



Positive Action

Working with communities affected by HIV and AIDS

GLOBAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS





Supporting the community response

The world has been confronting AIDS for over 25 years. In that time over 20 million people have died and another 40 million are estimated to be living with HIV today.

Although we understand how HIV transmission can be prevented, and antiretroviral (ARV) treatments have dramatically extended life for some, there is still no cure, no vaccine, and no short cut to accessing effective healthcare for the millions affected who live with poverty, stigma and little care or support.

With the increasing involvement of community-based and non-governmental organisations (CBOs and NGOs), affected communities have begun to tackle some of these barriers to effective HIV and AIDS awareness, prevention, care and treatment. Some have done this with the direct help of Positive Action, GlaxoSmithKline's international HIV and AIDS community partnership programme.

Positive Action was established in 1992, an early recognition of the pivotal

role played by communities in responding to the world's HIV and AIDS epidemics. Since then the programme has supported projects that strengthen these communities' responses and encouraged greater involvement of people living with HIV and AIDS.

Since 2003 Positive Action has funded 43 projects in partnership with 37 different CBOs and NGOs across 36 different countries. A variety of projects are profiled here, and further information can be found at www.positiveaction.com. These projects reflect many of the needs and challenges of communities around the world and demonstrate the different ways communities are successfully fighting AIDS. More than that, they help to show that responding to HIV and AIDS without the involvement of the community is no response at all.

“Positive Action funding has brought us new opportunities to improve the lives of people living with HIV and AIDS on the frontlines”

JACQUELINE MUKA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR AFRICAN FAMILY STUDIES

Fighting HIV stigma and discrimination in Mexico

Stigma is a critical barrier to effective prevention, early detection and treatment of HIV and AIDS. There are nearly 150,000 people living with HIV in Mexico, which has the third highest number of cases in the region.

In partnership with the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, Alianza Mexico and Colectivo Sol, Positive Action is supporting a project to help reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV and AIDS in four of Mexico's most socially conservative states.

The three-year project will help small community-based organisations to identify and tackle HIV-related stigma and discrimination. The project is based on promoting and advocating human rights with vulnerable sectors of the population, including commercial sex workers, drug users, men-who-have-sex-with-men and people living with HIV and AIDS.



Improving healthcare links within Kenyan communities

As HIV treatment becomes more available in countries of high prevalence it is clear there are many barriers to access that cannot be removed immediately. Stigma and the fear of discrimination prevent some people from coming forward for testing and diagnosis. A lack of understanding of the treatment and how it works leads others to interrupt or break off their therapy. For some expectant mothers the combination of cultural norms and lack of information discourages their use of Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission services (PMTCT).

Positive Action is promoting greater involvement of communities affected by AIDS in their healthcare services. This initiative is a new partnership between Positive Action and the Kenyan Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS, the African Medical and Research Foundation and the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

Based on the success of existing clinics that link outreach workers and patient groups to clinical services, the project aims to replicate this model throughout Kenya. Over three years, the partners will work with some 60 clinical sites and their communities to improve the quality of and access to healthcare services.



Calling for treatment and prevention

The need to balance HIV treatment and HIV prevention efforts is at the heart of a new project of the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO). With five million preventable new infections every year, the council and its member organisations recognise that while expanding access to treatment must be a priority, so too are effective prevention programmes. If the rate of new infections is not reduced then the current success shown in scaling up access to treatment will not be sustainable.

This project – supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Positive Action and the Canadian International Development Agency – aims to identify current gaps in prevention and treatment programming in ten countries with high HIV prevalence. It will develop the advocacy skills of AIDS organisations in those countries to secure more effective prevention and treatment programmes.





“More voices from more vulnerable and marginalised groups, which have been muted for so long, are finally being heard”

**DONALD DE GAGNÉ,
INTERNATIONAL AIDS
ADVOCATE**

Reaching vulnerable women in rural India

A project in rural India tackles the social factors that expose the population to the damaging effects of HIV and AIDS: the lack of information and education about the virus; the enormous stigma relating to HIV and AIDS; and the social and economic status of women.

In partnership with Catholic Relief Services and Freedom from Hunger, Positive Action’s Reach India is developing and disseminating an HIV and AIDS education curriculum. This will reach at least 2.5 million community members over the next three years. The numbers will grow to millions as the project trains hundreds of local organisations to facilitate the HIV and other education projects with self-help groups.



Understanding treatment options in Asia

In communities gaining access to HIV therapies for the first time, “treatment literacy” – or understanding how the treatment works and what choices it allows – is critical to maximising the benefits that treatment can bring.

In partnership with the American Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR), Positive Action is supporting TREATAsia, an amfAR network of clinics, hospitals and research institutions and patient support organisations to help communities prepare for the advent of new treatment programmes. This includes individual community projects in China, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam and the creation of an advocacy network across the region.



Strengthening communities to tackle HIV and AIDS

Positive Action projects are coordinated by established NGOs, but they are delivered in conjunction with small, community-based or grassroots organisations – groups whose members and service users are the very people Positive Action was created to help.

These projects, which typically run from three to five years, are designed to have real and lasting impact on individuals and their communities. This is best achieved by working with – and strengthening – small organisations so that the local benefits will remain, long after the project has come to an end.

Positive Action has ...

- supported **43** projects in **36** countries around the world in partnership with **37** organisations since 2003
- established a new education project that will reach **500,000** women and **2.5 million** family members in rural India over the next three years
- trained **8,000** community and healthcare workers in East Africa
- introduced education on blood-borne disease prevention to **79,000** inmates in **200** UK prisons
- provided **8,500** healthcare professionals with access to HIV and AIDS healthcare training toolkits in **173** countries
- supported the participation of **40,000** community delegates at regional and international AIDS conferences

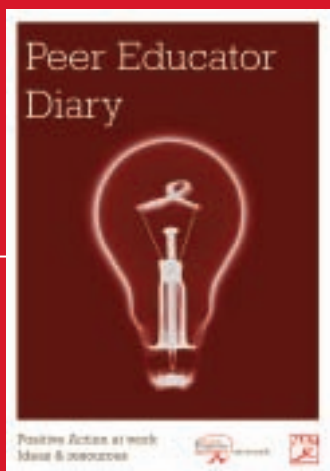
Positive Action around the world

Accredited HIV education for prisons (+VE): the development and promotion of the CHASE (Community Health Advice Support and Education) information kit for HIV and AIDS education for prisoners and prison staff

AIDS Action Europe (AAE): strengthening knowledge, expertise and information exchange among AIDS-related NGOs and CBOs in Western, Central and Eastern Europe

Strengthening groups of people living with HIV and AIDS (Centre for African Family Studies): building the expertise of small community organisations and strengthening organised networks of people living with HIV and AIDS in Ethiopia, Kenya and Togo

Positive Action at work (NAT): providing workplace toolkits to encourage peer education to tackle HIV and AIDS stigma for organisations operating in countries of high prevalence



Supporting Latin American HIV and AIDS information (GIPV): providing the only AIDS-related publications for people living with HIV and AIDS in six countries

Research and toolkit to tackle stigma (International Center for Research on Women): active research into HIV-related stigma in Africa and Vietnam and the creation of a stigma toolkit for community-based education and training

Making technical information accessible (NAM): sharing HIV treatment and care learning, materials and best practice in resource-limited countries, in print and on the internet

Challenging the social exclusion of young people affected by HIV/AIDS (SEYPA): changing responses to stigma by creating an informed network of young people affected by HIV and AIDS that advocate their rights to fair and equal access to services

Support for AIDS conferences: Positive Action funding for activities at regional and international AIDS conferences enables community-based organisations to interact and share their work with others at the forefront of AIDS research

Websites

For information on GlaxoSmithKline, its Global Community Partnerships or the Positive Action programme visit www.gsk.com or www.positiveaction.com

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