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1) GYCA Living Positively Section

Members of GYCA who are living positively have come together to create a resource for their peers that will increase the participation of Young People Living With HIV (YPLWH) in decision-making that affects their lives. Despite the debilitating effects of HIV/AIDS, YPLWH are taking action in their communities and evidence shows that they are most effective at changing the risk behaviors of their peers and at shaping a better future for themselves.

“Living Positively” is initially being launched through an international e-group and a Web site profiling exceptional young leaders living with HIV. YPLWH have started researching and compiling resources that will inform other YPLWH about their rights, disclosure, stigma and discrimination, psychosocial issues, secondary prevention, access to services, and more.

“Living Positively” is an outcome of the WHO and UNICEF Global Consultation on Strengthening the Health Sector Contribution to Care, Support, Treatment and Prevention for YLWHA, Blantyre, Malawi, in November, 2006. YPLWH were invited to work with health care providers and advocates to synthesize the physical and psychosocial needs for care, support, treatment and prevention for YPLWH. Participants focused on increasing access to medicines, treatment maintenance and adherence, and developing consensus on key elements of care, support, treatment and prevention for YPLWH. Recommendations included strengthening linkages between the health sector and other areas that will enhance the delivery and effectiveness of services, and the involvement of young people. Visit the Living Positively section at: <http://www.youthaidscoalition.org/living.html>

2) World AIDS Day Report

We are pleased to share with you GYCA's World AIDS Day 2006 Report! Members hosted 50 events on Dec. 1,

2006, in 30 countries. Not all members who hosted events sent in pictures or reports, and we were unable to include all information provided due to length. The organizer's contact details are listed in the report if you seek more information. Download the report on the GYCA website at: <http://www.youthaidscoalition.org/>.

Highlights include:

- Two month informational campaign called “wAds2006” in Tokyo, Japan;
- Sensitization and awareness campaigns in 52 schools, universities, companies and health centers in Cameroon;
- MTV Staying Alive 48 Fest Film screening at the University of Calgary, Canada with over 40 youth attending;
- Workshop of 519 community members in Canada with exhibition of ‘peace tiles’ made by Indian HIV+ network;
- HIV/AIDS conference for over 150 students of the Protestant University in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo;
- HIV/AIDS discussion and information session in Egypt;
- Three kilometer procession followed by a meeting at a community center in Nairobi, Kenya;
- Multiple events organized in Skopje, Macedonia, in high schools, shopping malls and on television;
- Seminar of over 200 people on the current HIV/AIDS situation in Nepal;
- Various events throughout the UK and Canada by Dignitas Youth Chapters which raised over \$2000 for HIV awareness and education in schools;
- A vigil in Katmandu, Nepal with over 1500 students;
- AIDS sensitization campaign, statewide rally, lectures for the health care worker, school visits, march to national assembly, and more in Nigeria;
- Community forum of 400 members in Lahore, Pakistan;
- Local gathering with various activities in Butare, Rwanda;
- Two week festival in Togo with over 20,000 people from 5 villages;
- Networking session of 40 people to discuss the social, medical and economic determinants of HIV/AIDS at University of Ottawa, Canada;



wAds2006 Japan

- Local gathering with 90 activists from the Tachira state in Venezuela.



Igbinedion University students awareness march in Nigeria

3) National Focal Point Applications

In addition to GYCA's 12 Regional Focal Points, GYCA is currently recruiting 2007 National Focal Points (NFPs). Please look at the principle functions, duties and responsibilities, criteria for application and benefits if you are interested in applying. The term for the position is from Feb – Dec 2007. Contact your RFP for more information about this process and for the application form. We look forward to receiving them! A list of RFPs can be found below and on the website at <http://www.youthaidscoalition.org>

Deadline: Friday, February 16th, 2007. Applications should be sent to your respective RFP.

4) Introducing GYCA RFPs 2007

After reviewing over 135 applications, a selection committee of GYCA Taskforce members selected 11 Regional Focal Points (RFPs). Congratulations! The new RFPs will be solidifying regional teams, selecting and managing National Focal Points (NFPs), mapping youth HIV/AIDS initiatives in their regions, reaching out to marginalized youth, following up with commitments made by adults at the XVI International AIDS Conference in August 2006, and more. We are pleased to announce our RFPs for the year 2007!

Ramy Nasr (Egypt – Middle East & North Africa)

Ramy, 22, is a medical student who has been working and volunteering in the field of HIV/AIDS for over four years.



He started working with International Federation for Medical Students' Association where he completed a leadership training program. He then worked with Global Youth Partners, where he and his colleagues succeeded in establishing youth-adult partnerships with governmental sectors, private sectors and UN agencies, and securing funds for GYP activities. Ramy attended the UNGASS +5 Review and Youth Summit at the UN in New York, where he presented at a UN Church Center dialogue with Church Leaders and was also interviewed on UN radio in June 2006.

After successfully completing the GYCA Political Advocacy e-course, Ramy initiated and coordinated a campaign that aims at fighting Female Genital Mutilation in Egypt. The first step of the campaign is to conduct narrative research on knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. Ramy's campaign is supported by the National Democratic Party, and has both the financial and technical support of the Arab League and Pan-Arab Project for Family Health. Ramy was also a speaker in the XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto at a leadership session where he spoke about connecting youth globally and gave recommendations to youth, civil society and the government. He was also a co-facilitator in a pre-conference session named "Intricacies of the Virus." (ramy@youthaidscoalition.org)

Miodrada Stefanovska (Macedonia – Eastern Europe & Central Asia)

Miodraga, 23, has over nine years of experience working on health and social education with a special focus on AIDS prevention in Macedonia and internationally. After graduating from St. Cyril and Metodij University in Skopje, she now works as a consultant, offering services in a range of areas relating to health and social development. She represented Macedonia at the UNGASS-Children and HIV/AIDS session in New York, 2002 and also joined high-level sessions at the XVI International AIDS Conference in August 2006. Her recent activities include supporting the development and implementation of a successful proposal to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) for Macedonia and a National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS (2007-2011), participation in a review of HIV/AIDS country analysis UN HIV/AIDS Team Group, UNICEF consultant on



VCCT for young women and girls, and compiling a toolkit for work with peer educators, students and teachers. As a member of the executive board of Macedonia's oldest NGO, MIA (Association for Health Promotion and Education), she provides strategic leadership to over 11 NGOs with a primary focus on building their capacity on health and social communications and promoting HIV/AIDS prevention among MARA in Macedonia. (miodraga@youthaidscoalition.org)

Kolawole Oreoluwa (Nigeria – West Africa)

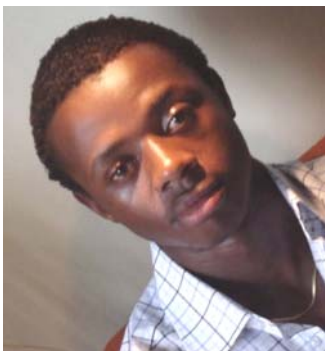


Kolawole, 22, is a trained videographer and photographer, youth peer health educator and activist with over eight years experience in youth development programs. He focuses on behavior change communication strategy, edutainment, training and capacity building, development and implementation of feasible and interactive youth-friendly

development programs. His interest in adolescent/youth sexual and reproductive health and rights, and HIV/AIDS prevention among LGBTQ youth began during his secondary school days when he volunteered for the Youth Rescue Club in Nigeria. Kolawole has a National Diploma in Public Administration from Osun State Polytechnic Iree and is currently the Program Director of Youth Action for Development (YAD), Nigeria, and a member of a number of youth led networks and coalitions.

(kolawole@youthaidscoalition.org)

Jean Claude Dusingize (Rwanda – Central Africa)



Jean Claude, 26, is a fifth year medical student at the National University of Rwanda. He focuses on HIV/AIDS awareness, and reproductive health and family planning within the Rwanda Village Concept Project. Claude is an experienced peer educator and has been working with young people living in rural areas

since 2003, advocating for poverty reduction and the prevention of HIV/AIDS among youth. He helped create the youth association called AntiAIDS Clubs and is also the co-founder of various projects such as EGP, a student

project that teaches reproductive health and AIDS education in secondary schools, and Rwandanmark, a project that teaches women about family planning.

Claude has participated in trainings on interactive teaching, project management, fundraising, leadership and peer education in sexual and reproductive health and rights. He presented at the Community Dialogue Space about strategies that his organization is using to respond to HIV/AIDS in rural settings at the XVI International AIDS Conference. Claude was also among 48 participants selected to make a film on HIV/AIDS at the MTV 48 Fest 2006 Staying Alive Team. These films were educational tools on HIV/AIDS awareness and he was awarded an MTV48 2006 Medal for his work. Claude participated in the 7th Standing Committee on Reproductive Health including AIDS (SCORA) Exchange on HIV prevention and treatment strategies in Sweden from September – October 2006, where he attended many lectures and seminars on the issue of HIV/AIDS. (jeanclaude@youthaidscoalition.org)

Stephen Kasoma (Uganda – East Africa)



Stephen, 23, is an ITMC holder from the New Jersey Institute of Technology and now works with Straight Talk Foundation in Kampala, Uganda as the IT assistant. He is an active member of other youth networks including UNICEF Voices of Youth, Advocates for Youth, Network for Adolescents and Youth of Africa (as Straight Talk Foundation's focal point.) Stephen has four years of experience in HIV/AIDS work, working with youth both in and out of school, in urban and rural areas within Uganda, including those directly affected by the rebel activities in the northern part of the country.

He has skills in Project Management and Political Advocacy, attained through GYCA e-courses. Stephen has been a speaker at a number of conferences including the International Students Conference on HIV/AIDS (ISCA 2005), where he presented a paper on "AIDS and the Youth: What they know and what they need to know." He has also presented at the BARA University Students' Campaign, speaking on "Giving university students methods that work in the fight against HIV," and at Highway to Africa in 2006, titled "The Vulnerability of Youth to HIV". Stephen was also a youth representative on



Uganda's delegation to UNGASS 2006. (Stephen@youthaidscoalition.org)

Muwoli Mvula (Zambia – Southern Africa)

Muwoli, 25, works with Students Partnership Worldwide (SPW), an international but locally registered NGO working in collaboration with the Zambian Ministry of Education on school-based sexual reproductive health and life skills education. SPW works with the untapped human resource of young Zambian school-leavers who are trained to do voluntary placements of up to nine months in rural school communities. Muwoli started as a field officer and is currently working as a program coordinator at SPW. She spent seven months in the UK working with SPW UK as a campaign and advocacy officer, learning from young UK advocates on diverse issues in international development. Upon returning, she has been exploring ways of engaging young Zambians to advocate on issues that affect them and their society. Muwoli is now based out of Lusaka, and is focusing on initiating strategic partnerships and relationships relevant to her advocacy work. (muwoli@youthaidscoalition.org)



Tsutomu Nemoto (Japan – Asia Pacific)

Tsutomu, 25, was previously the National Focal Point for GYCA – Asia Pacific. He coordinated GYCA activities in Japan, wrote a National Youth Shadow Report on Japan's progress toward youth and HIV/AIDS for UNGASS+5, and was also the first youth in the Japanese national delegation. Tsutomu has been a peer educator in Tokyo for over four years and has facilitated a number of workshops in both Japanese and English. He recognizes himself as gay/MSM, and focuses on general youth health including the gay/MSM population. In 2005, Tsutomu had the opportunity to become involved with a youth cafe event as Master of Ceremony (MC) at the 7th International Conference on HIV/AIDS in Asia and Pacific regions (ICAAP7) held in Kobe, Japan. Tsutomu also participated in the youth pre-conference in Toronto and the main XVI International AIDS Conference 2006. Upon



returning to Japan, Tsutomu co-chaired and helped spearhead a huge campaign called 'WADS' (World AIDS Day Series), where local youth held WAD activities including a campaign that lasted two months from Oct. 27th – Dec. 21st, 2006 comprising of 32 events, ranging from AIDS awareness raising clubs, condom distribution throughout Tokyo, international visual symposiums, and focused media coverage on HIV/AIDS. As a result, Tsutomu and his colleagues collected the voices of over 2000 Japanese youth who were unsatisfied with what they learned in public education with regard to sex and HIV/AIDS. Tsutomu has worked for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Tokyo in the Public Relations Unit. He also worked at World Vision Japan and is currently working at the African-Japan Forum. Tsutomu has a Bachelors degree in International Relations from the University of Tsukuba. He speaks English, Japanese and intermediate Spanish. (tsutomu@youthaidscoalition.org)

Rayonne Pile (Guyana – Caribbean)

Rayonne, 24, obtained a B.A. in Peace Studies from the American University of Peace Studies in 2004. He then joined the American University of Peace Studies in August, 2004 as a Senior Instructor and was soon appointed to the Board of Directors. Rayonne also serves as Program Director of the HIV/AIDS Research Department of the University, where he has demonstrated significant expertise in the area of research and training with the development of a practical conflict resolution program. Currently, a comprehensive program is being executed to monitor and evaluate the national and regional plans for HIV/AIDS related projects and the critical next steps to curve the spread of the disease and promote effective educational programs particularly for youth.



Rayonne has been active in youth activities at GuyberNet, where he was instrumental in the organizing of GuyberClub, a youth organization that engaged youths in national deliberations. Rayonne participated in the National Youth Day activities and volunteered as a UN representative through its international Year of the Volunteer, after which he was appointed an executive member of the United Nations Associations of Guyana. Rayonne directed its Committee on Youth and Education for two years. He is engaged in the planning of youth led



activities in Guyana, serving presently as President of the Youth Peace Council Volunteer Corps, providing technical assistance to various groups on HIV/AIDS related project planning. Rayonne is also part of the national team working on HIV/AIDS related activities. Rayonne recently participated in the Caribbean Youth Dialogue, which followed the XVI International AIDS Conference.

Ricardo Baruch (Mexico – Latin America)



Ricardo, 22, is a Political Science student at the Autonomical University in Puebla, Mexico. He has been an activist for sexual and reproductive rights in Mexico for over seven years and is currently working in civil organizations that focus on sexual diversity, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS

prevention, including Alpha Youth and the Mexican Foundation for the Planned Parenthood MEXFAM - Young People. He also works in two national networks, the National DEMYSEX Network for NGO's working on sexuality issues and the Task Force for HIV/AIDS prevention among gay men and men who have sex with men. He was the coordinator and co-founder of the youth group "Juventud Alpha," the first juvenile national group for LGBT young people. There he developed two projects focused on preventing the transmission of HIV/AIDS among gays and MSM.

Ricardo also collaborates with an organizational member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the Mexican Foundation for Family Planning, where he has managed, developed and worked locally and nationally with projects that empower young people in issues such as contraception and the prevention of STIs. Ricardo has been a member of the regional and national councils of the Ministry of Health for HIV/AIDS representing the youth sector. During the past three years, he has advocated for the modification of laws against discrimination of the LGBT and PLWHA communities in Mexico. He also fights for universal access to ARVs and medical care. Ricardo was selected as the youth delegate for the delegation of the Government of México for the UNGASS AIDS 2006 Review Meeting in New York, and also attended the XVI International AIDS Conference, where he was an active

member of the Toronto Youth Force and participated as a speaker at three sessions at the main conference.

Ishwarchandra Haobam (India – South Asia)



Ishwarchandra, 26, does in depth work in the harm reduction community motivated by his experiences as an ex-drug user from Manipur, India. He has been off drugs since 1999, and started doing grassroots work in the HIV/AIDS field seven years ago. Ishwarchandra graduated from Manipur University and has worked as an outreach worker in a harm reduction project, a counselor in a care and support project and the project coordinator in a study for exploring the link of sexual behavior among young female injecting drug users in two districts of Manipur. He is currently a Project Coordinator in a harm reduction project supported by AVAHAN (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). Previously, Ishwarchandra had the opportunity to participate as an Indian youth ambassador in a seven month long International Youth Exchange Program between India and Canada (2001-2002). He also attended the 2004 OXFAM International Youth Parliament in Sydney, Australia, where he presented an action plan on "Youth and HIV/AIDS in Manipur." He traveled to the 7th ICAAP last year in Kobe, Japan, as the only Indian youth, where he presented a paper on the need for advocacy for an effective implementation of harm reduction programs among and from IDUs in Manipur. Ishwarchandra has attended trainings and workshops conducted by various organizations and international agencies. Ishwarchandra also played a significant role in drafting a policy on children affected and infected by HIV/AIDS in Manipur.

Marco Gomes (Canada – North America)



Marco, 27, has been living with HIV for over four years and is committed to advocating for YLWHA issues. He was the first youth to be selected for the Canadian Treatment Action Council in 2006, where he was voted onto the Special Youth Seat, representing the province of Ontario. Marco



participated in the XVI International AIDS conference as a panel discussion speaker, presenter of an abstract, and participated in a documentary that followed five adults and one youth through the conference. Marco was also invited by WHO/UNICEF to Malawi in November 2006 as a youth recipient to participate in a consultation for "Strengthening the Health Sector Contribution to Care, Support, Treatment and Prevention for YPLWH." He participates in the Ontario Vaccine/Prevention Technology Trials Network as a youth steering committee member. He is also spearheading the new GYCA initiative for and by YPLWH, "Living Positively." He is on an advisory committee for Positive Youth Outreach (PYO) and a board member of Peel HIV and AIDS, where he moderates youth discussion sites that speak about HIV/AIDS from a youth perspective. He also volunteers for the AIDS Committee of Toronto doing outreach in the Portuguese community and fundraising for youth events. Marco is a resource person for www.livepositive.ca, a site that was implemented and developed by and for youth living with HIV/AIDS in Canada. He is currently pursuing a health policy certificate, after which he intends on working within the community of youth initiative programs to combat prevalence rates of youth MSM. Marco speaks English, French and Portuguese. (marco@youthaidscoalition.org)

RFP for Western Europe: TBA! If you are located in Western Europe and are interested in applying to be an RFP, contact Caitlin – caitlin@youthaidscoalition.org

5) E-courses

GYCA is currently offering the **Political Advocacy e-course** from Jan. 22nd – Feb. 19th. GYCA will continue to offer free monthly e-courses in 2007; please visit www.youthaidscoalition.org for information on how to apply. Calls for applications are sent over the GYCA list serve one week before the application deadline. Please contact Caitlin - caitlin@youthaidscoalition.org - if you have any questions. Dates:

E-course	Dates – 2007
Project Management	Feb 13 – March 16
Grant Proposal Writing and Fundraising	Feb 28 – March 21
Political Advocacy	March 19 – April 18

GYCA is constantly seeking to help e-course alumni implement their projects, grants and political advocacy strategies. If you are an e-course alumni interested in

advising us on how to better serve you, please e-mail Kate - kate@youthaidscoalition.org.

E-Course Graduates Report Back!

- While most E-course participants create HIV-focused project plans, occasionally a participant chooses to pursue a project focused on one of the root causes of HIV/AIDS, such as poverty and gender inequality. In Pakistan, Hassan Nacir Mirani, age 23, created a final project plan from GYCA's Project Management E-Course in the fall of 2006 entitled, *"Improving HIV/AIDS Knowledge among Literacy Participants in Kalarsydan Tehsil District Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan."* Hassan currently works with the Cavish Development Foundation, a national NGO that runs a community empowerment project that focuses on improving literacy rates through 23 "literacy circles." The circles train primarily women participants to read and write.

Hassan's project seeks to expand upon these well-attended literacy circles by incorporating an HIV/AIDS prevention and information curriculum into the sessions. Under his project, three HIV/AIDS education modules will be prepared. Literacy circle facilitators, both male and female, will be trained to teach the modules and will then lead them in their circles. Hassan aims to educate 200 women on modes of HIV transmission, prevention, treatment, and anti-stigma and discrimination training throughout the two month run of his project. If the project is successful, he hopes to expand it beyond the Rawalpindi community.

- In fall 2006, Adu Adjei Danquah of Ghana, age 23, developed a plan to train 100 women in the Bibiani community in snail production. Adu's project aims to empower the women economically with a feasible income-generating skill. All of the women Adu's project targets are currently living below the poverty line, with an income of approximately €700,000 (\$75) per year. The women work at farms part-time to generate this small income. Adu chose snail production because snails are a staple food in Bibiani, and also because community members supported the idea. Adu expects his project to run for one year.
- In the December 2006 Grant Writing and Fundraising e-course, Phindile Nhleko, age 25, of Swaziland worked to create a grant proposal for her organization, the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW). Phindile is seeking to fund a program of the ICW, *"Positive Women Monitoring Change"* which operates in four regions of Swaziland to inform women living positively of their treatment, support and care options, as

well as their sexual and reproductive health rights. The program also involves HIV positive women in advocacy efforts to ensure the government adheres to treatment commitments, and helps women living positively to become involved in programs that affect them.

Other ongoing GYCA e-course projects include:

- Training clinics to be youth-friendly in Nigeria,
- Outreach to vulnerable youth in the slum areas of Lilongwe, Malawi with information on HIV prevention,
- A talent show in AIDS orphanages in Mombasa, Kenya,
- Utilizing drama to facilitate peace-building in Belgrade, Serbia, and Montenegro,
- A program that re-habilitates street children in Port-au-Prince, Haiti,
- A plan to change the risky sexual behaviors of 25 youth in Sophie, Guyana,
- And a plan to provide school uniforms, supplies and meals for AIDS orphans in Burundi.

6) Youth Network for Harm Reduction

GYCA is supporting young people working in harm reduction to start the International Youth Harm Reduction Network. GYCA members will be presenting at the Youth Network Satellite meeting, which coincides with the 18th International Conference for Drug-Related Harm in Warsaw, Poland, May 13-17 (<http://www.harmreduction2007.org/>).

The network seeks to build the capacity of young people addressing drug-related harm in their countries. Given the growing rates of HIV infection among young people due to injecting drug use, and the multiple other harms, risks and barriers youth face with regards to drug-related harms, the hope is to engage young people in the decision-making process to develop effective interventions for their peer groups. This is a call for young people between the ages of 18 – 26 who already have experience in harm reduction and drug policy to participate and to help shape the vision, goals and priorities of the network from a global perspective.

Some basic criteria outlined: (not all are required)

- Working or participating in harm reduction programs or initiatives (this could include alcohol reduction programs, syringe exchanges, peer education, and anything that is working towards reducing the harms associated with substance use);

- Basic knowledge of harm reduction philosophy and a desire to learn more;
- Working to reduce drug or alcohol-related harm to young people;
- HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis C prevention, treatment or support;
- Current or former self-identified drug user;
- Current or former street-involvement or homelessness.

Those that fulfill some of the criteria above or know someone who might be interested should contact Caitlin Padgett – youthnet4hr@yahoo.ca.

7) Living Positively – Interviewing Precious Shongwe



“Being HIV positive has not stopped me from realizing my dreams. Everyone I know is aware of my status and has been very supportive. I want to be remembered for the love and care for people living with HIV and will continue to fight for the rights of young people living with HIV/AIDS,” says 23 year-old Precious Shongwe from Swaziland.

How I got infected – I met my boyfriend when I was a virgin, and we finally made love after a year of dating. I never thought he was HIV positive and we ended up having unprotected sex. I felt very guilty, especially when a week later I got an STI and received treatment. After six months, in 2003, I went for an HIV test that came back positive. Initially I felt shaken and confused, but I know that life goes on regardless of my status.

It was very hard to tell my family about my health. I told my father and aunt this year but it was very hard for me to tell my mother because she has a negative attitude towards HIV issues.

Living With HIV – Being HIV positive has not affected my attitude. Instead it has brought some direction in my life with respect to who I am and what I want to be in future. I am a very sociable person and am currently working as an HIV counselor. My friends have been very supportive and I also joined a support group where I share my ideas and thoughts, which lessens the burden I initially



felt. I did not blame myself or anyone else for my status, and that has helped me a lot. I also do not allow myself to get stressed regardless of the challenges that I face being HIV positive. I am not on any ARVs yet and am living my life as a normal person.

Goals and Aspirations – There is nothing that I was doing before I tested positively that I cannot do now. Previously I was a peer educator on a voluntary basis and now I am an HIV/AIDS counselor, and that to me is a great achievement. I aspire to be a chartered accountant and am working on raising enough money to make sure this dream comes true. However, the main obstacle is finances since I have to raise enough funds for school. My family also relies on me for support and this is hard since I have a very low income. I understand that this can be an obstacle to realizing my dream.

I think behavioral change is the main tool to halt the spread of the HIV virus. People know the facts about HIV and the only thing needed is for everyone to change his/her behavior and be positive about life irregardless of their HIV status. Empowering young people can help a lot because they are the pillars of every country and are vibrant and energetic. This can be done in many ways, for example, supporting them in starting their own businesses, training them in peer health education, etc.

Facing Stigma – I would not say that I have faced stigma. Instead, my friends were giving me unnecessary attention and I felt like I was sick and not very independent at all. Although I understand that this was out of love and concern, the main problem was that it was catching other people's attention.

Young people should be engaged in income generating projects, since a majority of young people, especially in rural areas, are vulnerable because they are not working/schooling and are at risk of getting into prostitution and so on, which puts them at high risk of contracting HIV. Stakeholders should make trainings available for young people, for example, peer education and counseling, so they can help each other out. Support groups for young people would also be helpful and fruitful.

Role Models – My father is my role model because he is patient and humble, and stays calm and positive even if the situation seems to be bleak.

Advice for Other Young People – Young people should disclose their status, but should also be aware of the challenges that come with disclosure. I would recommend them to first seek proper counseling before letting others know about their status. Disclosing does help as a coping mechanism and reduces stress level not only for people who are positive, but also those who are affected by HIV/AIDS. To be able to live positively you need talk to someone who can understand your feelings and situation. I would also emphasize in joining support groups because that is where you get to learn how and when to disclose your status. It teaches you a lot about yourself and about the people around you that will support you in case of discrimination or any future challenges.



If you have information or material that is HIV/AIDS and youth focused, or if you know of any excellent examples of people working in HIV/AIDS intervention in your country and think they should be highlighted in our newsletter, please submit their information to info@youthaidscoalition.org.

Join GYCA by subscribing to GYCA's partner organization TakingITGlobal at www.takingitglobal.org and then sending a blank email to: gyca-subscribe@groups.takingitglobal.org.