

Human Rights and Accountability:

Revitalizing the HIV response, 2011 and beyond

Messages to governments from the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+)

GNP+ calls on governments to commit to respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the human rights of people living with, affected by, and vulnerable to HIV

HIV-related human rights violations, stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV and key affected populations continue to create barriers against access to prevention, treatment, care and support services for people living with HIV. Universal access cannot be achieved unless the rights of people living with HIV are protected and entrenched in the HIV response.

*Positive Health Dignity and Prevention*¹ requires a human rights framework, including rights based approaches to HIV programming and recognition of the sexual and reproductive health and rights of people living with HIV. Improving and maintaining the dignity of people living with HIV has a positive impact on their physical, mental, emotional and sexual health, and creates an enabling environment that will reduce the likelihood of new HIV infections.

GNP+ calls on governments to commit to achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support (universal access) by 2015

Whilst significant progress has been made on achieving universal access targets, thus far, these efforts have fallen short of the significant demand. GNP+ calls on governments to commit to setting costed and measurable targets for sustaining and increasing access to comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services for all people living with HIV. By the year 2020, the World Bank has estimated² that the macroeconomic impact of the epidemic may be enough to reduce the growth of national income by up to one third in countries with adult HIV prevalence of 10%. Therefore, an investment in HIV prevention, treatment, care and support is an investment in productivity and economic growth.

Positive Health Dignity and Prevention requires that prevention and treatment be addressed simultaneously and holistically because treatment contributes to the health and wellbeing of people living with HIV and also reduces HIV transmission risk. People living with HIV should be recognised as part of the solution in the response to HIV.

GNP+ calls on governments to commit to recognising and responding to the needs of men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender people, sex workers and people who use drugs

In most countries where data is reliably collected and reported, key populations – men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers, people who use drugs, and transgender people – bear a disproportionately heavy burden of HIV. Yet routine HIV surveillance estimates do not always capture these groups, and even when they do, national AIDS strategies do not always closely align with demonstrated epidemic trends. GNP+ supports the call by networks of key population groups for governments to have National AIDS Strategies, whose programming priorities directly align with reliable evidence on national epidemic dynamics, including key affected groups by 2015.

Positive Health Dignity and Prevention requires that people living with and most affected by HIV be meaningfully involved in the research, design, programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the HIV response.

¹ *Positive Health Dignity and Prevention is a new framework for universal access, in particular, it integrates prevention efforts into a holistic approach that takes account of the treatment needs and human rights of people living with HIV*

² *Employers' Handbook on HIV/AIDS. A guide for action.* Geneva, International Organisation of Employers, 2002.

GNP+ calls on governments to commit to the greater and more meaningful involvement of people living with HIV in national regional and global levels of the HIV response

30 years into the epidemic, the lived experiences of people living with, affected by and vulnerable to HIV have played a critical role in driving the HIV response. GNP+ calls on governments to commit to strengthening the capacity of people living with HIV to drive the efforts towards achieving access.

Positive Health Dignity and Prevention requires that people living with HIV be meaning fully involved in the research, design, programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the HIV response.

GNP+ calls on governments to commit to introducing and promoting laws that protect the rights of people living with, affected by and vulnerable to HIV. Governments should review their laws, practices and policies and amend any that cause barriers to accessing HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services

Enforceable and accessible laws and policies that protect against discrimination, reduce stigma, and change harmful gender norms are prerequisites to achieving universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment, and care and support services. GNP+ calls on governments to commit to a concerted effort to address stigma, discrimination and HIV-related human rights violations against people living with and most affected by HIV.

Positive Health Dignity and Prevention requires a supportive and protective policy and legal environment. Oppressive and/or punitive social, legal and policy environments discourage people from testing for HIV and utilising and benefiting from facilities that governments invest in. In such environments those who do know their status are unable to disclose it with safety, and unable also to take up HIV prevention and treatment services safely—that is without a real risk of experiencing stigma, discrimination and/or the possibility of prosecution. A protective legal and policy environment is thus important for the protection of public health.

GNP+ calls on governments to commit to recognising and responding to the needs of women and girls, particularly women and girls living with and most affected by HIV

Globally, women and girls are disproportionately affected by HIV. In most countries, women bear the brunt of the negative impacts of the epidemic. Women and girls must be capacitated to gain independent control over their own sexuality, bodies and lives and take concrete measures to increase their access to and influence over the use of income, services and resources. GNP+ calls on governments to invest in removing all legal, economic, social and cultural barriers that sustain and enforce gender inequality.

Positive Health Dignity and Prevention requires equality between genders and supports the linking of programming to better serve the unique needs of women and girls.

GNP+ calls on governments to commit to country level HIV responses that are transparent and accountable to those most affected by HIV

As the world experiences a global financial crisis, it is crucial for national HIV response to be transparent and accountable to all stakeholders, including people living with HIV, the communities of key affected populations and donors. GNP+ calls on governments to commit to accountable leadership, ensuring that all national HIV processes are informed by the needs and priorities set in open consultation with those most affected by HIV.

Positive Health Dignity and Prevention requires transparency, ownership and responsibility from all stakeholders.