

Alliance of Youth CEOs

Statement on HIV/AIDS Programmes

Introduction

The Alliance of Youth CEOs perceives the HIV/AIDS pandemic as a crucial issue affecting young people and therefore is one of our top priorities in each of our organizations. In our Empowering Africa's Young People Initiative paper we say that:

AIDS is more than a public health problem; it is a crisis in education, economics, social and security systems. Young people are at the heart of the pandemic with an estimated 8.5 million young people aged 15-25 living with AIDS in Africa. To stem the further rise in infection rates, prevention strategies that are strategically focused on youth, combined with interventions aimed at the communities in which they live, offer an effective way of mitigating the impact of the disease.

The Alliance is committed to addressing the root causes of the issue such as poverty, inequity, social injustice, gender inequality and lack of respect for human rights.

Our Principles

The Alliance attempts to counter the pandemic in a holistic way, following four underlying principles that are embedded in all our interventions. These are:

- Youth can serve as agents of social change and are central to the Initiative through their involvement in design, implementation and evaluation aspects;
- Holistic approaches to prevention, care, support and advocacy against stigma and discrimination within and outside the Alliance member organizations;
- Empowering girls and young women especially;
- Involve and support people living with AIDS in all aspects of the programme.

Our Programmes

We are responding to the challenge through a variety of programmes based on a comprehensive educational and skills building approach for the prevention of HIV/AIDS. We do this through:

- peer education;
- non-formal education programmes that empower young people to make decisions, to have self-esteem, improved life skills and to treat others with respect;
- providing all the information young people require so that they can make wise choices;
- advocacy to address harmful cultural practices, stigma and discrimination;
- developing leadership to fight stigmatisation and discrimination;
- supporting those with HIV and AIDS and those affected by HIV and AIDS;
- projects to tackle unemployment, peace building and human rights;
- some organizations develop marketable job skills so that young people can earn a livelihood.

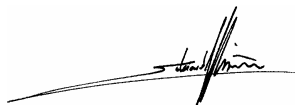
Our Commitment

We are committed to all young people, including those who are infected or affected by HIV and AIDS. Whatever the environment in which they live, whether they are HIV positive, HIV negative or already have AIDS, all young people have the same basic needs; they need to acquire the ability to cope and the ability to become the architects of their own development as individuals who are:

- **autonomous** ~ able to make choices and to control their personal and social life as an individual and as a member of society;
- **supportive** ~ able to show concern for others, to act with them and for them, to share their concerns;
- **responsible** ~ able to take responsibility for their actions, keep commitments and complete whatever they undertake;
- **committed** ~ able to assert themselves in respect of values, a cause or an ideal and to act accordingly;
- **responsive** ~ able to adopt positive attitudes, practices and behaviours;
- **contributing** ~ able to give back to their communities now and in meaningful ways that recognize their inherent strength and resiliency.

Thereby developing their full potential as individuals and as members of society. This goal can only be reached if the appropriate educational opportunities, which cover the totality of their needs, are offered to young people.

We listen and respond to the needs of young people.



Eduardo Missoni
Secretary General
World Organization of the Scout Movement



Lesley Bulman-Lever
Chief Executive
World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts



Bartholomew Shaha
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World Alliance of YMCAs



Gilly Shirazi
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