

POSITIVE LIVING IN THE TIME OF COVID-19



@ UNVPA, Teenergizer, ICWAP, RNP+, ENYP+, NCPI, J+ LAC, Partnership Network, ENYP+, JIP,

Final Edition: We asked our partners from around the world to share any lessons as networks of people living with HIV have adapted and risen to respond to COVID and HIV in their communities.

For us, the greatest lesson is our resilience. COVID-19 has made us adapt to a new normal and we see the coming together of networks and organisations to provide services to help their community. Investing in community-based organisations is essential to shoring up our capacity to respond in times of crisis.

Trinidad and Tobago Positive Women



“ All agendas must work together to respond to any crisis or need. The presence of civil society to put pressure on governments is a priority, since the right to life is fundamental. We ensure that governments do not compromise and that they follow the WHO recommendations on the dispensing of medications. ”

Jóvenes Positivos (J+ LAC)

“ We’ve learned that grassroots organisations are essential to the response in crisis situations. We are making sure that people living with HIV are able to access their treatment, that everyone can access different prevention methods, and that the sexual rights of people all over our country are being respected. ”

Fundación Chile Positivo



The world changed and this change is an opportunity to interact and share our experiences in creating new programs with a physical and emotional balance based on what we in the HIV response have learned over the years. Although they are different pandemics, we can carry out actions to address shared challenges and social gaps.

ICW Mexico



As networks, we have the ability to provide psychosocial support through online platforms as well as to address any myths on linkages between COVID-19 and HIV/AIDS and share information on COVID-19 preventive measures.

ICW Malawi



We realized that young people are the key actors of change. We’ve seen that with our culture, change was really difficult. Training and awareness-raising meetings for young peer educators were carried out by our network to so they can deliver reliable messages to their communities. Young people must be involved in every action in order to end this pandemic.

Réseau National des Jeunes Vivant avec le VIH (RNJ+), Burundi



Building relationships with the right entities is crucial so that you know where to run to in an emergency. We have also noted the power of peer support for young people living with HIV and we have been speaking in one voice to ensure access to care and treatment. COVID-19 has brought that activism amongst young people.

Eswatini Network of Young Positives (ENYP+)



If there’s a lesson for us from the pandemic, it’s the importance of supporting young people with the relevant tools and information to carry on their peer support role in different environments. They have ridden bikes, walked distances and lobbied with partners to ensure peers living with HIV receive their medication and other SRHR services.

Uganda Network of Young People Living with HIV



COVID has reminded us strongly that policies and actions around health must be led by and with communities. Networks of people living with HIV have demonstrated their importance in terms of peer support and advocacy for the health and rights of people living with HIV and vulnerable groups.

Réseau national des associations de personnes vivant avec le VIH (RNP+), Senegal





It is communities who make a difference. As HIV networks we can bring our expertise to the COVID response on - awareness raising, social mobilisation and countering stigma. Our experience of HIV gave our staff and volunteers the strength and skills to deal with new challenges of COVID and the lockdown and use creative ways to help our communities.

National Coalition of People living with HIV in India (NCPI)

During COVID-19, we learned that it is important to build trust and strong collaboration between communities, government, health services and others, to ensure that essential services and ARV treatment remains available. As a network, we have continued intensive coordination and communication by virtual technology so that communities do not feel left out.

Jaringan Indonesia Positif (JIP)



“ Women's networks are doing their level best through self-raised funding to support women suffering mental health issues or financial hardship. COVID-19 resources must be made available to women and girls, this is as fundamental as securing women's rights. Women can get resources out into the communities where they are needed the most. ”

ICW Asia-Pacific

The health system was not ready for HIV response in the COVID-19 pandemic. Collaboration between community organisations and the health system should be stronger for the benefit of the HIV positive community. People with COVID are also discriminated against and more should be done to combat discrimination towards communicable diseases.

Women's Empowerment Centre, Armenia



We have learnt that during COVID-19, teenagers and youth living with HIV, require more support to address their mental health needs. Isolation hits adolescents most as they lose usual social contacts and spend a lot of time with adults who might not understand them well. Thus, online activities which are easily accessible must be available for youth at all times, particularly during quarantine.

Teenergizer, Ukraine



We need to ensure that the government does not lose focus or forget about the challenges associated with HIV while dealing with COVID-19. The government must actively involve community and include women in decision-making processes around responding to both HIV and COVID-19.

Positive Women Ukraine

As people with HIV, we have a long history of organising and helping each other in face of adversity.



Individual and collective resilience has become part of our DNA. COVID-19 has exacerbated many issues that were already there: mental health, isolation, poverty. Now we need to prepare for the long-term consequences of this crisis.

Positively UK

Many years of experience in the fight against HIV allowed us to adapt to COVID-19 quickly - ensuring the continuity of ARV drugs and developing remote approaches to the provision of services. Close interaction with international and national partners and exchange of information on best practices allows us not to feel confused and to know that we will overcome these difficulties with minimal losses.



Partnership Network, Kyrgyzstan

“ COVID-19 amplified existing disparities especially for immigrant, sex workers and substance users. We need to be more prepared to respond and not work in silos. We must increase our deliberate programming to “lead with race and gender” and place these at the centre of our HIV and COVID-19 responses as well as the recovery efforts. ”

ICW North America

Our Survey Report is out – read it, share it and use it in your advocacy

A big thank you to all the networks and organisations of people living with HIV for completing our survey and sharing how you are adapting to **Living with HIV in the time of COVID-19**.

Together in solidarity

GNP+, ICW and Y+ Global are working together to understand the challenges of COVID-19 and advocate for people living with HIV. We just launched a report from our survey of networks and will use the findings in our advocacy. From end of March to end of July we also published 8 issues of this newsletter to share information, resources and inspiring responses from national networks. As we come to accept that COVID-19 is not about to disappear quickly, we will be looking at other ways to continue this work on an ongoing basis.

Please send your ideas and thoughts to covid@gnpplus.net You can also visit our [COVID-19 webpage](#) to find the survey report, past editions of the newsletter and other resources.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU AND WANT TO SALUTE YOU – LIKE HEALTH CARE WORKERS YOU ARE ALSO ON THE FRONTLINE.

