

# UNHLM on HIV/AIDS 2021



# A Civil Society Engagement Guide to the HLM 2021

A GUIDE TO SUPPORT  
CIVIL SOCIETY TO ENGAGE  
AND CONTRIBUTE MORE  
EFFECTIVELY DURING THE  
2021 HIGH-LEVEL MEETING  
ON HIV AND AIDS (HLM)

GNP+ & AIDSFONDS



aidsfonds

The logo for aidsfonds, featuring a red ribbon icon followed by the word "aidsfonds" in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font.

UNAIDS

The logo for UNAIDS, featuring the acronym "UNAIDS" in a bold, black, sans-serif font next to a red ribbon icon.

# About this guide

This guide was created to support civil society to engage and contribute more effectively during the 2021 High-Level Meeting on HIV and AIDS (HLM). Unlike other HLM processes the majority, if not all, of the HLM activities, will be virtual. This means that it is especially important for advocates to find solutions to build their capacity, strengthen their networks and engage in advocacy virtually. This guide includes some important engagement opportunities and places to start on this journey.





## HLM Overview

On 23 February, the General Assembly adopted resolution 75/260 on the organisation of the United Nations General Assembly 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS (HLM). The resolution calls for the HLM to be held on 8-10 June 2021 and invites Member States to participate. The primary goal of the HLM is to develop a clear and action-oriented Political Declaration to be agreed upon by member states towards achieving the commitment of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

To promote meaningful contribution of civil society in the entire process, UNAIDS decided to contract a civil society or community-led organisation with recognised experience in the global HIV response. GNP+ and Aidsfonds were appointed to act as NGO co-conveners to work with UNAIDS to facilitate the active and meaningful participation of civil

society organisations and communities in the entire HLM process. Communities and other stakeholders are encouraged to participate in the process leading up to the HLM and in the meeting itself.

The HLM is important because the outcome will be a Political Declaration that will be agreed upon by all UN member states. This document will be the point of reference for advocates to monitor and hold governments accountable to what they committed to in the Political Declaration. In order to influence the UN Member State negotiations on the Political Declaration, civil society organizations need to gain access to the people in their country's UN Mission in New York who will be negotiating on behalf of their government. Civil society should also aim to liaise with the official country delegations who will be representing their country at the HLM, usually consisting of government officials and a civil society representative.

But regardless of whether you are on the country delegation or supporting the community outside, there are many ways to engage and be involved in the process.

# Getting involved

In order to participate effectively in the HLM it's important to strengthen your capacity for engagement, build your networks and connections to stakeholders, and then advocate! The more that you engage, the better prepared you'll be to advocate.

## 1. STRENGTHEN YOUR CAPACITY FOR ENGAGEMENT

The best way to start to build your capacity on the HLM is to read about it. Since [UNAIDS](#), [GNP+](#), and [Aidsfonds](#) are the co-conveners for civil society they have dedicated web pages with materials to read that will be constantly updated throughout the process.

- Participate in the [Community Engagement Webinar Series](#). These will be hosted in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian and Arabic.
  - HLM 2021 Basics: Engagement and advocacy opportunities  
Dates: Thursday, April 21st / Friday, April 22nd
  - HLM 2021 Advocacy: Preparing for action  
Dates: Wednesday, May 19th / Thursday, May 20th
  - HLM 2021 Outcomes: Gains, losses and how to prepare for country level advocacy  
Dates: Wednesday, June 16th, Thursday, June 17th

- Attend workshops, events and consultations to build your understanding of what others are asking for and how to advocate for a united civil society platform. Participate in regional and global dialogues and when ready, review the agreed upon Civil Society Declaration so you can share that with others.

## 2. BUILD YOUR NETWORK AND CONNECT TO HIGH - LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS

To better understand the HLM and the many moving pieces it's important to connect with other like-minded advocates and organisations in your country and in the [multi-stakeholder taskforce](#) for the HLM and its [advisory group](#).



By connecting with others you can establish key priorities and plan for advocacy. These priorities can be used during UNAIDS and other organizations regional and country level consultations.

- It's important to understand that the people who are closest to the decision making will be the individuals selected to be on the Official Country Delegations and the Missions in NYC. Your country's national delegation might also include a civil society representative. Find out who these people will be and build connections with them.
- Join the [\*\*global advocates listserv\*\*](#) and/or [\*\*Facebook group\*\*](#) to connect with other advocates and stakeholders participating in the HLM.
- Participate in the **Civil Society Social** networking event hosted by GNP+ and Aidsfonds to build linkages and personal relationships with other advocates.  
Date: Wednesday, May 12th (more information to follow)

### 3. ADVOCATE

If you want change you need to get up and make some noise. This is the time to advocate and have your community's demands heard. Advocacy can take many forms, a phone call to a politician, writing an article, a twitterstorm or a protest in the street. Think about what tactic you feel most comfortable with and then go for it!

- Determine who is the government official leading your country delegation in the HLM and write them a letter demanding that they send the highest level of representative on the Official Country Delegation alongside people living with HIV and key populations. Offer to meet with them and offer your support in the negotiations. (See letter example attached).
- Work with advocates and community-led organisations to develop a position paper or document that you can use to influence the government's negotiating position.



- Engage in global advocacy campaigns to raise awareness of issues and civil society's collective voice by using **#WeAreHLM** and **#PressureON** hashtags. GNP+ and Aidsfonds have a social media toolkit that can support online advocacy for civil society and organisations.
- Use your voice and speak out about injustice, discrimination and oppressive systems in your country

that undermine the HIV response.

- Include your voice in community-led survey's, protests, sign ons, and other civil society advocacy efforts to support in solidarity others in the HIV response.
- Reach out to the local media and have them cover the HLM and what's happening. Be their inside person and help shape the story.



# HLM Advocacy Planning

An important advocacy moment for civil society during the lead up to the HLM is the **Multi-Stakeholder Hearing on April, 23rd**. This event will be the direct result of the hard work of the Multi-Stakeholder Task Force. It will feed into the HLM process with a summary document highlighting the main advocacy asks of civil society towards the HLM Political Declaration. It will be transmitted live on [UN Web TV](#) and the [GNP+ Facebook page](#). In these spaces, there will be moderated conversations and civil society can add input and share their thoughts which will be captured and included in a drafted Civil Society Declaration.

The Civil Society Declaration will be the main global advocacy document that civil society advocates will use to advocate for our collective demands and language in the Political Declaration.

The time in between the Multi-Stakeholder Hearing and the HLM (June 8-10th), advocates will be working very hard to ensure that as much language as possible of the Civil Society Declaration is positioned to be included in the final Political Declaration and signed off by all UN Member States.

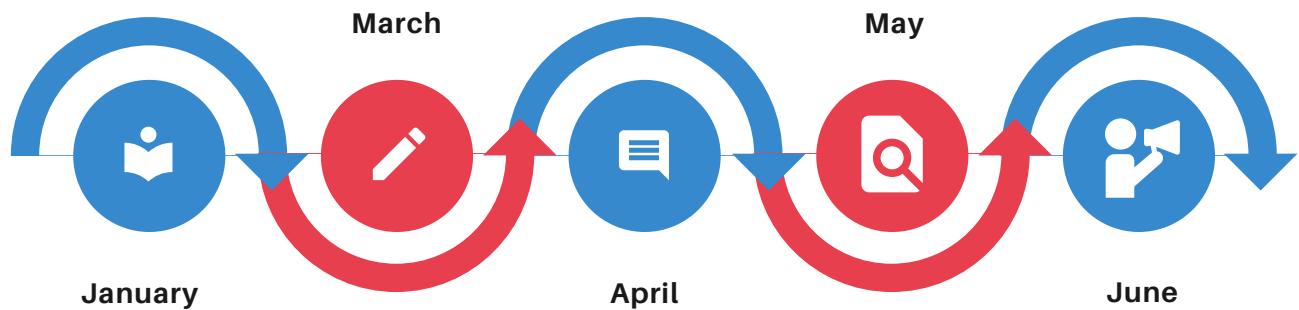
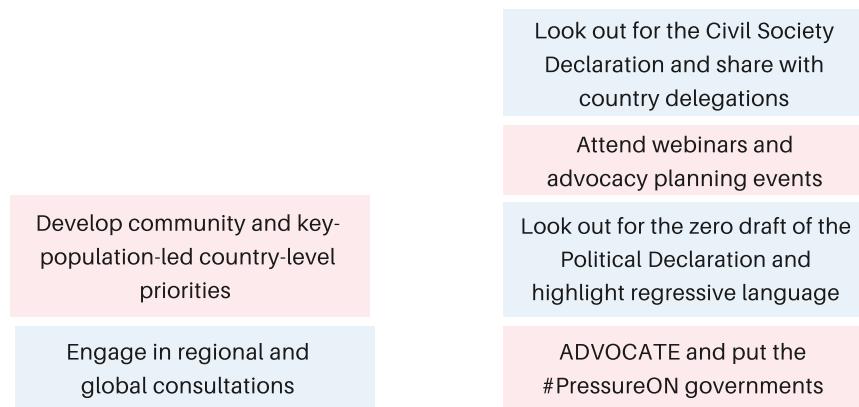
It is important to strategically plan your advocacy interventions around these two dates and apply pressure when it is called for. This is where being registered on the HLM global listerv will be very helpful to speak directly to other advocates in real time.

## After the HLM

Following the HLM, all the UN member states will have signed onto the Political Declaration. The Political Declaration will be the tool that advocates can use to monitor and hold their countries accountable. It will be important to stay connected to other advocates and strategize about follow up advocacy interventions and actions.



# Timeline



Learn more about the HLM	Join listserv and FB group	Sustain the pressure and advocacy
Connect with other advocates and organizations	Attend webinars and advocacy planning events	Attend the HLM
Advocate for country delegations that are engaged and include with civil society	Participate in the MSH and discussion	Attend the report back webinar on the analysis of the final Political Declaration

Use the Political Declaration commitments to hold your government accountable



## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

**High Level Meeting on HIV and AIDS. End Equalities. End AIDS.** UNAIDS, 2021

**The 2021 High Level Meeting on HIV and AIDS: Advocacy Toolkit for Young People.** The Pact, 2021

**High Level Meeting Action Alert.** ICASO, 2021

**GNP+ HLM Webpage.** GNP+, 2021

**Aidsfonds HLM Webpage.** Aidsfonds, 2021

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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