

Asia Pacific Inter-Agency Task Team on Young Key Populations



Annual Report of Activities for 2013

About the IATT

The Asia Pacific Inter-Agency Task Team on Young Key Populations (YKP) 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 as its members a wide range of UN and civil society partners. Membership is open to any organization interested in working collaboratively to support the HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support needs of YKP. The members for 2013 were:

- Asia Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health (APCOM)
- Coalition of Asia-Pacific Regional Networks on HIV and AIDS (7 Sisters)
- Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS (GYCA)
- HIV Young Leaders Fund (HYLF)
- International Federation of Medical Students Association (IFMSA)
- International HIV/AIDS Alliance
- International Organization on Migration (IOM)
- International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)
- Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- Save the Children
- UN Women
- UN Development Programme (UNDP)
- UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
- UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- UN Population Fund (UNFPA)
- UN Organization on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- Youth LEAD
- Youth Voices Count (YVC)
- World Health Organization (WHO)

The Task Team is co-chaired by one UN and one civil society partner and rotates at the end of each year. In 2013, it was jointly chaired by Youth LEAD and UNAIDS.

Broad objectives

The following are the broad objectives of the task team:

- To ensure that capable and effective young leaders from key populations are collaboratively engaged in the response to HIV and AIDS.
- To develop the capacity of policy makers and programmers to address YKP issues in national policies and plans.
- To jointly advocate at the regional level for scaling up comprehensive evidence-informed interventions for YKP by governments and civil society.
- To provide regional guidance on the collection, analysis and use of strategic information (including surveillance data) to support advocacy, policies and programmes for YKP.
- To encourage a coordinated UN/INGO approach toward expanded HIV, sexual health and human rights related responses for YKP across the Asia-Pacific region.

The Task Team meets bi-monthly and promotes:

- availability and use of strategic information on YKPs;
- meaningful engagement of YKPs in relevant strategic processes;
- capacity development of policy makers and programmers to work on YKP issues;
- capacity development of young leaders (including from YKPs) to address YKP issues; and
- advocacy on YKP issues in national, regional and international fora.



The Task Team's activities for 2013 are described under the following areas:

- Young people from key populations in the Asia-Pacific region are engaged and capacitated to contribute in national AIDS responses.
- Capacity of policy makers and programmers in the Asia-Pacific region developed to address YKP issues in national policies and plans.
- Evidence is generated / synthesized and advocacy is undertaken at the regional level targeting governments and civil society promoting scaled-up, comprehensive evidence-informed interventions for YKPs.
- Guidance on the collection, analysis and use of strategic information (including surveillance data) is developed and used in the region to support advocacy, policies and programmes for YKP.



Young people from key populations in the Asia-Pacific region are engaged and capacitated to contribute in national AIDS responses

The Task Team puts great emphasis in meaningfully engaging YKPs to contribute to the national AIDS responses. In 2013, this has included support to:

- NewGen Asia leadership short course;
- NewGen Asia mentorship programme; and
- engagement of regional networks supporting programming for YKP in the IATT.

NewGen Asia Leadership Course

The NewGen Asia Leadership short course was developed in 2011 through a partnership between young people, UN agencies, civil society and academic institutions. It is a highly interactive and engaging course that aims to build the leadership capacity of young people from key populations to better engage in national AIDS responses.

The course was initiated by Youth LEAD and developed over a nearly one-year consultation, writing and piloting process led by Youth LEAD in partnership with the Youth Research Centre at the University of Melbourne, Australia, and supported by UN partners: UNFPA, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNAIDS.

In 2012, country level roll-outs in Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Sri Lanka were successfully implemented. Feedback from participants, during the country roll-outs, called for further attention in the course on Strategic Information (SI) and Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH). This year, a writers' workshop was convened in June to review the course content and consider these components. The workshop included participants from country rollouts, technical working group members of Youth LEAD New Gen Writing Team, Youth LEAD secretariat, the academic expert from the University of Melbourne, and UN partners.



Youth LEAD, in collaboration with the Youth Research Centre at the University of Melbourne, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, and UNAIDS, hosted the second regional NewGen Asia Leadership Course Training of Trainers (ToT) in Bangkok on 23-29 November. The second regional ToT was expanded to allow for the testing of new materials, information and activities on basic SRH and HIV, and on SI. New activities were incorporated into the course to provide basic information and skills-building in negotiation and problem-solving to help people practice skills that they can apply in all aspects of their lives.

Over 20 young participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Nepal and Thailand attended the regional training of trainers in November, with the intention to hold country level roll outs in their respective countries in 2014. Enthusiasm did not waver over the course of the week, and the participants all agreed that, "NewGen rocks!"



"This is the best experience I have ever had. I have been to lots of trainings but this one is different and it is the best. I can go back to my country and I can be a leader and pull people together for a cause because I know the qualities and how to be a leader".
– NewGen participant from Nepal.

NewGen Asia Mentorship Programme

The Task Team launched the NewGen Asia mentorship programme in August 2011 at ICAAP10, linking emerging young leaders with well-established leaders working in the area of HIV and AIDS. Since then, 30 mentor-mentee partnerships around the Asia-Pacific region have been established.

In late 2012, participants of the Mentorship Programme were asked to complete an online survey to elicit feedback on participation in the programme and inform the next steps.

Two surveys were designed – one specifically for mentees and the other designed for mentors. The questionnaires were distributed online, through Survey Monkey in 2012, and participants had until January 2013 to complete the web-based questionnaire.

Out of a total 32 mentors and 17 mentees originating from 16 countries in the region only 8 mentors and 7 mentees completed the survey. Some key findings:

Respondent Demographics:

- Nine countries were represented in the survey responses.
- Mentee respondents were mostly males aged 21-29, working in civil society organizations and with university-level education.
- Mentor respondents were primarily females aged 45-49 and also working in civil society organizations and with university-level education.

Communications and Achievements:

- Most respondents reported communicating through written correspondence and in person meetings
- The frequency of communication varied from multiple times a month to once every few months
- Mentors reported that on average, they spent 2.5 hours a month supporting their mentee
- 75% of mentors were in contact with their mentee at least once a month
- Of those that developed expected outputs, 63% felt they had been delivered as planned
- The majority of mentors used the NewGEN Asia Partnership Plan

Primary Limitation:

- The primary limitation identified was lack of resources to provide ongoing support to the mentees and mentors, which therefore led to a loss of communication and momentum of the programme.

Despite this, mentees and mentors agreed that the programme was a mutually beneficial experience that allowed both parties to gain more skills and knowledge about challenges that are faced in HIV programming for YKPs, the transfer of knowledge and skills from mentor to mentee, and important opportunities for entry into networks and committees that offer youth representation.

The NewGen Asia mentorship programme was formally closed in 2014, and all participants thanked for their participation in the programme.



Engagement with regional YKP networks

A number of youth-led and youth-serving networks are members of the Task Team, including HIV Young Leaders Fund (HYLF), Youth LEAD, and Youth Voices Count (YVC). These members ensure that the lessons learned from their activities inform the work of the Task Team, including advocacy, interventions and guidance.

Similarly, Task Team members play a role in providing technical support to these networks, and links to relevant global opportunities.

In recent years, these networks have grown from strength to strength and are recognized as key regional civil society organization partners in advocating for issues of YKPs.

For example, 2013 has seen the growth of Youth LEAD. After their Annual General Meeting (AGM) in June, the organization has undergone transformations in its governance structure, strengthened its monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, cultivated existing networks, expanded with new members, with the aim to become the key regional network of networks and organizations for issues pertaining to YKPs.



The executive board, secretariat, and technical working group members convened a series of meetings to facilitate a transition over the next year to an updated governance structure to increase efficiency and transparency, while incorporating exponential growth. The changes include: a robust selection process for focal points; introducing Focal Point Coordinators to cultivate and intensify country-level activities and allow for linkages with grassroots organizations, without language or logistics barriers; and finally, the initiation of Youth LEAD Alumni for transitioning committed members into adult regional and international networks, while retaining their engagement and utilizing their expertise. Furthermore, Task Forces will be formed on an ad hoc basis in various capacities to tackle different topics and accelerate regional advocacy; two were formed in this AGM based on urgent needs for 1) YKP involvement in Post-2015 discussions, and 2) enabling legal environments.

Out of 24 grantees globally for Robert Carr Network Fund (RCNF), Youth LEAD has been selected to be the only youth grantee. The first phase of the Youth LEAD RCNF fund supports 6 unique and innovative projects in 5 regional countries ranging from collecting strategic information as an advocacy platform, to tracing stories of youth leadership and transformation and mobile HIV testing in marginalized communities. The organization's efforts to reach communities on the ground is recognized, and has secured a new RCNF fund for the next 2 years.



"We know our communities better than anyone else, we can help solve our needs and problems, but as young people we are neglected the chance and denied the opportunity. When equipped with leadership skills standing on a solid advocacy platform, we can reverberate positive changes for ourselves and those around us."

- Changbong from South Korea, representing young people living with HIV and men





YVC has been able to make the year a productive one with dramatic improvement in representation as a regional youth-led network made by new young enthusiastic members with important acknowledgement and partnership. With consistent and timely financial and technical support from the Task Team, Hivos, UN agencies, AP-COM, 7 Sisters, and the Alliance Technical Support Hub, the network has shifted itself into a community-driven and outcome-oriented entity that reinforces the voices of young people down to grass-root level; delivers concrete outputs; and advocates with regional players and interagency working groups at decision making level.

YVC has been consistently looking for more qualified membership, particularly from unrepresented countries in the region with the aim of engaging local communities of young men who have sex with men (YMSM) and young transgender (TG) people in HIV work. The Secretariat, Core Working Group and Country Members have managed to spread the message around the region, expressing the need of YVC expansion and interest for new members. For example, during its involvement in a regional consultation of young people living with HIV (together with APN+, HYLIF, Youth LEAD and UN agencies), YVC welcomed 4 new members from 4 different countries, including India, Malaysia, the Philippines and Viet Nam. All are under 25, living with HIV, and in need of engaging with their communities and so it was an opportunity that YVC did not miss. In addition, UNAIDS Youth Advisory Forum provided YVC with another TG member from Fiji in the Pacific willing to join the big family. Ten extra members make the total membership of YVC to 60 (12 TG and 48 MSM) who are well connected and advocating for YMSM and YTG's issues to the fullest.

YVC also launched in 2013 a policy brief on self-stigma among YMSM and TG. This policy brief, developed from the outcomes of in-country study on self-stigma among youth, together with the consultation report have provided significant advocacy points and recommendations on tackling the problem from different levels. Recommendations include in-country peer support interventions, safe space/shelter, psycho-mental support mechanism in place and particularly multimedia campaigns to boost self-esteem targeting youth audiences.



Finally, in November, YVC held its 3rd consultation that centered on the issue of HIV Testing Programme targeting YMSM and TG. The meeting, with participation of 26 country members, including Technical Working Group members from 12 countries will officially kick off YVC's focused action plan to promote HIV testing among YMSM and TG people in the region via collecting insight, ideas and recommendations from the target audience themselves. The consultation outcomes will then inform advocacy work in several selected countries targeting healthcare providers, stakeholders and governments, as well as multimedia campaigns among young people as follow-up activities.

Together, participants identified practical barriers faced by young people regarding access to these specific services, built key components of a comprehensive youth-appealing testing program for young MSM and TG people; and developed programmatic recommendations on improving existing health services for increased uptake among young target audiences.

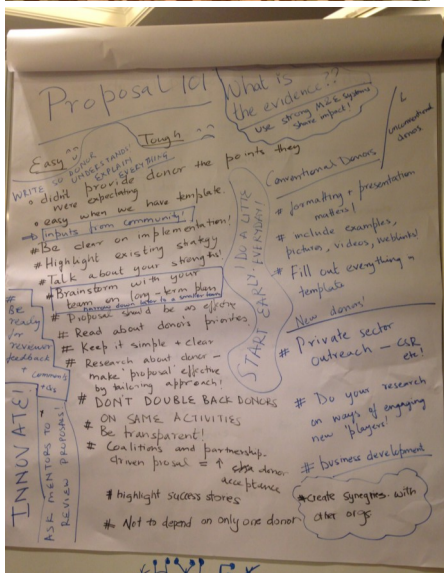




- Raks Thai Powerteen Network based in Chiang Mai, Thailand that works for adolescents living with HIV;
- Viet Nam Youth HIV Prevention Network based in Hanoi and Ho Chin Minh City that brings together over 22 youth-led HIV initiatives in Vietnam;
- Kid's Sun Network based in Hanoi, Vietnam that works on Hep C and HIV co-infections among young people who use drugs; and
- Pioneer Institute for Social Change based in Baturaden, Indonesia that works with young women in non-brothel based sex work.

As part of its technical support to grantees, HYLIF implemented several strategies this year including a successful mentorship programme and learning exchanges with partner organizations. HYLIF linked grantees to regional organizations like YVC and APN+ to explore collaborations and partnerships.

Additionally, HYL F was involved in several advocacy activities with other Task Team members throughout the year. It supported APN+ and UNICEF with the adolescents living with HIV consultation. In partnership with the UNESCO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNICEF and Save the Children, HYL F led the Health Equity For All Initiative. HYL F staff also participated at ICAAP11 and co-facilitated a skill-building workshop, on Effective Ways of Sharing Knowledge among YKAP, with UNDP.



Capacity of policy makers and programmers in AP region developed to address YKP issues in national policies and plans

To further advocate for YKPs and their rights, policy makers and programmers need to be informed and capacitated to address their issues in national policies and plans. The Task Team developed key tools and publications to aid policy makers and programmers in their capacity development.

Input into tool kit for service providers for young drug users

A stakeholder consultation facilitated by Save the Children and UNICEF was held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 25-26 November. The consultation was attended by approximately 20 people representing service providers, outreach workers and young people who use drugs who provided input and feedback into the draft tool to inform subsequent development. An updated version of the toolkit is currently being developed and will undergo professional layout in early 2014, with service delivery pilots taking place shortly thereafter in a number of locations, potentially including Nepal, Myanmar and various countries in Eastern Europe. The final toolkit is expected to be released around the time of IAC 2014.



Analysis of national AIDS strategic plans (NSPs) for attention to YKP issues

A small working group of the Task Team (led by UNESCO, with participation from GNP+, Save the Children, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNICEF EAPRO, UNICEF ROSA, and UNFPA) has been supporting an analysis of NSPs in the Asia-Pacific region for attention to YKPs. The review aims to:

- identify strengths, weaknesses and gaps in how NSPs address young people from key populations in identified areas including:
 - * strategic information (HIV epidemiology);
 - * legal and policy framework / enabling environment;
 - * advocacy / meaningful engagement and leadership of key populations;
 - * programming (HIV prevention, treatment, care and support – identified interventions);
 - * monitoring and evaluation; and
 - * resources / budget
- make recommendations on further integration of YKPs in NSPs.

The analytical framework for the review draws on investment framework approaches to identify core interventions, guidance documents on comprehensive packages for key populations, and other analytical frameworks that have been developed globally and in the region for NSP analyses on different thematic issues.

The report is near-final, and will be released around the International AIDS Conference in 2014.

Evidence is generated / synthesized and advocacy is undertaken at the regional level targeting governments and civil society promoting scaled-up, comprehensive evidence-informed interventions for YKP

Strategic information is an integral advocacy tool in the assessing interventions for YKP. The Task Team has taken strides and is leading globally in key publications focused on issues of YKPs.

Legal and policy review

A groundbreaking study on the impact of laws and policies on young people's access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV services was released at the 11th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP11).

The report, *"Young people and the Law in Asia and the Pacific: A review of laws and policies affecting young people's access to sexual and reproductive health and HIV services"*, was commissioned by UNESCO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNDP and Youth LEAD and authored by John Godwin.



Over 400 key legal and policy documents from 32 Asia-Pacific countries were analyzed for the report, making it the first systemic review of its kind in the region on this issue. Focus group discussions with young people were also undertaken to elicit their views and experiences in accessing SRH and HIV services, including on issues such as age of consent, age and marriage requirements for services, and attitudes of service providers.

The report offers recommendations on steps that can be taken to address challenges keeping young people from accessing essential health and information services. These cover legal reforms, changes in law enforcement practices and the greater inclusion of young people's voices in drafting policy related to SRH and HIV services.

The IATT engaged governments from throughout the region in the results and recommendations of the review. This included:

- Hosting a side event on legal and policy barriers facing young people during the Asia-Pacific High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Assessment of Progress against Commitments in the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The session was attended by over 200 delegates from 40 governments in the Asia-Pacific region, and informed commitments made by governments to removing punitive barriers.
- A similar session was delivered at the Asia Pacific Population Conference, and contributed to the integration of legal and policy issues in the APPC final report and inputs into the General Assembly.
- The formal release of the report took place at the International Congress on AIDS in Asia and Pacific (ICAAP) in an oral presentation and satellite session on evidence on adolescents and YKPs in the Asia-Pacific region.

IATT members are now developing a plan of action to take forward the advocacy, training, policy and programme support recommendations highlighted in the report.

"There are over 1 billion young people aged 10-24 in the Asia-Pacific region. Ensuring their health and well-being requires attention at multiple levels, focusing on individuals, their relationships, and society at large. This includes protecting them from harm through supportive laws, policies, law enforcement practices and access to justice." – Justine Sass, Chief of UNESCO Bangkok's HIV Prevention and Health Promotion Unit

"Our research found that restrictive laws can be a significant barrier to access to sexual and reproductive health services for young people – in terms of enjoyment of their health rights, the law has got a lot to do with it."

"We found that very few countries have taken legal steps to clarify the health rights of young people, and this creates particular problems in the sensitive areas of HIV, sexual health and reproductive health." - John Godwin, author of the report.



Full report is available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002247/224782E.pdf>

Lost in Transitions

The Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV (APN+) undertook a year-long work programme in 2013 to better understand the issue of adolescents living with HIV. This included a literature review, in-country formative research and a regional consultation.

The regional consultation, entitled 'My Right to Health' was held in Bangkok from 16-18 February 2013. The meeting brought together 14 adolescents and young people living with HIV from 10 countries in the Asia-Pacific region to share their experiences of living with HIV and identify strategic actions to address shared challenges.

The consultation was organized by the Asia-Pacific Network of People Living with HIV (APN+), in collaboration with the HIV Young Leaders Fund (HYLF), Youth Voices Count and the Global Network of People living with HIV (GNP+), with technical and financial support from UNICEF East-Asia and Pacific Regional Office, UNFPA Asia-Pacific Regional Office, UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, and UNAIDS Asia-Pacific Regional Support Team.

The results of this process were consolidated in the report released by APN+ in partnership with UNICEF, UNESCO and Treat Asia: *"Lost in Transitions: Current issues faced by adolescents living with HIV in Asia Pacific"*. The report highlights significant gaps in how communities and governments in the region are addressing the needs of adolescents aged 10–19 living with HIV.

The report captures the experiences of adolescents perinatally infected with HIV as they disclose their status, deal with life-long antiretroviral treatment, move from paediatric to adult health care services and navigate sexuality and relationships. It also includes the perspectives of adolescents who acquired HIV through unprotected sex and drug use.

Key recommendations include:

- Invest in better data, better analysis of existing and more operational research;
- Establish holistic, age-appropriate, confidential and non-judgmental health services for adolescents living with HIV;
- Give adolescents living with HIV the best possible treatment and related care;
- Ensure access to sexuality education that meets the needs of adolescents living with HIV;
- Help create a better social environment for adolescents living with HIV; and
- Enable adolescent leadership and participation.

"The current response to HIV in Asia Pacific is failing adolescents living with HIV. We need to do more to support the mobilization of adolescents living with HIV and promote peer-based services that are effective in meeting their needs as highlighted in our report. We must also push for better treatment regimens." – Shiba Phulairatpam, Regional Coordinator, APN+



The report was released at a special session of ICAAP on 22 November 2013, co-organized by TreatAsia, UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO. An advocacy plan has been developed to inform IATT support in 2014.

Full report is available at: http://www.unicef.org/eapro/Lost_in_Transitions.pdf

Health Equity for All Initiative

Health Equity for All has been a partnership initiative to better understand the needs of adolescents engaged in selling sex in accessing health services, with a focus on sexual and reproductive health and HIV services.

HYLF has been leading the initiative with the participation of UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNAIDS, Save the Children, among others.



This initiative has aimed to better understand:

- SRH, HIV and other needs of adolescents under 18 who sell sex;
- evidence on appropriate programs and policies to address their health and other needs; and
- gaps in resources and interventions with a view to formulate recommendations.

It has been a one-year piece of work, and has included:

- a literature review;
- community level consultations in a handful of countries with young people from diverse backgrounds with experience selling sex under the age of 18; and
- a regional consultation that took place in November in Bangkok with young people from diverse backgrounds working with communities of young people selling sex under the age of 18.

The process has drawn on the voices and experiences of young people with experience selling sex under the age of 18 and young leaders who work on these issues in their communities. Collecting these voices and perspectives has provided critical inputs to the process, and been invaluable to the design of interventions and support for policies that are truly evidence-informed.

The findings of this process were released at a satellite session entitled “Mitigating harm and ensuring service access: SRH and HIV protection for adolescents who sell sex” which took place on 21 November at ICAAP11.

Emerging findings from the process include that:

- Adolescents often cannot access confidential health information & services. When adolescents under 18 are engaged in selling sex, they face major barriers to health services – including parental consent policies and/or blatant discrimination from health care providers.
- Health care settings are not safe spaces. Violence and abuse were not limited to police. A number of countries reported violence from health care providers – including sexual assault and breach of confidentiality.
- “Child protection” is creating harm. It is being interpreted at the country level via law enforcement and punitive systems and adolescents under 18 engaged in selling sex experience abuse, violence and health harms. Programmes are often not voluntary – they include compulsory detention and forced “rehabilitation”, and preliminary findings show a lack of any voluntary programs or services for adolescents under 18 in some communities.
- Police are a major source of violence and abuse. Across countries, abuse, violence and extortion from police for people under 18 were common, create major barriers to health services and cause harm. Police were often cited as the number one concern for adolescents engaged in selling sex when under 18.

The final report will be released in 2014.

Engagement of YKPs in key fora and international conferences

The Task Team, with the technical and financial support of its Member Agencies, has successfully ensured the greater visibility and meaningful engagement of YKPs in key fora and international conferences that took place in 2013.

Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference (APPC)

The issues of YKPs were well-represented at the 6th APPC in Bangkok. Youth LEAD joined forces with young people from the International School of Bangkok and delivered the opening performance with themes and issues relating to young people, unemployment, homophobia and bullying, access to information, SRH rights and services for all, gender equality, and the transforming powers of investing in youth and giving them opportunities.

UNESCO, UNFPA and UNESCAP, together with Youth LEAD co-organized a youth side-event based on the “*Young People and the Law*” legal and policy review. The side-event entitled “What’s the Law Got to Do with it?” was well attended by APPC participants. The session was developed and delivered in partnership with young people and highly interactive. A video based on the report was also produced: <http://www.unescobkk.org/resources/multimedia/video/young-people-and-the-law/>

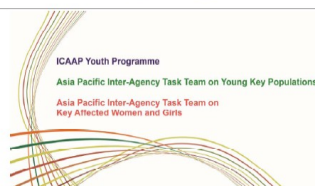


11th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP11)



Young people at ICAAP11

Roadmap of youth related sessions and activities



ICAAP11 became a platform to address the need of young people in the HIV response. The Task Team partnered with the Youth Programme Coordinators and has protected the interests of YKPs at the Congress. Over 30 sessions (symposia, satellites, oral and E-poster discussions) were specific to YKPs. The Task Team also provided a youth roadmap highlighting all sessions and activities that would interest ICAAP participants and young people in particular.

The most innovative project at the Congress, the Virtual Participation, got its debut at ICAAP11, with support from the Task Team. Over 100 young people from key populations from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines and Viet Nam, participated remotely through Google Hangout technology. In certain sessions, participants were given the chance to ask questions and interact directly with panelists.

Other IATT supported sessions included those on:

- Legal and policy barriers to SRH/HIV services for young people
- Strategic information on young people from key populations
- Adolescents living with HIV
- Young men who have sex with men and young transgender people
- Young people selling sex



Guidance on the collection, analysis and use of strategic information (including surveillance data) is developed and used in the region to support advocacy, policies and programmes for YKP

Strategic Information guidance launched

Although HIV risk among adolescents and young people is well-documented, there is still a need for better strategic information on young people at higher risk of HIV exposure. Reliable strategic information, disaggregated by age, sex and other characteristics, including knowledge, risk behaviours, and use of services among these groups is crucial for informed programme planning and policy decision-making.

There are large gaps in strategic information on YKPs. While studies have been undertaken in many countries in the region (such as Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Pakistan), the varying research methodologies make comparative analysis difficult due to the non-homogeneity of the data. Moreover, many of these studies have insufficient sample sizes to enable generalizations about the total population of YKPs within the country.

Similarly, while there is considerable expertise in the region on survey and surveillance methodology for sampling and size estimates of key populations, the inclusion of young people (particularly those under 18) in these surveys is limited. Many young people with risk behaviours are not easily identified for inclusion in such surveys and surveillance, and legal restrictions (e.g. age of consent) in many countries further limit their participation.

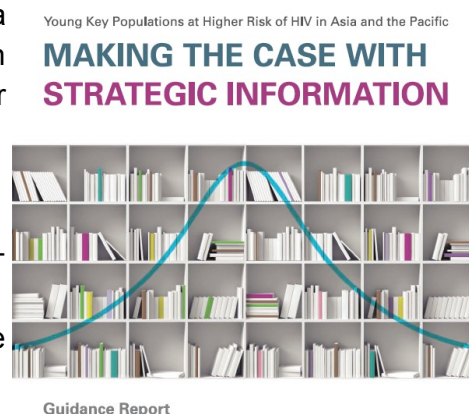
To improve the collection and reporting of strategic information on young people from key populations, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA and UNAIDS have published “YKPs at Higher Risk of HIV in Asia and the Pacific: Making the Case with Strategic Information”.

The publication draws on the outcomes of an expert meeting on Methodologies for Obtaining Strategic Information on Young People at Higher Risk of HIV Exposure, held in Bangkok, Thailand from 3-5 September 2012 .

It is designed to be used by national HIV and AIDS programme planners and managers, and those working in local, national and international governmental and non-governmental organizations that commission, collect and use data about YKPs for advocacy, policy-making, and programming. Although the guidance focuses on the Asia and Pacific region, it likely has wider global application and use.

The publication provides guidance on:

- Ethical issues including informed consent, staff training and support, and issues around biological testing;
- Building the case for strategic information using qualitative methods and existing data;
- Methodological considerations including sampling, survey design, population size estimations and other areas; and
- Dissemination and support for the use of strategic information.



Guidance Report



The report was released at ICAAP in a session on using respondent driven sampling to collect, analyse and use data on young people from key populations.

Full report is available at: <http://www.unicef.org/eapro/>

Key activities for 2014

2014 will be an important year for the Task Team. The 20th International AIDS Conference will take place in Melbourne, Australia in July. This will be an opportunity for the Task Team to further promote the issues of YKPs.

The Task Team has agreed to work on the following outcomes for 2014:

- Young people from key populations in the Asia-Pacific region are engaged and capacitated to contribute in national AIDS responses.
- Capacity of policy makers and programmers in the Asia-Pacific region developed to address YKP issues in national policies and plans.
- Strategic information generated and synthesized and used to support regional level advocacy targeting governments and civil society to promote scale-up of comprehensive evidence-informed interventions for YKP.
- Advocate for an enabling and coherent policy and legal environment for YKP .

Key activities will include:

- NewGen Asia Leadership Course Country roll-out in Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Thailand and Nepal.
- Launch and piloting of toolkit for service providers for young injecting drug users.
- Key publications to be launched in 2014:
 - analysis of national AIDS strategic plans for attention to YKP issues;
 - review of young people selling sex;
 - evidence review on young MSM and transgender people;
 - Risk and Response report (examining the evidence on adolescents and YKPs in Asia Pacific).
- Development of advocacy tools for YKP that are easily understandable by young people (through infographic designs, etc.).
- Advocacy plans will also be developed based on the *“Lost in Transitions”* and *“Young People and the Law”* reviews in relation to young people’s access to sexual and reproductive health services.



The Asia Pacific Inter-Agency Task Team on YKPs aims to strengthen consensus and collaboration among UN agencies and key INGO partners at regional and country level to support governments and civil society in accelerating action to achieve the global and national targets to reduce HIV transmission among YKPs.

For more information, please contact the outgoing Co-chairs for 2013:

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