV and AIDS.
3. **Greater Involvement and Empowerment of People Living with HIV** in the community's response to the epidemic.
4. **Sustainability and action at scale** - Sustainability as well as adaptability the program to different social settings and potential to be scaled-up at local, national and regional levels.
5. **Gender Equality** - Equal involvement of women and men in designing and implementing responses to the epidemic.
6. **Innovation** - Creative and unique approaches to contain the spread of HIV and directly address its socio-economic impacts.
7. **Partnership** - Strategic partnership building to respond effectively to the epidemic.

Process

The Red Ribbon Award honorees are selected by the Technical Review Committee (TRC). The role of the TRC is to conduct an objective review of all nominations and identify the 25 winning organisations. The TRC consists of 90 HIV/AIDS experts from civil society, working at the community, national and regional levels. All of the winning organisations are recognized during the International AIDS Conference and receive an award of USD 5,000.

The Jury of eminent persons, a group of high-profile experts, then selects the organisations that receive special recognition and an award of USD 20,000 each. The selection process attempts to ensure representation based on both region and area of work.

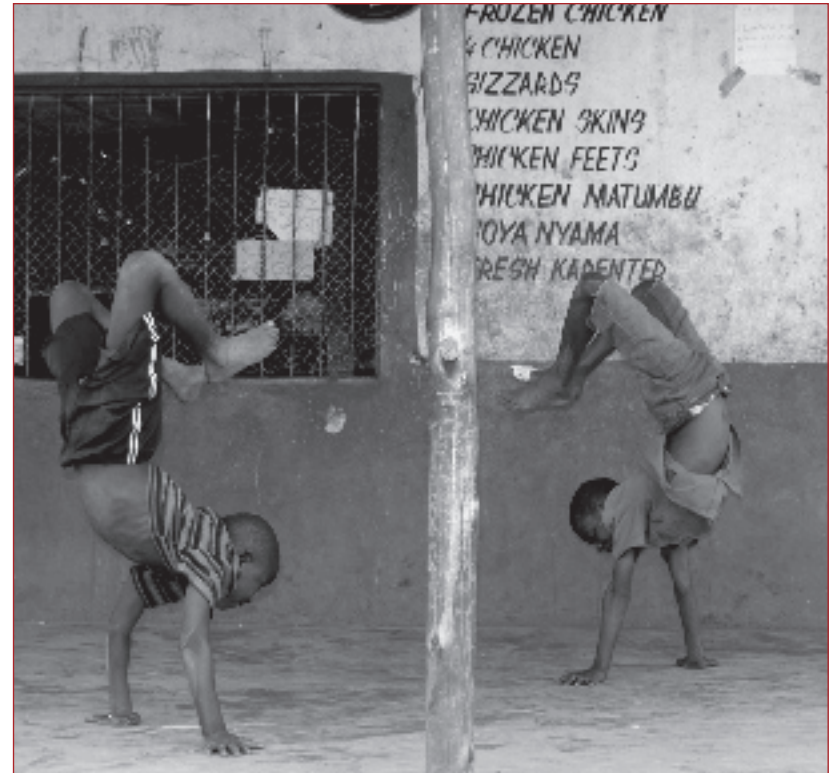


Photo: Johnny Fernandes

Community Dialogue Space

The Red Ribbon Award – in leveraging its unique partnership with governments and multi-lateral institutions – works to effectively position local voices and knowledge within the larger policy dialogue on HIV and AIDS through the Community Dialogue Space (CDS). The dialogue spaces showcase the success of community action and highlight the challenges still faced by civil society at the local level around the world.

Open to all attending the conferences, community dialogue spaces are centrally located within the conference and hosted by representatives of the Red Ribbon Award winning organisations. These spaces offer a unique opportunity for community leaders to learn from one another and have direct access to decision makers and policy processes. Additionally, these spaces provide the opportunity for policy makers to grasp the complexities of the epidemic as experienced at the local level and to recognize the expertise and merit of community leadership on AIDS.

Through the CDS programme, the Red Ribbon Award serves a critical role in breaking down barriers to community participation in political processes and policy formulation. Community dialogue spaces provide a unique advocacy and learning platform for local leaders and innovative grassroots initiatives to contribute to building a global community of best practice on AIDS.

Community Commitment

The Red Ribbon Award recognizes community-based achievements within the global AIDS response, highlights local issues on the global AIDS agenda, and enables organisations to expand the depth and breadth of their initiatives. The programme commitment extends well beyond the monetary award, serving as an avenue through which community-based organisations gain credibility and improve upon their work. Ideas, networks and solutions continue to be exchanged in the greater Red Ribbon Award Network, online and in regional dialogue spaces. Previous Red Ribbon Award winners have reported improved access to funding, more open relationships with their governments and international organisations, increased respect and an enhanced recognition of their work and goals at the national and international level. Over time this award is meant to foster an environment that is more conducive to community-based action on AIDS, and to serve as an inspiration to grassroots organisations worldwide.



2008 WINNERS



Center for Popular Education and Human Rights

GHANA

The Center for Popular Education and Human Rights – Ghana (CEPEHRG) is a community-based organisation that operates primarily in the eastern and central regions of Ghana and Greater Accra and focuses on prevention, education and advocacy for a broad range of marginalized and at risk communities. CEPEHRG seeks to protect and uphold the human rights and health of all sexual minorities. The center has pioneered HIV treatment and mental health services by offering counseling and referrals, and running a drop-in health clinic for men who have sex with men (MSM). Its interactive drama troupe reaches over 6,000 people annually with messages of inclusion. CEPEHRG also contributes to build the capacities of small organisations that provide MSM-friendly health services.

Coalition of Women living with HIV/AIDS in Malawi

MALAWI

The Coalition of Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Malawi (COWLHA) is a grassroots organisation based in Lilongwe and active in every district of Malawi. Working with a wide range of partners, COWLHA's members bring the issues of women living with HIV to the national stage, while providing them with support. Over 50,000 members-strong after two years of operation, COWLHA provides a space for women to meet with leaders, receive microfinance support, and advocate for their needs. COWLHA holds anti stigma and discrimination workshops, campaigns on violence against women, and provides support to children orphaned by AIDS. The coalition's activities have encouraged thousands of women to be open about their status and to seek HIV testing and counseling, antiretroviral treatment, mother to child transmission prevention, and nutritional support.

Consol Homes**MALAWI**

Located in the rural areas of Ntchewu and Lilongwe districts in Malawi, Consol Homes works with over 20,000 children orphaned by AIDS in 250 villages. Founded in 2000, the organisation operates on a model of youth leadership and involvement through its Orphan Affairs Unit, a support task force for children. Recognizing that children can be key leaders, Consol Homes encourages orphans and vulnerable children to form collectives that encourage their communities to work together and address the issues associated with HIV. Consol Homes works with a variety of partners to mobilize rural communities to provide home-based care, HIV prevention, and social and early childhood development support. This pivotal work demonstrates that vulnerable children can become key actors in the response to HIV in their community.

FIMIZORE – Fikambanana Miaro ny Zon’ny Rehetra**MADAGASCAR**

Since its inception in 2005 the principal objectives of FIMIZORE (an abbreviation for “Organisation for the Protection of the Rights of All”) have been to reduce vulnerability of sex workers to HIV, sexually transmitted infections, stigma, and gender-based violence, with a focus on the protection of human rights. The organisation provides training on human rights, challenging discrimination, preventing HIV and on laws related to sex work. It facilitates access to essential services, and works to change policies that have led to discrimination against sex workers. As a network of fourteen organisations in ten cities in Madagascar, FIMIZORE reaches 15,000 female sex workers and 2,000 men who have sex with men. These efforts have initiated a change of attitude among the police force, doctors, and the community as a whole, and have increased the number of sex workers who actively monitor their health status.

Mama's Club

UGANDA

Mama's Club is a Ugandan community-based organisation led by women living with HIV focused on addressing the impact of HIV, reducing the associated stigma, and providing support to and empowering HIV-positive mothers. Mama's Club provides psychosocial peer-to-peer support and provides training in HIV prevention and income-generating skills. The Club is led by 50 mothers, 25 of whom are between the ages of 17 and 22, who travel to nearby local communities to mentor other mothers. Its broader policy and programmatic activities include advocacy to men about becoming more active partners in the prevention of vertical transmission, and instigating change in child custody practices, so that women living with HIV can remain the custodial parents of their children.

Ntankah Village Women Common Initiative Group

CAMEROON

Ntankah Village Women Common Initiative Group brings a gender and development approach to the HIV response in rural communities in the Northwest Province of Cameroon. The group provides culturally sensitive prevention programs that promote understanding and encourage HIV positive women to give live testimonies regarding their status. The group's Mother Center is an entry point and resource center that assists widows, orphans and other children vulnerable as a result of AIDS. The center trains members to administer home-based care, and has also organized paralegal watchdog groups that document widows' rights violations. Local-to-local dialogues have convinced traditional leaders to admit women into the formerly exclusive male traditional councils, empowered women to run in municipal elections, and placed women's issues on the development and political agenda.



Power Positive Support Community-Based Organisation KENYA

Based in Kendu Bay, Kenya, Power Positive Support Community Based Organisation (PPSCBO) champions children's rights, supports people living with HIV, and works to ensure women's property and inheritance rights, especially for those affected by HIV. PPSCBO provides psychological and material support to orphans and other children made vulnerable by the epidemic, with a focus on young girls. Home-based care programs and counseling are provided to people living with HIV, and sensitization and prevention programmes are offered to the wider community. A watchdog group focuses on protecting women's property and inheritance rights and shares information to prevent land grabs, asset stripping and disinheritance, using peer-group forums. Under PPSCBO's leadership, various support groups have been formed in the Karachuonyo East Division in Kenya, behavior change among the youth has been noted, and disclosure has reduced the level of stigma and discrimination in the community.

**SANERELA +
SOUTH AFRICA**

SANERELA+, the South African Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV or AIDS, is active in nine provinces to support leaders from a variety of denominations, including traditional spiritual leaders and healers. Most of the members of the organisation are open about their status, and all actively engage with their congregations to bring an end to stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV. The organisation supports female religious leaders affected by HIV and ensures that their message of acceptance is heard by women and young girls. SANERELA + organizes workshops and advocates to empower religious leaders to become role models to affect change and further efforts to end discrimination and stigma against people living with HIV.

**Voice of Roses
KENYA**

A volunteer group comprised of vulnerable people including HIV positive youths and orphans, Voice of Roses has a total membership of 15 girls active in Nakuru, Kenya. Activities are designed to benefit the deaf, youth, school children and, more recently, internally displaced youth in two refugee camps in the province. Voice of Roses promotes HIV advocacy and information through peer education, group discussions, community outreach, and exchange forums as well as through entertainment and music events. Voice of Roses is also involved in income-generating activities, the proceeds of which are used to fund its HIV outreach activities. The group is among the few (if not the only one in the region) that reaches the deaf community with HIV information and teaches its members sign language in order to share HIV prevention messages.

Empower Foundation

THAILAND

Active since the onset of the epidemic in Thailand in 1984, Empower Foundation works to prevent HIV and protect the rights of sex workers. The Foundation's activities are designed, managed, and implemented by the sex workers themselves. Through nine centers in four locations, the Foundation actively serves 50,000 sex workers. Members at the centers teach safe sex skills and provide quality information and access to condoms. Empower Foundation uses street theater, t-shirts, posters, cartoons, and an innovative public education game to fight discrimination and increase the dignity and respect with which the government, the media, non-governmental organisations and the general public treat sex workers. Through these programs, Empower Foundation and its partners strive to empower people living with HIV to play a positive role in their health and lives.

National Federation of Women Living with HIV/AIDS

NEPAL

The National Federation of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (NFWLHA), based in Lalitpur, Nepal, is a network of 26 organisations committed to highlighting and responding to the needs of women living with HIV and their children. The network seeks to develop the capacities of its members through coordinated activities, communication and advocacy. The women of NFWLHA focus their efforts on HIV prevention, including voluntary counseling and testing, and the reduction of stigma and discrimination. The organisation also reaches out to marginalized groups and other organisations led by HIV positive women. Active in 15 locations, the Federation advocates for national policy and legal reform, and acts to reduce social stigma in the community through the involvement of affected family members.

People Like US (PLUS)

INDIA

People Like Us (PLUS), a community-based organisation of transgender youth dancers, runs programmes aimed at providing care and support to transgender people, men who have sex with men, and sex workers to change the social gender constructs that lead to stigma and discrimination. In the PLUS walk-in shelter, transgender people in need can access health care, education on the prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, financial support, and counseling. The shelter helps to build the transgender sex worker community and integrates HIV programming with other development issues such as poverty and unsafe migration. As providers of HIV education and health services, PLUS members are firm believers in community participation, and partner strategically with local, regional, and international organisations to advocate for people affected by HIV.

Social Action for Women

THAILAND

Social Action for Women provides shelter, health, and educational facilities for HIV-positive Myanmar immigrant women and children in and around Mae Sot, Thailand. The organisation runs a Health Care House which provides shelter and treatment to women living with HIV, a safe house for children orphaned by AIDS and a reproductive health program to provide sex education to thousands of migrants from Myanmar, particularly those working in nearby factories. Social Action for Women follows a rights-based approach, and is a leader in promoting society-wide respect for and empowerment of migrants living with HIV in Thailand, regardless of their gender, age, or immigration status. It operates in partnership with several national and international networks working to improve the lives of immigrant women and children.

Sankalp Rehabilitation Trust
INDIA

A community-based organisation, Sankalp Rehabilitation Trust operates from seven permanent sites to prevent and treat HIV and other opportunistic infections affecting injecting drug users. A team of outreach workers and peer educators, who are former or current drug users, reaches out to the community on the streets of Mumbai. Needle exchange, abscess management, and safe injecting education services are initiated through this point of first contact. Medical staff and social workers provide treatment, needle exchange programs, and counseling through home visits and in five drop-in centers in the city. Sankalp's work includes an unprecedented program for injecting drug users in prisons, where it promotes awareness, encourages adherence to Anti-retrovirals, and offers counseling and medical visits. The organisation has initiated a vocational skills training program designed to empower HIV-positive injecting drug users and help them to regain control over their economic and social lives.

Sanghamitra – A Women's Collective
INDIA

Sanghamitra, a women's collective in Girgaum, Mumbai, is giving voice to the needs of sex workers. Sanghamitra's organisational objectives are defined by its members in a remarkably participatory and accessible manner. The organisation encourages sex workers to confront issues of concern head-on and to cease self victimization so that they can confidently articulate their needs without fearing reprisal from brothel-owners or the police. Working to alleviate exploitation, overcome illiteracy, discrimination and the power structure of the sex trade, Sanghamitra strives to build the skills of its constituency. The women's collective encourages universal condom usage by sex workers, works with the police to ensure protection of legal rights, and with clinics to improve access to health services, in particular for HIV positive sex workers. Sanghamitra has been recognized to enhance and improve the quality of life of its community.

Yayasan Kesehatan Bali (Yakeba)

INDONESIA

Yayasan Kesehatan Bali (YAKEBA) is a grassroots organisation for people living with HIV and injecting drug users in Bali, Indonesia. The organisation's programs have increased access to clean needles and decreased the stigma and discrimination associated with both people living with HIV and injecting drug users. YAKEBA is a regional leader in providing HIV programs in prisons, and in working to empower highly marginalized groups. Recognizing the challenges of post-release reintegration, the organisation seeks to rebuild the connection between prisoners and the public health system. YAKEBA manages a hospice for injecting drug users and people living with HIV, and is currently working to form a support group for female injecting drug users in Indonesia. Respected within the harm reduction movement in the region, YAKEBA seeks to develop a network of similarly-focused organisations throughout Asia.



Photo: Johnny Fernandes

Estonian Network of People Living with HIV

ESTONIA

Since its creation in 2005, the core mission of the Estonian Network of People Living with HIV has been to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV. Towards that goal, the network provides psychological and social support, counseling, legal aid, and diagnostics for people living with HIV. Operating from Tallin, the network advocates to improve access to medicine and treatment for people living with HIV, and lobbies for protecting and promoting their rights. Its target groups encompass vulnerable and hard to reach populations such as HIV positive men and women, pregnant women and infants, male and female injecting drug users, men who have sex with men, and persons in prisons. The Estonian Network of People living with HIV also gathers, analyzes, and publishes relevant data and communicates effectively with the media.

Phoenix Plus – Orlovskaya Regional Non-profit Organisation Against AIDS

RUSSIA

Founded by people living with HIV, Phoenix Plus is based in the remote city of Orel. Its core mission is to create and support social services for people living with HIV while reducing the prevalence of stigma and discrimination, not only as a major obstacle to prevention and care, but also with respect to human rights. Through cooperation with state institutions, mass media, non-governmental organisations, and networks of people living with HIV in other regions, Phoenix Plus has achieved increased clinical coverage, improvement of the quality and quantity of medical-psychological-social services, organisation of non-medical services, and provision of training programs. The organisation runs a recognized community center in Orel, has developed effective internet outreach and listservs, and provides resource material and capacity-building support for new organisations in the field.

ASONVIHSIDA
NICARAGUA

A recognized actor in the national response to HIV, ASONVIHSIDA is the only organisation in Nicaragua formed exclusively by people living with HIV. Working in five provinces and reaching 300 people living with HIV and their families, it provides educational activities, promotes human rights and gender equality, and seeks to reduce stigma and discrimination. ASONVIHSIDA works to empower women affected by HIV, people of all sexual orientations, and all age groups. It has formed alliances with faith-based organisations, organisations of men who have sex with men, transgender organisations and other social actors. It encourages people living with HIV to reintegrate into society, and provides them with access to microcredit to start small businesses and financially support their families. ASONVIHSIDA actively participates in advocacy and political activities locally and nationally.

Asociación Civil Amavida
VENEZUELA

The 365 volunteers of Asociación Civil Amavida operate in the state of Zulia, Venezuela. The association is dedicated to promoting and protecting the human rights of all people affected by HIV, as well as promoting prevention and access to treatment, support, and care. Among Asociación Civil Amavida's many achievements are providing 2,400 people living with HIV with access to treatment. Amavida's prevention work includes distributing male and female condoms and educating the indigenous communities of the Yukpa, Bari, Japreria, and Wuayuu ethnic groups. The organisation has specific programming for children, adolescents, and women. A leader in its community, Asociación Civil Amavida has received local and national recognition, and works in partnership with a variety of national and international organisations.

Fortaleciendo la Diversidad**MEXICO**

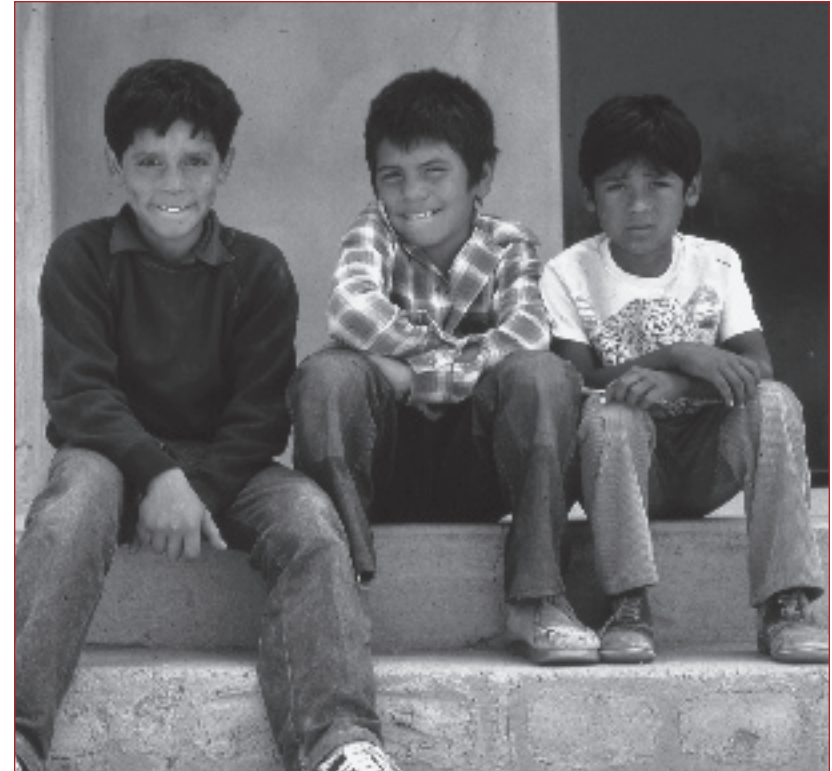
Fortaleciendo la Diversidad operates from San Luis Potosí, Mexico, dedicated to improving the quality of life, health, and acceptance of transgender populations and sex workers. Promoting self-acceptance to 200 transgender people, Fortaleciendo la Diversidad focuses on human rights sensitization through an analysis of stigma – including self stigma - and discrimination. Its HIV prevention work includes access to voluntary testing and monthly condom distribution in a setting where access to condoms was previously limited. The organisation supports members to attend university classes to expand their opportunities. Through use of the media and artistic events, collaboration with the police, and peer education, Fortaleciendo la Diversidad has changed perceptions, decreased prejudice, and increased recognition and acceptance of these key populations.

Grupo de Amigos con VIH, AC**MEXICO**

Grupo de Amigos con VIH (GAVIH), Mexico, operates from Acapulco since 1998 and travels to remote areas with high prevalence and incidence of HIV. Its work focuses on HIV prevention, sexual health education, and the promotion of sexual and reproductive rights. The organisation provides treatment and supports hospital stays for low-income individuals, and has developed theater and nutrition programs that are carried out in various municipalities in the state of Guerrero. GAVIH runs Casa Hogar Villa Sarita, a home for orphaned children living with HIV, offering necessary services such as lodging, food, counseling, medical and psychological care, and social support. Advocating for the human rights of children living with HIV and their integration into society, GAVIH engages with governmental and civil society partners.

Promoteurs Objectifs Zéro Sida (POZ)**HAITI**

Promoteurs Objectifs Zéro Sida (POZ) operates five sites in Haiti and offers guidance, counseling and support to over 2,000 people living with HIV. Support groups provide space for dialogue and to learn basic facts about HIV such as how to manage seropositivity, protect oneself and one's partners, cast off self-stigma, and acquire the knowledge to become an activist. POZ supports people living with HIV and their families, men who have sex with men, and male and female sex workers. POZ has enhanced its activities by working in collaboration with religious groups, popular opinion leaders, and the media. Since 2002, the Hope Center, managed by the community, provides psychosocial support, training and facilitates treatment for people living with HIV and their families. Many of today's most prominent HIV leaders in Haiti have been associated with POZ.



Association de Lutte Contre le Sida**MOROCCO**

Active in the response to HIV since the first diagnosed case in Morocco in 1988, Association de Lutte Contre le Sida (ALCS) advocates for the human rights of people living with HIV and for their access to treatment. The association has achieved policy and programmatic successes including access to antiretrovirals, support to people living with HIV, increased awareness of prevention methods, and the provision of voluntary, anonymous, and free counseling and testing. ALCS has recently started working with at risk groups such as migrants, men who have sex with men, male and female sex workers and injecting drug users. With headquarters in Casablanca and 16 regional branches, ALCS partners with international and national organisations such as ministries, social development agencies and the private sector. Belonging to regional networks, it often represents the Middle East - North Africa region in international AIDS forums.

Hamyaran Mosbat – The Mashhad Positive Club**IRAN**

Hamyaran Mosbat, the Mashhad Positive Club, works in close partnership with local, national and international institutions in the north and east regions of Iran to provide support to people living with HIV and other key populations, offering comprehensive services in a complex environment. The HIV clubs it establishes offer peer education, prevention workshops, a referral support system and counseling, while conducting home-based care and advocacy to religious leaders. The group focuses its efforts on people living with HIV as well as high risk groups such as injecting drug users, sex workers, and refugees. Hamyaran Mosbat's harm reduction efforts have benefited 2,500 injecting drug users; 16,000 youths and adolescents have been reached through its outreach materials, and many more through its quarterly publication that provides a voice for people affected by HIV.