



VOICE, CHOICE

& JUSTICE

Putting people living with,
affected by, and at risk of HIV
at the forefront of the AIDS
response

Hivos
people unlimited



HIV and AIDS are not purely medical problems. They are development and human rights issues. This has been Hivos' conviction since the early 1990s when we were one of the first development organizations to respond to the pandemic. To this day, our work aims to:

- strengthen the *voice* of rightsholder communities to ensure their participation in decision-making processes
- promote the *choice* of young people by providing access to inclusive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)
- put *justice* at the center of the HIV and AIDS response

We join the Montréal Youth Force in advocating for these key principles:

VOICE

People and communities need to be at the center of the HIV and AIDS response. Including and amplifying the voices of those deliberately left out has helped band together more inclusive, diverse, and representative groups of people to challenge dominant narratives and harmful gender norms, punitive laws, and policies that foster stigma and discrimination.

CHOICE

Exclusion in health policies has a destructive impact, especially on young

people. They need to be able to make informed decisions about their sexuality and health. For this, we must guarantee they have access to quality services and information. This includes HIV and AIDS treatment and prevention, sexual and reproductive health services, mental health support, and harm reduction for people who use drugs.

Young women aged 15 to 24 are twice as likely to be living with HIV as men. The risk of acquiring HIV is 34 times higher for transgender women. Access to inclusive SRHR is therefore high on our agenda.

JUSTICE

Social justice, human rights and feminist principles need to be at the core of the HIV and AIDS response. We must address the underlying socioeconomic and political drivers of the epidemic. If we do not end the stigma, criminalization and violence they face, we will not reach those most affected by HIV.

As Covid-19 and climate change continue to affect lives and livelihoods worldwide, it is evident that marginalized communities are more likely to suffer the social, health, and economic consequences. We consider it essential to develop and implement strategies that create equity and inclusive economic development as preconditions for social justice.

OUR CALL

During AIDS 2022 Hivos calls on governments, donors and other stakeholders to:

Meaningfully **engage young people** as frontrunners and leaders in HIV prevention and lend them continued political and financial support.

Promote **evidence-based decision making and HIV programming**, and support youth-led research initiatives that include those most affected in the planning, implementation and evaluation of HIV programs.

Provide **accessible open data** regarding HIV and key populations, where community involvement is central to data collection and utilization.

Implement **comprehensive, inclusive and non-discriminatory HIV prevention** and treatment programs as part of routine sexual and reproductive health services for key populations.



OUR APPROACH

1. BUILDING POLITICAL POWER AND INFLUENCE

Hivos supports and accompanies rightsholders to ensure they wield the sustained political power and influence needed to challenge systems and practices that fuel discrimination and exclusion.

Through financing and technical capacity, our interventions have enabled these communities to claim their rights and participate meaningfully at all stages and levels of policymaking. We design, implement and evaluate our programs jointly with rightsholders and local organizations. We facilitate direct engagement of local partners with decision-makers. And when advocating at international forums, our messaging is "joined up."

2. NEW NARRATIVES TO INSPIRE ACTION

We aim to build political and public support for new narratives that foster transformative dialogue and disrupt dominant views and patterns of inequality. We invest in rightsholders' capacity and communication resources to induce shifts in public discourse.

In Latin America, for example, Hivos and its partners are implementing the Libre

de Ser program. It trains LGBTQ+ people and organizations to communicate their own stories — their life experiences — and the consequences of discrimination and violence. In this program, rightsholders work with journalists and artists to question hate speech and empower affected communities to use the most powerful tool they possess: their voice. The resulting "Free to Communicate" manual champions community journalism that is respectful of LGBTQ+ populations.

3. COLLABORATING FOR IMPACT

Hivos works in partnerships to build (intersectional) connections where communities of people living with HIV, or most affected by or at risk of HIV, collaborate with their allies to develop and scale context-specific solutions.

By fostering this kind of mobilization, we envision rightsholders using these connections to jointly work with duty bearers across sectors to identify and respond strategically to priority issues. This way of working also enables donors to collectively apply their investments and resources to reach those furthest left behind.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Hivos not only implements programs that specifically address HIV and human rights. We adopt a rights-based approach throughout our work, making our HIV and AIDS agenda cross-sectional.

WE LEAD

We Lead strengthens the influence and position of young women whose sexual and reproductive health and rights are neglected the most. It works with young women and adolescent girls who: live with HIV; identify as lesbian, bisexual, trans, or intersex (LBTI); live with a disability; and/or are affected by displacement.

In nine countries in Africa, the Middle East and Central America, the program puts young women rightsholders in the driver's seat, connecting them with each other in Communities of Action. In these spaces they share knowledge, experiences and ideas, and learn from one another, while they also develop joint strategies to improve their SRHR.

The program is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Consortium partners are: Positive Vibes, Restless Development, Marsa, FEMNET, the Central American Women's Fund, and

Hivos as lead party. M&C Saatchi World Services is our technical partner.

THE REGIONAL SRHR FUND

The core purpose of the Regional SRHR Fund is to improve access to high quality SRHR information and services for adolescents and youth in all their diversity as underserved populations. It employs policy engagement with duty bearers, youth-driven research, capacity strengthening, and grant making.

Its initiatives aim to build strong, resilient, diverse and well-coordinated youth-led movements and organizations that can challenge young people's exclusion, amplify their voices, and shift narratives regarding youth sexuality.

The fund was set up by Hivos and Ford Foundation in 2010. In 2017, Swedish International Development Cooperation (Sida) enabled the fund to increase its technical and geographical reach across East and Southern Africa. The fund has partnered with over 55 partners across East and Southern Africa and reaches over 15 rightsholder organizations.

ALEP

The "Positive Leadership Alliance & Key Populations" project (ALEP+PC) is a Latin American consortium that aims to improve the living conditions of people living with HIV and of key populations, such as trans people, men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers, and people who use drugs.

ALEP connects Hivos' work in the impact areas *Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion* and *Civic Rights in a Digital Age*. The program launched the online platform www.observadatos.org to promote the use of open data, oversight, and social control of public policies to ensure an effective and inclusive response to HIV and AIDS.

ALEP is funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. It works in 11 countries and reaches nearly 78 organizations across Latin American and the Caribbean.

The program has built partnerships throughout the region with high level institutions such as GNP+, USAID, and several health and finance ministries, and with Human Rights Secretaries, to ensure a holistic response to HIV and the needs of key populations.



WHERE WE CURRENTLY WORK

on advancing the human rights
of people living with HIV

Bolivia
Colombia
Costa Rica
Ecuador
El Salvador
Guatemala
Honduras
Jordan
Kenya
Lebanon
Malawi
Mozambique
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
South Africa
Tanzania
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe

HIVOS, HIV AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN KEY FACTS

- In 1991, Hivos was one of the first development organizations to respond to the HIV and AIDS pandemic.
- In 2000, Hivos and four Dutch development organizations founded STOP AIDS NOW!. Collectively we reached 400,000 people affected by HIV every year between 2001 and 2016.
- Hivos currently works with over 70 partners in 23 countries to advance the rights of people living with or at risk of HIV.
- We use a unique holistic approach and link our HIV work with many other Hivos programs.
- *Women, Human Rights and HIV*, a program implemented in collaboration with ICW Latina, received an A1 performance rating, the highest possible rating given by its donor, The Global Fund.

Our work is not possible without the support of donors that share our conviction that Voice, Choice & Justice must be at the core of the international response to the HIV epidemic. We specifically want to thank The Global Fund, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Sida, and the

Ford Foundation. We also want to acknowledge the heart warming support of thousands of individual givers who support our work.

Find out more about our work by visiting hivos.org/aids2022

ABOUT HIVOS

Hivos is an international development organization guided by humanist values. Together with citizens and their organizations, we aim to contribute towards just, inclusive and life-sustaining societies where people have equal access to opportunities, rights and resources. We work in partnership with others in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America on three impact areas: Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Civic Rights in a Digital Age, and Climate Justice. Our approach is solution driven, and we build wider movements for change by amplifying and connecting voices.

OUR TRACK RECORD

1991: AIDS IS A HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM

Hivos was one of the first development organizations to respond to the HIV and AIDS pandemic that had hit Africa so hard. We chose an unconventional approach, arguing that AIDS is not a purely medical problem, but a development and human rights problem. Our HIV and AIDS program focused on the dignity and human rights of the groups that were most at risk of infection. As long as these people were discriminated against and stigmatized, they would lack access to HIV prevention and treatment.

TODAY

We are proud of our strong HIV and AIDS track record in working with key populations. Up to the present, we have consistently focused on the underlying socioeconomic changes that are needed to fight the epidemic. Through our regional offices, we reach those who are most vulnerable to HIV, and who are disproportionately denied access to HIV prevention, care and treatment.

We link our HIV work with other areas of Hivos' work because we believe bringing

together perspectives of governance, health, rights, and poverty reduction can lead to effective cross-cutting interventions.

UNHEARD VOICES

One of the focus areas of our KP Reach program (2016 - 2017) was developing and spreading messages co-created with LGBTIQ+ and sex worker organizations to reduce stigma and discrimination amongst key segments of the public.

The Unheard Voices campaign featured positive stories that modeled a new social norm of embracing Key Populations. The campaign – developed together with M&C Saatchi – measurably improved public sentiment in eight countries in Southern Africa. The accompanying radio campaign reached over 33 million people.

THEATER OF THE OPPRESSED

The Women, Human Rights and HIV program (2016 - 2018) strengthened the leadership of Latin American women living with HIV. The program focused on their effective participation in regional and national decision-making spaces to raise awareness about HIV and its links to gender inequality and violence against women.

ICW Latina and Hivos ventured into new ways of building personal and collective power. The project, called Theater of the Oppressed, allowed women to give expression to the violence and oppression they faced through theater. The resulting plays were used to sensitize civil servants and decision makers.

WOMEN@WORK

In the Women@Work program (2016 - 2020), which aimed to improve labor conditions for women working on flower farms in East and Southern Africa, we made use of our expertise in HIV and human rights to set up the Blooming Schools and Workplaces Project in Uganda.

The project started tackling work floor discrimination faced by women living with HIV not at the flower farms where they worked, but at the schools nearby. The project's peer education, teacher training, and art projects reached over 15,000 pupils – the future workers at the farms. The participating flower farms also improved their own policies to address HIV and AIDS and sexual harassment at the workplace.

FOR EVERY STORY OF HATE,
THERE'S A STORY OF HOPE.

UNHEARD VOICES

THEATER OF THE OPPRESSED

WOMEN@WORK



WE LEAD

FREE TO BE ME

