



**ASIAPACIFIC**  
INTER-AGENCY TASK TEAM ON  
YOUNG KEY POPULATIONS

# IATT on YKP 2020 Report

## About the Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on Young Key Populations Asia and the Pacific

The Asia Pacific Inter-Agency Task Team on Young Key Populations was established in 2009 to promote coordinated support from UN agencies and civil society partners to meet the HIV prevention, treatment, care and support needs of YKPs, including young men who have sex with men, young transgender people, young people who inject drugs, young people living with HIV, and young people selling sex. The Task Team is an informal working group that includes a wide range of UN and civil society partners. Membership is open to any organisation interested in working collaboratively to support HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support needs of YKP.

### The members of 2020 are:

- Youth LEAD
- Youth Voices Count (YVC)
- Y-PEER Asia and the Pacific Centre
- APCASO
- Asia Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health (APCOM)
- International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) South Asia
- ILGA Asia
- UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
- UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Asia and Pacific
- UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) East Asia and Pacific Regional Office
- UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) Regional Office for South Asia
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Regional Support Team for Asia and the Pacific
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Asia and the Pacific Bangkok Regional Hub
- UNWOMEN

The IATT on YKP usually is co-chaired by one UN and one civil society organisation; however, in 2020, there were three co-chairs; two UN representatives and one from civil society. The Co-Chairs were:

- Michela Polesana  
(Advocacy Advisor, UNAIDS RST),
- Jeffry Acaba  
(Programme Officer, APCASO)
- Jawying (Honey) Lyster  
(Programme Implementation and M&E Consultant, UNDP)

# 2020 Annual Report

The Task Team focuses on progress towards achieving outcomes, and its members are accountable for promoting a coordinated approach toward expanded HIV, sexual health and human rights-related responses for YKP across the Asia-Pacific region. 2020 has been a challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is affecting the lives and livelihoods of people everywhere. Its impact is especially severe among socioeconomically disadvantaged and marginalised people and people with underlying medical conditions. Young people are particularly vulnerable to the disruption the pandemic has caused. Many are now at risk of being left behind in education, economic opportunities, and health during a crucial phase of their development. For young key populations (YKP) – including young people living with HIV, young gay men and other men who have sex with men, transgender youth, young sex workers, young people who use drugs, young migrants and prisoners – already facing challenges and disenfranchisement from the wider community, the hardships they face in employment, household settings, livelihood and social protections have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To shed light on how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the lives of YKP and young people living with HIV and provide

points of reflection about the needs of YKP, the IATT on YKP has implemented a wide range of initiatives, demonstrating how joint work can lead to meaningful results.

The annual report covers the joint work plan of the IATT on YKP under four outcome areas. COVID-19 related initiatives are crosscutting and included in each outcome area.

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**Outcome 1:** Young people from key populations in the Asia-Pacific region are engaged and capacitated to contribute to national HIV responses to improve their health, well-being and to realise their sexual and reproductive health rights

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**Outcome 2:** Strategic information is generated, synthesised and used to support regional level advocacy targeting governments and civil society to promote scale-up of comprehensive evidence-informed interventions for YKP

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**Outcome 3:** Scale-up evidence-informed, national programmes for YKPs through advocacy interventions with government, policy-makers and other stakeholders

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**Outcome 4:** Increased advocacy for an enabling and coherent environment for YKP

# Highlights of 2020

## Outcome 1

Young people from key populations in the Asia-Pacific region are engaged and capacitated to contribute to national HIV responses to improve their health and well-being and to realise their sexual and reproductive health rights.

### YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund



The YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund was a funding programme established by Youth LEAD to support youth-led initiatives and projects across Asia and the Pacific in the time of COVID-19. The small-grants programme ensures that youth-led and youth-serving organisations can help young key populations, particularly young people living with HIV when they need the most support.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Youth LEAD worked closely with network partners, stakeholders, and UN agencies and conducted various needs assessments to identify additional support areas. The [IATT YKP COVID-19 Survey](#) results supported many of the claims and challenges experienced by young people across the region. In response to this, Youth LEAD reached out to existing

donors and opened the discussion on fund-reallocation for the YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund. An allocation of a small emergency seed fund for network partners to support on-going COVID-19 initiatives would provide more significant support and security for organisations and networks struggling to cope with the pandemic's social and economical impacts. The [Robert Carr Fund \(RCF\)](#), one of Youth LEAD's prominent donors, agreed to the proposal and approved the reallocation of programme costs to support the COVID-19 response. The first phase of the [YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund](#) was launched on Monday 20th April 2020, with a total budget of USD 29000 allocated to support COVID-19 relief efforts.

In August, Youth LEAD held an internal discussion with network partners to



explore the idea of continuing the YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund with a second phase. Likewise, focal points and network partners indicated concerns in the rise of COVID-19 cases. Due to poorly coordinated responses from governments, youth-led organisations could not access resources and financial assistance. After a series of discussions with donors and UN partners on fund reallocation and support, Youth LEAD agreed to launch Phase 2 YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund in late August. Phase 2 of the YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund was supported by RCF and [AIDS Healthcare Foundation \(AHF\)](#), with USD 23000 allocated to support on-going COVID-19 relief efforts.

In total, combining Phase 1 and Phase 2, Youth LEAD mobilised **USD 53000 towards the YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund**; supported **12 youth-led organisations from nine countries**, of which three organisations received grants from Phase 1 and 2.

To name a few of the beneficiaries of the YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund, Youth LEAD supported the following initiatives:

1. YKP LEAD + Recovering Nepal (Kathmandu, Nepal) - supported critical harm reduction services and support for people who use drugs on the streets in Kathmandu with emergency care packages;
2. Human Touch Foundation (Goa, India) - supported the ARV home-delivery scheme and mental support programmes for adolescents living with HIV;
3. Inti Muda (Jakarta, Indonesia) - supported programmes and activities of local YKP organisations in seven provinces across Indonesia. Activities include essential care packages, online counselling services with a psychologist and seed funding for emergencies;
4. Ya\_All (Manipur, India) - supported mental health services, food and essential medicine packages, and provided small financial grants to local Transgender businesses;
5. YKP LEAD and NAP+N (Kathmandu, Nepal) - supported essential relief packages, including ARV to the children living with HIV under 12 years old across Nepal
6. Y-PEER Pilipinas (Philippines) - supported adolescents and young key populations by hosting a series of web-talks on HIV and SRHR. Y-PEER also distributed free condoms through a delivery scheme.

To find out more information about these initiatives and more on various projects across Asia and the Pacific, please visit [www.ykptaskteam.org](http://www.ykptaskteam.org).



## Innovative Grants on SRHR, HIV and Humanitarianism 2020

Y-PEER established the innovative grants programme for young organisations and networks seeking funding to support programmes related to SRHR, HIV and humanitarianism amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Y-PEER AP was responsible for the programme, and funding was supported by Youth LEAD and the Robert Carr Fund. In total, six ykp, youth-led and youth-serving organisations from Cambodia, Pakistan, Thailand and Nepal benefited from the grants and supported activities and projects that linked SRHR and HIV with COVID-19.



## IGNITE Empowerment Grants: small grants for YKP and youth-led organisations in AP

Youth Voices Count is committed to supporting LGBTIQ youth-led initiatives in the region. Following the same vision of our IGNITE! Mentorship Programme in 2015, the youth empowerment grants supports youth-led projects working around LGBTIQ+ in countries in the Asia – Pacific Region. The grant implementation is six months, including pre-activity preparations, fund transfers, documentation, and liquidation. The unique aspect of this grant is the inclusion of the “Mentorship Scheme” as part of the M&E, and the technical support mechanism of the grant provides more details on this. The grants focus on four core themes of the youth empowerment advocacy for LGBTIQ+ populations: (1) Inclusive and youth-friendly health services; mental and physical health and well-being, (2) Creating Inclusive Educational Spaces, (3) Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), (4) Digital Rights, Online Safety & Security, and Open Technology, and (5) Promoting Human Rights through Culture, Arts and Sports.



apply now for the

**IGNITE!**  
**EMPOWERMENT GRANTS**  
for youth-led LGBTI organizations in Asia-Pacific

DEADLINE  
january 30, 2020



In April 2020, YVC provided the first round of IGNITE! Empowerment Grants to Inclusive Bangladesh (Bangladesh), Equite (Sri Lanka), YA\_ALL (India), UniGen (Vietnam), and Bahaghari LGBT Center (Philippines). In November, YVC continued

to provide IGNITE Empowerment Grants in round 2, which COC Netherlands and Open Society Foundation supported Queer Youth Group (Nepal), Inter-University LGBT Network; Young Out Here (Singapore), The Queer Muslim Project (India), MYRainbow; Queer Asian Project (Malaysia) and YKP

PNG & KP Advocacy Consortium (Papua New Guinea).

More Information may be found here: <https://yvc-asiapacific.org/2020/11/08/yvc-announces-the-2nd-round-ignite-empowerment-grants-recipients>

## Organisational Development and Change Country Assessments: Strengthening LGBTIQ Inclusion in Asia and the Pacific



Photo courtesy of Ya\_All - Facebook @manipur.youthnetwork

The Organisational Development and Change (ODC) manual was developed in 2019 by Youth LEAD to guide youth-led organisations through their organisations' development and growth with tools, workable and accessible frameworks in a language youth-friendly and easy to understand. In 2020, Youth LEAD was awarded funds by UNDP, Being LGBTI in Asia and the Pacific, to enhance LGBTI youth leadership. The grant aimed to strengthen the capacity and leadership of LGBTI youth networks to advocate for rights and inclusion and capacity-

strengthening at national and/or regional level(s). The grant supported the country-led assessment of three of Youth LEAD's network partners; Myanmar Youth Stars, Youth LEAD Mongolia and Ya\_All, India. The internal reviews allowed organisations to reflect on their foundations, structure, and organisational management and promoted cross-sharing of findings between network partners.

Link to reports from country assessments can be viewed here: [www.youthleadap.org/resources](http://www.youthleadap.org/resources).

## COVID-19 related initiatives led by Youth Voices Count (YVC)

Since March 2020, YVC has engaged in several COVID-19 responses alongside its members and partners. This has allowed YVC to support its members from various countries to provide immediate and community-led responses and relief support. Some of the initiatives include:

- Relief packs were distributed to four cities in the Philippines through the leadership of the Board of Trustees of YVC based in the Philippines. The relief packs contained food and other necessities. The relief packs are intended to support LGBTI individuals currently not receiving any support from local government units. This was also be given to LGBTI individuals who belong to the informal economies and cannot provide for themselves and their families because of quarantine. This is a target support initiative for members of the LGBTI community and their households. The relief packs were distributed to Iloilo City, Roxas City, Tacloban City, and Quezon City.
- YVC also provided support to Online Counseling Services. It offered

minimal financial support amounting to around 350 USD. It was given to Lunas Collective, a feminist chat service based in the Philippines primarily for domestic abuse victims and provides information on sexual and reproductive health. It was also given to Prism Chat, a youth-led online chat service that provides peer support and information to LGBTIQ youth. prismchat has over 10,000 users across the world.

- YVC also organised three online webinars and dialogues alongside some of its regional and global partners. A regional survey was also launched on the wellbeing of LGBTIQ adolescents and youth during COVID-19, securing 543 responses from across East Asia and Southeast Asia. YVC developed a regional discussion paper to summarise and present the results of our several online engagements and surveys on LGBTIQ adolescents and youth's wellbeing.

## UNICEF approach to mental health during COVID-19 in East Asia and the Pacific

UNICEF EAPRO launched a regional [advocacy brief](#) on mental health during COVID-19 in East Asia and the Pacific, which presents a snapshot of the multisectoral and adaptive approaches of UNICEF EAPRO to mental health and psychosocial support during the pandemic

response. This brief drew upon some of the key initiatives and activities of the IATT, including the rapid response survey and the companion blog on the mental health and wellbeing of YKP and YPLHIV, in addition to the #CopingWithCOVID discussion paper which Youth Voices Count led.

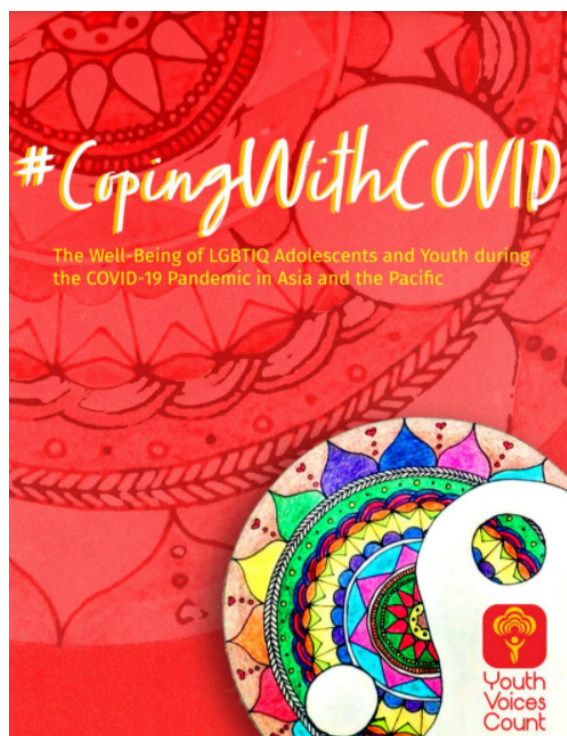


## #CopingWithCOVID

From the learnings of our COVID-19 response, including the various discussions that were conducted, including a survey launched by YVC, UNICEF East Asia Regional Office, Prism Chat, and Equal Asia Foundation, developed a regional discussion paper titled [#CopingWithCOVID: The Well-Being of LGBTIQ Adolescents and Youth during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Asia and the Pacific](#).

In Asia and the Pacific, pandemic-related measures have limited the movement and public gatherings that have negatively affected social interactions and resulted in the loss of economic opportunity and work of many LGBTIQ youths. Similarly, these measures have also magnified the inequality and have furthered the stigma and discrimination that LGBTIQ youth persons experience. As COVID-19 continues to threaten societal and social norms and cohesion, this discussion paper examines how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the overall state of well-being of LGBTIQ youth people.

Specifically, this discussion paper aims to: (a) explore the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health, sexual health, civil



and political life, and social and economic status of LGBTIQ youth people; (b) identify mitigating and coping mechanisms that LGBTIQ youth individuals exercise during this pandemic situation; (c) showcase interventions that LGBTIQ-led organisations do to address these challenges faced by their communities, and (d) provide policy and programmatic recommendations in responding to the needs and challenges faced by LGBTIQ youth.

## Outcome 2

Strategic information is generated, synthesised and used to support regional level advocacy targeting governments and civil society to promote scale-up of comprehensive evidence-informed interventions for YKP.

### Rapid response survey to assess information needs, medication on hand, and ability to access HIV services in the time of COVID-19

#### Rapid Survey on the Needs of Young Key Populations and Young People Living with HIV in Asia and the Pacific in the Context of COVID-19

##### Analysis of the Preliminary Findings



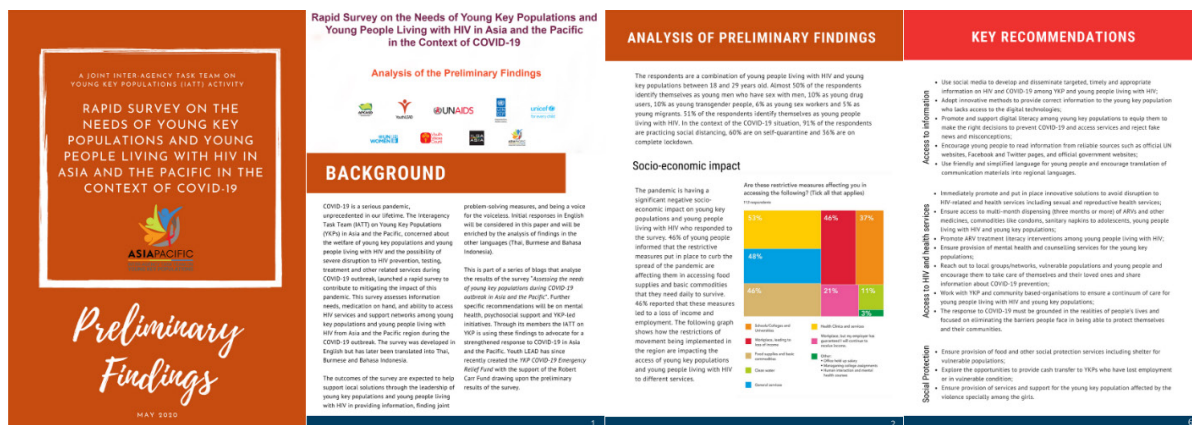
The IATT on YKP in Asia and the Pacific, concerned about the welfare of young key populations and young people living with HIV and the possibility of severe disruption to HIV prevention, testing, treatment and other related services during the COVID-19 outbreak, launched a rapid survey to contribute to mitigating the impact of this pandemic. This survey rolled out between March and April 2020 and led by UNAIDS, UNDP, APCASO and Youth Lead, assessed information needs, medication on hand, and ability to access HIV services and support networks among young key populations and young people living with HIV from Asia and the Pacific region during the COVID-19 outbreak. The survey was developed in English but has later been translated into

Thai, Burmese and Bahasa Indonesia. The survey outcomes helped support local solutions by the leadership of young key populations and young people living with HIV in providing information, finding joint problem-solving measures, and being a voice for the voiceless.

The respondents were a combination of young people living with HIV and young key populations between 18 and 29 years old. Almost 50% of the respondents identified themselves as young men who have sex with men, 10% as young drug users, 10% as young transgender people, 6% as young sex workers and 5% as young migrants. 51% of the respondents identify themselves as young people living with HIV.

The survey's main findings were analysed in a series of blogs that provide key recommendations on mental health, psychosocial support, and human rights to advocate for a strengthened response to COVID-19 to address the needs of

young key populations in Asia-Pacific. The blogs have been drafted by various IATT members, including UNICEF, UNWOMEN, UNAIDS and UNDP, in collaboration with ILGA Asia, Youth LEAD, YVC and APCASO.



## Links to the blogs:

Preliminary findings: assessing the needs of young key populations during the COVID-19 outbreak

<https://unaids-ap.org/2020/04/30/assessing-the-needs-of-young-key-populations-during-covid-19-outbreak-in-asia-and-the-pacific/#more-3380>

Socio-economic impact and social protection:

<https://unaids-ap.org/2020/08/11/socio-economic-impact-and-social-protection-for-young-key-populations-and-young-people-living-with-hiv-in-time-of-covid-19/>

Gender-based violence, stigma and discrimination

<https://unaids-ap.org/2020/08/11/stigma-discrimination-and-gender-based-violence-in-the-covid-19-pandemic-young-key-populations-in-asia-and-the-pacific/>

Mental health and quality of life in the time of COVID-19

<https://unaids-ap.org/2020/05/29/impact-on-mental-health-and-quality-of-life-in-time-of-covid-19-for-ykp-and-yplhw-2/>

Report: rapid survey on the impact of COVID-19 to young key populations in Indonesia (UNAIDS Indonesia and Inti-Muda)

<https://unaids-ap.org/2020/05/13/report-rapid-survey-on-the-impact-of-covid-19-to-young-key-populations-and-young-people-living-with-hiv-in-indonesia/>





## YKP Projects and Stories

Youth leaders and organisations alike are rallying together to support communities in need. The YKP Projects and Stories page showcases many examples of where young people and youth organisations implement programmes at the country level, across Asia and the Pacific. The YKP Projects and Stories page highlights many initiatives led by young people and how YKPs are active in the response. You will find stories and testimonies from youth leaders and their involvement in the COVID-19 response on this sub-page. The YKP Projects and Stories page will regularly be updated to reflect



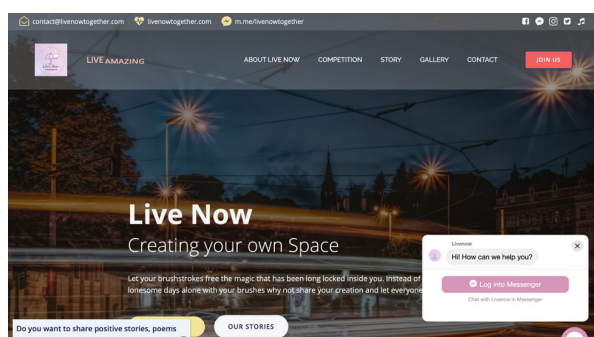
where projects are being implemented across the region by IATT on YKPs partners.

## COVID-19 Resources

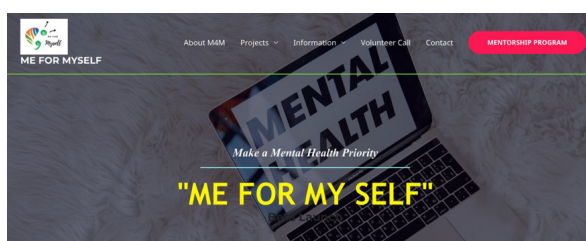
In the last couple of months, IATT partners pulled together a collection of COVID-19 related resources for young key populations and young people living with HIV. They gathered resources internally and from partners to help guide what young people can do to look after themselves and their communities during COVID-19. In this section, you will find

links to different categories to provide you with detailed information on existing resources. Ultimately, this section aims to strengthen the collection of best practices and strategic information on young key populations during COVID-19 and promote its use for evidence-informed programming.

## 'LIVE Now' Campaign for Positivity during COVID-19 and 'Me for Myself' Regional Campaign on Mental Health



[Live Now](#) and [Me for Myself](#) (M4M) were two campaign initiatives led by Y-PEER APC and supported by UNFPA APRO in 2020. The campaigns were released in response to COVID-19.



The Live Now campaign was launched in March 2020, immediately after lockdowns and travel restrictions swept across many countries around the region. The campaign focused on spreading positivity in times of

uncertainty and reducing the mental health impacts of COVID-19 among young people. The campaign promoted positive stories and messages via an online platform that allowed young people to submit stories, key thoughts, art and literature.

Similarly, the M4M campaign was launched in June 2020 that focused on young people's mental health and well-being during the pandemic. The campaigns organising committee consists of ten core members and enrolled more than 200 plus active young volunteers until December 2020. The M4M platform pools together information related to mental health, including helpline numbers, and provides training to young people on specific mental health and well-being issues.

Both campaigns are still active and will continue into 2021.



## Peer Education Manual on LGBTI and SDGs and Peer Education Regional Manual for Deaf Youths 1.0



Recently, Y-PEER Asia Pacific Center and UNFPA APRO worked on two manuals, the *Peer Education Manual for Young People* and *SRHR Training Manual for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Young People*. The first manual, *Peer Education Manual for Young People*, was an upgraded version of an existing peer education manual. In this updated version, various components of SRHR were brought in, including the SDGs, ICPD25 and other youth groups such as LGBTI.

The second manual, *SRHR Training Manual for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Young People*, was completed in 2020, although not yet launched, in partnership with organisations and activists working with deaf or hard-of-hearing communities. Y-PEER has also created a working group of young people with disabilities, primarily with deaf young people working in SRHR. Both manuals are near completion and are in the process of review.

## Outcome 3

Scale-up evidence-informed, national programmes for YKPs through advocacy interventions with government, policy-makers and other stakeholders

### UNAIDS Global AIDS Strategy Consultations with YKP in Asia and the Pacific

## UNAIDS STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

With less than ten years to reach the goal of ending AIDS by 2030, UNAIDS has been tasked by the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) to develop the next global AIDS strategy. The strategy will build on the significant gains already made and will accelerate the pace of action. The new global AIDS strategy will serve as a road map for the world to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, guiding key stakeholders to overcome the challenges and ensure effective country-led AIDS responses. With recent global targets for 2025 and resource needs estimates, the new strategy will shape the next United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS and its political declaration. The next strategy development is data-driven and consultative, involving UNAIDS' staff, the Cosponsors, civil society, people living with and affected by HIV, young people, faith institutions, ministers of health, finance and gender and parliamentarians, scientists, donors and the private sector.

In Asia and the Pacific, Youth LEAD, Y-PEER and Youth Voices Count, with support from UNAIDS, UNICEF and UNDP, organised a regional consultation with more than 30 young people from the region representing diverse key populations and people living with HIV. The virtual focus group discussion explored central themes around the contextual environment of concentrated HIV epidemics among YKP in the region, the accessibility, availability and quality of YKP HIV services, and the implications of COVID-19 on the HIV response for YKPs and new strategies to meet the HIV targets. The discussion highlighted the importance of developing and strengthening a streamlined approach to the continuum of care for YKPs living with HIV and prioritising differentiated service delivery, and supporting governments to integrate HIV services into primary care. The outcomes and takeaways from the consultation have informed a regional report that has been published on the UNAIDS website: [https://www.unaids.org/en/Global\\_AIDS\\_strategy](https://www.unaids.org/en/Global_AIDS_strategy).



## Regional and Global Consultations on the Global Fund Strategy

In collaboration with Y+ Global, Youth RISE and YVC, Youth LEAD organised a series of regional consultations with YKPs and young people living with HIV to contribute to the new Global Fund Strategy (Post 2022). The virtual consultations had technical and financial support from The Global Fund CRG and were held at various dates throughout November and December. The Global Fund expressed the need to hold separate consultations for young people due to the lack of youth engagement in the other Global Fund Strategy consultations and to ensure that young key populations' voices were reflected in the global strategy.

Most recently, Youth LEAD co-organised the regional consultation for the Asia Pacific with YVC in December 2020. Other regional consultations led by youth networks included Africa (in both English and French), MENA (the Middle East and North Africa), EECA (East Europe and Central Asia; in both English and Russian),

Latin America and the Caribbean. The final global consultation is planned for February 25, 2020. The consultations explored five key thematic issues:

1. The Global Fund's Role in Global Health Security
2. The Global Fund's future role in RSSH to achieve UHC
3. Improve the GF program effectiveness for young people
4. Equity, human rights, and gender
5. Community, youth engagement, partnership and leadership in the response





## Strengthening engagement of CSOs in the Global Fund processes

This activity led by APCOM was implemented as part of a larger programme supported by MPact Global to enable the key populations, including young key populations, in Cambodia and Nepal to participate in the Global Fund country dialogue processes meaningfully. Together with KP representatives, CSO partners and CCM focal points, APCOM, and country partners in Cambodia and Nepal assessed communities' level of engagements. The key population communities and representatives barely participate due to limited capacity and limited knowledge about the Global Fund processes. Poor communications between CCM and community focal points were highlighted.

In Cambodia, APCOM facilitated regular communications and meetings between CCC and community focal points. The regular catch-ups provided opportunities for community partners to raise challenges and issues faced by MSM and transgender communities. APCOM, together with the

country partner in Cambodia, translated the Global Fund related work plan for the communities in the local language and established follow-up activities.

In Nepal, APCOM's country partner facilitated a meeting with NCASC, CCM, MoHP and national networks. APCOM regularly organised meetings to improve key populations' understanding of Global Fund grants, concept note development processes, and National Strategic Plan development processes.

Through the SKPA Program, a multi-country grant funded by the Global Fund and led by the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), APCOM provided technical assistance to community organisations in Mongolia, Lao PDR, Sri Lanka, Philippines and PNG to implement community-based monitoring. The activities include the selection of data collectors, training them and gathering data about the quality and accessibility of HIV services under the Global Fund national grant.

## Baseline Assessments of CSOs in PEPFAR's processes

Through the support from the EpiC Project (led by FHI 360) and ViiV Healthcare Positive Action, APCOM is working with key population networks and representatives in Burma/Myanmar, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan. This activity aims to strengthen community systems and key population involvement in decision-making processes in PEPFAR's key population targeted programs through ROP21 both in the region and in selected countries.

APCOM conducted a baseline assessment in Burma/Myanmar, Nepal and the Philippines to measure the level of investment and engagement of MSM and transgender communities and their ownership of HIV programs. In this Baseline

Assessment, the level of investment in MSM and TG HIV-related work and the level of community engagement in budget-making decisions in Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines are poor. There is still work to be done to increase fiscal space for HIV and health initiatives. Furthermore, many MSM and TG representatives lack the confidence or the skills, for example, in Myanmar, to become active in strategic financing discussions around budgets. Likewise, stakeholders may underestimate and dismiss the community's capacities, as in some cultural contexts, like Nepal. To ensure sustained and increased investments, efforts must be made to upskill community members in budget design and make sure that their voices are amplified in budget making decisions that affect their community.

## Supporting YKPs in engaging with the Global Fund Funding Request processes in the country

In April 2020, APCASO developed five infographics with simplified texts about the Global Fund Funding Request process and introductory infographics on the concept of Community, Rights, and Gender (CRG) in the context of the Global Fund. These infographics were developed to support country-level civil society and key population-led organisations, including

YKP-led organisations, in their engagement with the Global Fund Funding Request process at the country level and monitoring the progress with their respective Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs). These infographics have been published on APCASO's APCRG Website (here: [apcaso.org/apcrg/starterkit/](https://apcaso.org/apcrg/starterkit/) and here: [apcaso.org/apcrg/unpacking-crg/](https://apcaso.org/apcrg/unpacking-crg/)).

## WHAT GOES INTO A SUCCESSFUL GLOBAL FUND FUNDING REQUEST?

### DON'T MISS THE SUBMISSION WINDOW

1

For the 2020-2022 Funding Cycle, there will be six critical dates for submitting a funding request:



Window 1 : 23 March 2020  
Window 2a : 30 April 2020  
Window 2b : 31 May 2020  
Window 2c : 30 June 2020  
Window 3a : 31 July 2020  
Window 3b : 31 August 2020

### WHO IS THE LEAD IN MAKING THE FUNDING REQUEST?

2

The **Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM)** in consultation with civil society, affected communities, and key populations.



- ▶ The Global Fund needs your cooperation and engagement to make sure the request is responsive to the needs of affected populations.
- ▶ You can also take this opportunity to increase your community capacity in disease response advocacy and strategy.

### WHAT MAKES A FUNDING REQUEST SHINE?

3

#### COMMUNITY, RIGHTS, AND GENDER (CRG)

Clear human rights, community engagement, and gender equality priorities supported by evidence for effective disease response. The Country Team will be ready to support you to make sure that CRG priorities are integrated into the Funding Requests.



### WAYS YOU CAN ENGAGE THE FUNDING REQUEST PROCESS:

4



- ✓ By taking part in the technical writing team.
- ✓ By providing important data and evidence to strengthen CRG priorities.
- ✓ By being chosen as key implementer.
- ✓ By integrating community capacity building in the implementation design.



APCASO has a CRG Assessment Tool to help you develop your CRG-based programmes. Download it here: <https://apcaso.org/apcrp/crg-needs-assessment/>

Learn more about submission windows for 2020-2022 by country here: <https://apcaso.org/apcrp/global-fund-key-submission-dates-2020-2022/>

#### AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY, RIGHTS, AND GENDER (CRG)



APCASO has a CRG Assessment Tool to help you develop your CRG-based programmes. Download it here: <https://apcaso.org/apcrp/crg-needs-assessment/>

Learn more about submission windows for 2020-2022 by country here: <https://apcaso.org/apcrp/global-fund-key-submission-dates-2020-2022/>

#### WHAT IS CRG?

CRG is an approach to responding to issues from the perspective of community systems, human rights, and gender equality. In the context of HIV, TB, and malaria, this means ensuring effectiveness of programmes by addressing structural barriers to programmes and services across all levels of society, from individual to community.

**Community, Rights, and Gender priorities are the main emphasis of the Global Fund's 2020-2022 funding cycle. Why?**

Because the impact of diseases on key populations is affected by CRG contexts and these have to be addressed as part of overall interventions. Certain populations would not have the same level of access to HIV, TB, and malaria programmes.

- Stigma, discrimination, or gender-based violence prevents people from seeking health services.
- Laws that criminalise specific groups of people prevent them from having a high prevalence of key populations further increase the vulnerability of these groups from infections and diseases.
- Lack of enabling environments for meaningful community engagement in decision-making processes hinders the decisions from being relevant, responsive, and effective.

CRG

APCASO has a CRG Assessment Tool to help you develop your CRG-based programmes. Download it here: <https://apcaso.org/apcrp/crg-needs-assessment/>

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#### AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY, RIGHTS, AND GENDER (CRG)



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#### COMMUNITY SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING (CSS)

Countries working with the Global Fund are encouraged to develop the roles of key affected populations and communities in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of services and activities aimed at improving health. CSS must focus on enabling communities and community actors to play a full and effective role alongside health and social welfare systems.

#### Community systems can be strengthened by:

1. Enabling environments and advocacy
2. Community networks, linkages, partnerships and coordination
3. Assessment and capacity building
4. Community activities and service delivery
5. Organizational and leadership strengthening
6. Monitoring and evaluation and planning

#### Examples of community systems strengthening in action:

**Thailand:** Recruiting HIV-positive women within Female Sex Workers to Reach Distribution of HIV-positive Women and Female Sex Workers

**Cameroon:** Four Group Discussions in Four Peripheral Locations to Roll Out the Community Health Development for HIV/AIDS (CHD) Guide

**Kenya:** National HIV Community Systems Strengthening

**Kenya:** Strengthening the role of community systems in HIV/AIDS response

CRG

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#### WHAT IS GENDER EQUALITY?

Gender equality is the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, orientation or expression in opportunities, the allocation of resources and benefits, or access to services.

#### WHAT IS GENDER EQUITY?

Everyone has an opportunity to attain their full health and well-being according to their respective needs, with no one disadvantaged due to gender norms, roles, and relationships.

- The Global Fund will support programmes that are gender responsive and transformative, including measures that address, and even change, harmful gender norms, roles, and relationships.
- Scale up programs to support women and girls, including programs to address sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).
- Invest to reduce health inequalities including gender and age-related disparities.
- Identifying gender-related barriers to HIV, TB, and malaria programming.
- Building a supportive legal, political and policy environment to promote gender equality equity and access to justice.
- Developing epidemiological surveillance that include sex and age-disaggregated indicators to ensure gender equitable prevention, testing, treatment and care programs.

#### Examples of gender equality actions in the region:

**India:** Building Capacity of Sex Workers to Negotiate Condom Use for Clients

**Thailand:** Ensuring that Pregnant Women Get Tested for HIV and TB

**Kenya:** National HIV Community Systems Strengthening

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331000000\\_gender\\_equality\\_in\\_aifd](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331000000_gender_equality_in_aifd)

#### AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY, RIGHTS, AND GENDER (CRG)



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#### WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

Human rights are basic rights and freedoms inherent to all human beings, i.e.:

- Everyone is entitled to their human rights by virtue of being human
- These rights can never be taken away from you just because you are different
- Every human being has equal human rights, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status

In relation to health, states international human rights laws and instruments guarantee the right to health, including the right to potable food and water, housing, adequate education, safe working and environmental conditions, and health-related education and information.

The Global Fund supports programs that address human rights barriers to ensure that countries can control their epidemics, scale up, and sustain their gains while ensuring that human rights of those most affected are promoted and protected. It suggests ways to reduce human rights-related barriers to health services, including through:

- Reducing stigma and discrimination
- Training health care providers on human rights and medical ethics
- Sanitizing blood and other equipment and supplies
- Reducing discrimination against women and transpeople
- Legal literacy and/or services
- Monitoring and release of arrested, detained, and/or incarcerated persons

#### Examples of human rights interventions:

**Kenya:** Training TB and HIV Activists to Document Human Rights Violations in TB Response

**India:** People Living with HIV (PLHIV) Successfully Advocating for Universal Access to Antiretroviral Treatment

**Kenya:** National HIV Community Systems Strengthening

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331000000\\_gender\\_equality\\_in\\_aifd](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331000000_gender_equality_in_aifd)

## FC2: Partnership with Social Enterprise on Female Condoms for Sex Workers

The [Female Health Company](#) (FC2) is a social enterprise that manufactures, markets and sells the FC2 female condom (the only female condom approved by the FDA). They approached Youth LEAD in 2020 to gain insight into the South East Asian market, especially on HIV prevention among female sex workers. In partnership with FC2, Youth LEAD launched an initial webinar to allow the social enterprise to meet community partners, focal points and sex workers networks to gauge their experiences with contraception in their respective countries.

After introducing FC2 to participants and demonstrating the use and benefits

of the FC2, the objective was to allow participants to return to their networks - to see if there is a demand for the product and the possibility of roll-out and scale-up female condoms in the form of training. Due to the current global pandemic, the demonstration was held online. Although the webinar was engaging, it would be much more impactful face to face where participants could hold the product. Youth LEAD hopes that training can resume in-country and make FC2 a stepping-stone in establishing further partnerships with private businesses and social enterprises to support key populations.

## Asia-Pacific Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the context of COVID-19 and launch of the Sexuality Education Virtual Exhibition (APSEVE 2020)





UNESCO and UNFPA partnered with the Asian Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW), to jointly organise a virtual multi-stakeholders dialogue on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the context of COVID-19. This Interactive Dialogue brought together 464 individual registrations comprised of 270 diverse stakeholders across government, civil society, international development partners and UN agencies that included representatives from Malaysia, Nepal, and Kiribati on their respective countries' CSE implementation status and experience sharing from civil society, Rutgers WFP Indonesia, and Aahung Pakistan on their sexuality education initiatives.

The Dialogue also launched a two-month-long Sexuality Education Virtual Exhibition (APSEVE 2020), wherein 23 innovative sexuality education initiatives were presented coming from 11 Asia-Pacific countries, showcasing diverse approaches targeting a range of young people: curriculum-based; technology-enabled; for young people with disabilities, out of school young people, marginalised communities; LGBTI communities; or rural youth.

The 2020 Dialogue was a follow-up to the first ARROW/UNESCO/UNFPA dialogue held in Bangkok in 2018, aiming to orient participants to the revised joint UN International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE) and enabling regional and national level momentum on CSE implementation.

## Rapid situation assessment of sexuality education in digital spaces led by UNESCO in Thailand

สวัสดีน้องๆทุกคน ขอเชิญน้องๆที่กำลังศึกษาชั้นมัธยมศึกษา  
ตอนปลาย และปวช. ร่วมตอบแบบสอบถามสั้นๆเกี่ยวกับพฤติกรรม  
ความสนใจ ความต้องการ และอุปสรรคในการเรียนวิชา  
เพศวิถีศึกษา และการเข้าถึงข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับเพศวิถีในประเทศไทย  
โดยองค์การ UNESCO กรุงเทพมหานคร และบริษัท เลิฟแฟรงกี้ จำกัด

โปรดเข้าที่ลิงค์  
**<https://lovefrankie.link/UNESCO-Youth-Survey>**  
หรือสแกน QR code ด้านล่างเพื่อตอบแบบสอบถาม

โดยแบบสอบถามจะใช้เวลาไม่เกิน 5 นาที

คำตอบของน้องๆจะถูกเก็บเป็นความลับ แบบสอบถามนี้จะเปิด  
ให้น้องๆกรอกเป็นวันสุดท้ายในวันที่ **9 พย. 2563**

แบบสอบถามสำหรับเยาวชนที่กำลัง  
ศึกษาชั้นมัธยมศึกษาตอนปลายและปวช.

United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Bangkok Office  
Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau  
for Education

love  
frankie

To support the implementation of good quality comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in Thailand, in collaboration with

the Ministry of Education Office of Basic Education (OBEC), UNESCO Bangkok has carried out a rapid situation assessment

of sexuality education in digital spaces in Thailand and explore opportunities for formal education. The study included a literature review, qualitative and quantitative primary data from 618 youth, 137 Thai teachers and education officials, and two Path2Health representatives to gain learners' and teachers' perspectives on sexuality education and engagement with sexuality information in digital spaces.

The findings of the study- carried out by Love Frankie, who conducted similar work commissioned by the UN in Asia in 2018 - were shared and discussed among twenty stakeholders in a consultation meeting hosted by UNESCO on 18 December 2020. That consultation brought together representatives from OBEC, schoolteachers,

the Children and Youth Council of Thailand, UN and other partners working in school-based CSE and digital sexuality education in Thailand. The meeting brainstormed recommendations for further action in bringing together offline and online learning platforms and approaches for sexuality education in Thailand, with applications relevant to the COVID-19 recovery context and inclusive, quality ICT enabled education.

The new data from the assessment will be finalised and circulated in English and Thai language versions in early 2021, linked to UNESCO's ongoing discussion with OBEC for UNESCO's further support to strengthen the OBEC teachers' CSE e-course following its first educator cohort and delivery in 2020.

## Digital Sexuality Education (DSE) Community of Practice in 2020

Significant momentum has been gained in building the Digital Sexuality Education (DSE) Community of Practice in 2020, with community development doubling the number of initiatives engaged from the previous year to a total of 62 from 19 Asia-Pacific countries. Main engagement with the community members led by

UNICEF with support of UNFPA included bilateral meetings, two virtual community events, and newsletters. These activities and connections have supported direct collaborations between nearly 40 platforms, and contributed to the development of more sustainable and quality sexuality education contents

## Online Portal of National Help-line Numbers for COVID-19 and SRHR

Y-PEER APC and UNFPA APRO developed this useful online portal with Y-PEER national networks and the ICPD25 Youth Group. The portal gathers useful helpline numbers for young people looking to access support on COVID-19 or SRH from more than 20 countries in the region. Helpline number includes direct contact to COVID-19 support, family planning and HIV services, GBV helpline, mental health counselling and more. Visit: [www.yfhs.asia/helpline](http://www.yfhs.asia/helpline)





## 4th International HIV & Adolescence Workshop

UNICEF EAPRO, in collaboration with the UNICEF Eastern Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO), led a skills-building session on strengthening data use for programming at the 4<sup>th</sup> International HIV & Adolescence Workshop in November 2020. The session explored existing data challenges and quality issues and strengthened knowledge of data types, sources and the latest strategies for

collecting representative data. Intending to enhance data usage capacity to improve services, this session aimed to encourage and empower both data champions and advocates working on the adolescent HIV response. UNICEF EAPRO led the second skills-building session and co-facilitated group discussions with Youth LEAD on Adolescents and HIV testing.

## My Body is My Body, My Life is My Life

In 2020, UNFPA Asia-Pacific Regional Office, together with UNICEF, UNAIDS and UNESCO, finalized the review *My Body is My Body, My Life is My Life: Sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people in Asia and the Pacific*. The purpose of the review was to describe the current status of young people's SRH and rights and examine key SRH priorities in Asia and the Pacific to support informed policy, programming and advocacy. The review had two main objectives: (1) Describe the current SRH risks, outcomes, and coverage of key interventions for young people aged 10-24 years in low-and middle-income countries in the Asia and Pacific region; and (2) Review the current evidence, policy and programme approaches related to key SRH priorities in the region: child marriage and

early union; adolescent pregnancy; young people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity; SRH in a digital age; comprehensive sexuality education; and universal health coverage for adolescent SRH. UNFPA APRO held a first Technical ASRH webinar on 14th December to present the data of the review *My Body is My Body, My Life is my Life* to country offices in partnership with UNESCO, UNAIDS and UNICEF country offices. The webinar with 60 participants provided an overview of the key finding of the review, provided a platform for exchange between the UNFPA youth focal points and other inter- agency colleagues and contextualized recommendations to the local context.

## Outcome 4

Increased advocacy for an enabling and coherent environment for YKP

### QueerxBodies series to raise awareness about the lived experiences of young LGBTIQ

QueerxBodies is an interview series that celebrates queer activists and influencers in the Asia-Pacific region, emphasising the intersection between being queer and other lived experiences. The project was implemented as a video series and a series of blog posts with four videos and four blog posts. The QueerxBodies series also highlights the work being done to promote sexual and reproductive health, bodily autonomy, HIV/AIDS prevention, and COVID-19 responses being done by community members themselves.



Participants for the videos:

- Acep Gates (Indonesia)
- Catherine Harry (Cambodia)
- Zolanski Genta (Indonesia)
- Cai Antonio (Philippines)
- Parkers Argasnom (Thailand)

Participants for the feature articles:

- Kumam Davidson (India)
- Shruti Venkatesh (India)
- Nenol Kaminga (The Marshall Islands)
- So Ju (South Korea)
- Levita Levi (Kiribati)

This project brought about a virtual safe space for influencers to reach out to an audience and spread awareness on how to bridge the gap in HIV prevention and SRHR services through the documentation of the practices led by them. It also brought light to the different situations and circumstances led by activists in various countries in the Asia Pacific to help community members gain access to help and services during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Spill the T with YKPs: Webinar Series on COVID-19, HIV and YKP

In June 2020 the IATT on YKP with support from UNAIDS, UNDP, APCASO and Youth Lead, launched the Spill the T! series which aimed to give a voice to young people in the region to share the unique experiences faced by YKPs and to highlight the issues

and needs of young key populations in the context of COVID-19. The webinars were also an opportunity to showcase youth-led innovative solutions that are helping mitigate the impact of the pandemic in Asia and the Pacific.

### Episode One: Youth-led response to the COVID-19 Pandemic; lessons learned from HIV

The first episode of the Spill The T with YKPs focused on youth-led response to the COVID-19 pandemic, using the lessons learned from HIV. In this episode, organized by UNAIDS and Youth Lead, young people from various key population networks were invited to speak on COVID-19 related initiatives that were supported by Youth LEAD's YKP COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund. Some of the key initiatives included, Human Touch Foundation youth volunteers delivering ARVs to the doorsteps of people living with HIV in Goa, India, and the YKP LEAD Nepal delivering emergency

OST to young people who use drugs in Kathmandu, Nepal. This episode provided the opportunity for young people to connect, share best practices and inform viewers on the vital role young people play in the COVID-19 response. In addition, Pia Wurtzbach, UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador for UNAIDS Asia and the Pacific and Eamonn Murphy, UNAIDS Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific provided welcome remarks and congratulatory messages to youth leaders for their achievements.

**Spill the T**

WITH **YKPS**

Youth-led response to the COVID-19 pandemic; lessons learned from HIV

**Special Guest**  
Pia Wurtzbach  
UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador for Asia and the Pacific

**Keynote Remarks**  
Eamonn Murphy  
UNAIDS Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific

**Moderators**  
Michela Polesana (UNAIDS Asia Pacific)  
Jeffrey Acaba (APCASO)  
Shirley Prabhu (UNICEF EAPRO)

**Speakers:**  
Jawyng Honey Lyster (UNDP Asia Pacific Thailand)  
Dr. Min Thet Phyo San (Myanmar Youth Stars Myanmar)  
Irene Audrey Inti Muda (Indonesia)  
Eddy Rudram (Youth LEAD Thailand)  
Applesta de Costa (Human Touch Foundation India)  
Rajal Maharjan (YKP Lead Nepal)

**WHEN**  
TUESDAY 30 JUNE, 2020  
15:30

**WHERE**  
FACEBOOK LIVE  
VISIT **YOUTHLEADAP**

Logos: UNAIDS, Youth LEAD, UNICEF, UNDP, APCASO

## Episode Two: Addressing wellbeing and mental health of YKPs in Asia and the Pacific during the COVID-19 pandemic



The second episode in the Spill the T! series, addressed the wellbeing and mental health of YKPs as an important part of our work on support and care for these populations during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Young people in the region were invited to share their experiences during the pandemic and was an opportunity to showcase existing virtual peer support systems available that have been developed by young people themselves. YVC and the IATT also launched resources on mental health of YKPs and the wellbeing of adolescent and youth LGBTIQ.

## Episode three: Addressing Sexual and Reproductive Health Service and Information Needs of Young Key Populations and young people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity / expression in Asia and the Pacific

The third episode in the Spill the T! series, addressed the unique experiences faced by young key populations and young people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE).

This episode specifically the sexual and reproductive health service and information needs of young key populations (YKP) and young people with diverse SOGIE as an important part of IATT's work on support and care for these populations, including in the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Young people have critical roles in providing care and support to their peers. Peer-led approaches to provide education and counselling have the potential to increase knowledge, improve condom use, and increase uptake of HIV testing among

young men who have sex with men and transgender women, particularly when these approaches are linked with health services. There is also the significant potential of digital media, which are often managed by young people themselves, to provide accurate, tailored and anonymous sexuality information, education and counselling, particularly for those young people with very poor access to comprehensive sexuality education.

This episode highlighted that, in order to fully address the complex determinants and multiple vulnerabilities associated with poor health outcomes among YKP, it is essential to have a multi-component, multisectoral approach that fully engages YKP and young people with diverse SOGIE in design, implementation and evaluation.



**Spill the T**

WITH YKPS  
Meeting sexual and reproductive health needs for young key populations in Asia and the Pacific

**Introductory Remarks**  
Dr. Jo Sauvarin  
Adviser on Adolescents and Youth  
UNFPA Asia-Pacific Regional Office

**Panelists**  
 Special Guest: Catherine Harry, Founder, A Dose of Cath  
 Lakey Tshering, Y-PEER Asia Pacific Center  
 Sadam Hanjabam, Youth LEAD  
 Sandeep Nanwan, UNFPA Indonesia  
 Tashi Tsheten, Youth Voices Count

**Moderators**  
 Jawyng Honey Lyster, UNDP Asia Pacific, Thailand  
 Michela Polesana, UNAIDS Asia Pacific  
 Jeffry Acaba, APCASO  
 Le Nguyen Phuong Linh, (Y-PEER Asia Pacific Center)  
 Rangjung Dorji, (Y-PEER Asia Pacific Center)

**WHEN**  
TUESDAY  
08 DECEMBER, 2020  
14:00 - 15:00  
(BANGKOK TIME)

**WHERE**  
FACEBOOK LIVE  
VISIT [Y-PEER](#)  
ASIA PACIFIC CENTER

Logos: ASIAPACIFIC, UNAIDS, APCASO, UNDP, Youth LEAD, Youth Voices Count, Y-PEER Asia Pacific Center.

## Regional E-course on Adolescent and Youth Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights 3.0

The Regional E-course on Adolescent and Youth and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights is a continuation of the e-learning programme established in 2018 and is jointly organised by Y-PEER APC and UNFPA APRO. The regional e-course 3.0 focuses on COVID-19 and considers the various current health issues and concerns affecting young people. UNAIDS RST, UNICEF EAPRO, UNESCO, Youth LEAD, IPPF SARO, IPPF ESEAOR, ARROW, Asia Pacific Alliance, and Asia Pacific Regional Mechanism on Adolescents and Youth SRHR (MY-SRHR) have agreed to support e-learning programme by facilitating workshops and skills-building sessions designed to capacitate young people with knowledge on SRHR, HIV and COVID-19.

In total, 100 young people across Asia and the Pacific have signed up for the programme. The e-course covers 13 topics, and participants are given the option to attend various workshops, modules and live sessions to enhance their critical thinking and skills-building - linking into to COVID-19. The e-course started in late 2020 and continued into 2021 and is expected to finish by the end of the first quarter of 2021.



# REGIONAL E-COURSE

## ON ADOLESCENTS & YOUTH SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR) 3.0

In the context of COVID -19

### Evidence and information-building on U=U

The online inception meeting organised by APCPM last June 2020 highlighted the different level of understanding or awareness of community organisations and EpiC implementing partners about the science of U=U and how to strategically use the messaging of U=U to increase uptake of testing and reduce stigma and discrimination. APCOM sought to establish a common understanding of the science behind U=U among key populations, community-based organisations, EpiC Implementing partners and other stakeholders in Burma (Myanmar), Nepal, Indonesia and the Philippines.

APCOM also organised a webinar series on U=U. The objective of the webinar series was to establish a common understanding with communities in Asia-Pacific about the science and evidence behind 'Undetectable=Untransmittable (U=U)' by:

- Presenting the basic science review of HPTN 052, PARTNER 1 & 2, OPPOSITES ATTRACT and the groundswell of earlier studies
- Sharing examples of community-led advocacy and endorsements by the world's leading scientific and medical institutions



## Dignity Amidst COVID-19: Trans Youth Leading the Response



The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented humanitarian crisis that claims lives, destroying livelihoods and disrupting economies worldwide. With support from UNAIDS Community Response Fund to COVID-19, the Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN) and Youth LEAD worked together to increase the visibility and voices of trans and gender diverse youth leaders throughout the Asia Pacific.

The objective of this project was to amplify trans youth voices and showcase a spectrum of young trans voices impacted by COVID-19. This activity involved developing six feature stories

that highlighted transgender and gender-diverse communities' achievements, exploring how young people have supported their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, which covered all of Asia and the Pacific (excl. Central Asia). The stories raised awareness about the impact of COVID-19 among transgender people and identified what their needs are to explore possible solutions that mitigate this impact through cross-learning and sharing of testimonies. These stories explored themes of identity, community mobilisation, strength and unity, leadership and activism. To view, these stories visit [weareaptn.org/aptn-x-youthlead-trans-youth-leaders/](https://weareaptn.org/aptn-x-youthlead-trans-youth-leaders/)

## Planned activities for 2021

### YKP Data Advocacy Brief

Youth LEAD, UNAIDS and UNICEF EAPRO have joined efforts to develop a regional situational analysis on the HIV situation among young key populations in Asia and the Pacific, to support the advocacy work and strengthen the programmatic AIDS response at both country and regional levels, to contribute to reaching ending AIDS targets. The report will shed light on regional trends in the HIV epidemic in Asia and the Pacific. More importantly, this situational analysis will investigate the availability and accessibility of HIV services catering to the needs of YKPs, highlighting the perspectives of YKPs, experts and policymakers in four domains: HIV prevention, treatment, stigma and discrimination, and policy and system frameworks. This report will present promising practices on YKP-led interventions and include policy and programmatic recommendations on what can be done to effectively address the needs of YKPs and strengthen HIV prevention efforts. Ultimately, the report will serve as an evidence-based advocacy piece for the organisations involved in this initiative to enhance strategic information on YKPs and accelerate the region's programmatic AIDS response.

In the last quarter of 2020, the core team disseminated questionnaires and conducted interviews with UN agencies, governments, The Global Fund, civil society and YKP focal points across Asia and the Pacific. The report is currently in the write-up phase, and the anticipated launch date of the report is scheduled for June 2021.

## Young People and the Law

In 2020, UNFPA APRO finalized the report *Young People and the Law: Laws and Policies Impacting Young People's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the Asia-Pacific region: 2020 update* which is a product of a collaborative effort between the UNFPA, UNESCO, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, Youth LEAD, Y-PEER Asia Pacific Center. This report provides an update to the 2013 report highlighting recent legal and policy trends and developments affecting the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of young people in Asia and the Pacific. The review considers recent legal and policy developments that are supporting or impeding countries in meeting the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development relating to SRHR. The report has a particular focus on whether countries recognize the evolving capacities of adolescents in their laws and policies on the age of access to contraceptives, access to safe abortion services, HIV testing services, age of consent to sex and the minimum age of marriage and provides an in-depth analysis of policy changes in detailed Country Case Study from India, Nepal, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Viet Nam. The report is expected to be launched in the first quarter of 2021.

## PrEP Toolkit

APCOM is in the process of developing and producing a PrEP Regional Toolkit with the support of WHO Team in Geneva and WHO-UNAIDS Regional PrEP Advisor in Asia-Pacific. The regional toolkit will include updated information about daily oral PrEP, event-driven PrEP, and long-acting injectable cabotegravir.



**ASIAPACIFIC**

INTER-AGENCY TASK TEAM ON  
YOUNG KEY POPULATIONS