

## **MSMGF Quarterly Report – October 15, 2010**

### **I. ADVOCACY**

#### **MSM and HIV Advocacy Toolkit**

In July, the MSMGF conducted the first pilot trainings of its new MSM and HIV advocacy toolkit. A total of 23 participants from 14 different countries took part in these sessions. Comments and feedback were subsequently integrated into the toolkit, and the Global Forum was invited by the Levi-Strauss Foundation to submit a grant proposal to see this project through to its next phase of regional training and adaptation.

#### **Commonwealth Law Conference**

The 2011 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) is slated to take place in Perth, Australia. The hosting government has a major role in setting the meeting agenda, and the MSMGF has partnered with the International HIV/AIDS Alliance and the Commonwealth HIV/AIDS Action Group (CHAAG) to advocate for the inclusion of discussion points on the repeal of laws criminalizing same-sex acts. Initial advocacy planning took place face-to-face in Vienna in mid-July, and additional efforts (including edits on an issue discussion paper and advocacy to other Commonwealth governments) have been ongoing.

#### **Judicial Leaders Network**

Criminal laws against same sex acts currently exist in 76 countries in the world, five of which include the death penalty (Iran, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen, as well as some parts of Nigeria and Somalia). Draconian legal environments hinder the HIV response, driving MSM underground and making it difficult to reach them with the information and services they may need. In October, the MSMGF with support from UNDP brought together an initial meeting of 3 Supreme Court Justices from 3 different countries to discuss the possible formation of a network on human rights, HIV and sexual orientation and gender identity.

#### **Advocacy for Millennium Development Goals**

The United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Summit that took place in New York in mid-September was an important opportunity to bring HIV and MSM advocacy to a global stage. In the months leading up to the meeting, the MSMGF collaborated with other HIV civil society groups to develop a briefing paper on HIV and human rights. This paper was then used as a background document to support a June face-to-face meeting of HIV advocates in New York (supported by UNAIDS and the Ford Foundation), in which participants produced a set of HIV-specific recommendations for the 'outcome document' of the MDG summit.

#### **Human Rights Crises – Nepal, China, Uganda**

A recent spate of human rights violations against MSM provoked analysis and action by the MSMGF. Statements were issued on: (a) Protests in Nepal against government failure to issue third-gender identification cards to transgender people (as accordance with a Supreme Court ruling), and (b) arrests and forced HIV testing of gay men at a public park in China. In addition, an

anti-gay 'outing' campaign by a tabloid in Uganda featured photos, names, and other personal information of 'top homosexuals', but input and analysis by partners on the ground counseled the MSMGF *not to* issue a statement. Additional publicity would bring more unwanted attention to the publication, which was anticipated to have a negative impact on local sexual minorities. The MSMGF did pass along the information to the U.S. State Department and is continuing to monitor the situation.

### **MSM Community Event**

The MSMGF is in discussions with UNAIDS, the MSM Policy Working Group and other organizations about a possible community event on Human Rights Day (December 10th). The MSMGF has held a congressional briefing in September for the past two years to raise awareness of critical advances in HIV among MSM. Considering that mid-term elections in the U.S. Congress have brought many decision makers out of D.C., the MSMGF believes a community event may be a more constructive initiative at this time. This meeting would potentially be a platform for promoting the new PEPFAR MSM guidance, which should hopefully have been released by that time. The MSMGF is also looking at this opportunity as a potential mechanism for sharing new data on the MSM prevention survey carried out by the MSMGF this summer.

### **Working with MSM in South Korea**

The HIV epidemic in South Korea is overwhelmingly concentrated among MSM but the government is extremely reluctant to acknowledge the extent of the epidemic's impact in this community. Moreover, the rate of suicide upon receipt of a positive HIV test result is reportedly quite high. MSMGF Co-Chair, Don Baxter, in partnership with Steven Gu at APCOM, Stuart Koe at Fridae.com, and UNAIDS have begun engaging South Korean MSM activists. APCOM will be holding a 'Developed Asia Network' meeting in December to which some South Korean MSM activists have been invited. This work is a lead up to next year's ICAAP conference which will be held in South Korea.

### **Advocacy for Transgender People**

The MSMGF continues its advocacy for transgender people by leading and supporting a variety of stakeholder communications with regional and global transgender advocates, experts and networks.

At the MSMGF pre-conference event Be Heard! in Vienna on July 17, 2010, JoAnne Keatley, Director – Center for Excellence for Transgender Health at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF), USA was invited to lead a session titled "HIV and AIDS among Transgender Populations: Global Challenges and Strategies for Effective Intervention Development". This session aimed at providing an international and multidimensional review of HIV risk and social and cultural issues among transgender people, covering specific topics such as global epidemiology, regional community advocacy, social stigma and gender transition and adaptation. Keatley led an international panel of experts that included Amitava Sarkar (India), Marcela Romero (Argentina), Paty Betancourt (Mexico) and Manisha Dhakal (Nepal).

The MSMGF in collaboration with JoAnne Keatley (UCSF) hosted a second two-hour session at the Global Village of the International AIDS Conference 2010. This session, led by Keatley, was



attended by a group of 22 transgender advocates from around the world. The participants engaged in a thoughtful discussion concerning advocacy, financing and global networking pertinent to transgender communities.

In September, a number of transgender activists were arrested in Nepal following a peaceful protest concerning a severe delay in the federal government's provision of transgender identity cards. The MSMGF provided timely support by speaking with activists both from Nepal and other parts of Asia, responding with a position statement calling for solidarity against the denial of basic civil rights for transgender people. Throughout this process, the MSMGF consulted and solicited input from key thought leaders and transgender activists from Asia and North America.

With guidance from JoAnne Keatley (UCSF), Justus Einfeld (Global Advocates for Trans Equality, GATE) and Mauro Cabral (GATE), the MSMGF will begin recruiting representatives from key regional transgender networks to form a new MSMGF Transgender Reference Group. This reference group will provide the MSMGF with strategic advice and counsel on issues of concern to the global transgender community on a regular basis.

## **II. COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

### **Media Coverage of the MSMGF Pre-Conference in Vienna**

The MSMGF successfully implemented its media strategy at the International AIDS Conference in Vienna. The total number of media hits for the pre-conference was 57 (39 original pieces written). Of these, 56 mention the MSMGF by name. The total number of media hits for the Vienna conference is a 78% increase over the Mexico City conference (32 hits total for that conference), and an over 200% increase in articles that mentioned the MSMGF by name (18 total for that conference). Hits included major media outlets such as Scientific American, Mail & Guardian and The Advocate.

In addition to media outreach for the Pre-Conference, the MSMGF held a press conference focused on the global HIV epidemic among MSM. It was well-attended, with between 20 and 30 journalists observing, and generated substantial media coverage.

### **MSMGF Expands its Distribution Capacity**

By working with our Steering Committee members and our partner organizations abroad, we have built robust media distribution lists in French, Spanish and Portuguese. *Sense* was launched in mid-September and received significant attention in numerous major topical publications in each language, including Yagg.com, Mirada Latina, and Google News.

In the past quarter, the MSMGF has drafted and/or edited numerous press releases, position statements, and articles. The MSMGF's statements are regularly picked up in major topical outlets including TheBody.com, UK Gay News, and others. Recent statements and articles include:

- The MSMGF calls on Nepal's Home Ministry to issue citizenship cards to transgender people and metis in accordance with 2007 Supreme Court ruling



- Arbitrary Arrests of Gay Men in China Violate Human Rights, Undermine Effective HIV Prevention and Treatment
- The Global Forum on MSM & HIV Stands with Global HIV Advocates in Congratulating CAPRISA on Prevention Breakthrough
- New Publication Transcends Language Barriers to Share Untold Stories of Gay Men Living with HIV around the World
- Groundbreaking Johns Hopkins—World Bank Survey Reveals Devastating Global HIV Epidemic among Gay Men, Global Health Leaders Call for Urgent Action Against Homophobia and Anti-Gay Legislation
- Global Leaders: End to Homophobia and Human Rights Abuses at MSM Pre-Conference
- Finding Our Global Voice

### **MSMGF.org 2.0 is Launched**

The new incarnation of the MSMGF's website, [www.msmsgf.org](http://www.msmsgf.org), was launched in early August and was very well-received. Fully available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish, the website represents an important tool for information exchange and collaboration among a diverse and multilingual constituency.

- New features of the website include:
  - A robust suite of translation options for content
  - Seven interactive listservs, one for each target language
  - Database of quotes and statistics
  - Social networking component
  - Take Action! system for advocacy and action alerts
  - Directory of member organizations
  - Interactive events and deadlines calendar
  - MSMGF Survey Panel: a ready body of volunteers who are interested in participating in research conducted by the MSMGF or its partners (already utilized for the WHO project)
  - MSMGF Volunteer Corps: a ready body of volunteers interested in various support projects for the MSMGF (already utilized to translate articles voted for translation by MSMGF members)

### **Online Information Exchange Gets a Boost**

We have stepped up our daily information exchange activities by enhancing our efforts to gather and circulate the latest information on the health and human rights of MSM around the world. Members of the MSMGF are now given the option to receive daily or weekly updates in any one of our seven target languages. In addition, our new member database has also given us the ability to segment our membership by region and characteristic to reach out to specific populations with information that is directly relevant to them.



## **MSMGF Membership**

More than 1,200 members from over 120 countries were carried over from our previous mailing list before we launched [www.msmgf.org](http://www.msmgf.org) 2.0 in August. Since then, more than 500 new members have joined, many of whom use the website in languages other than English. We have also cultivated a strong following on Facebook and Twitter by posting at least once a day on Facebook and nearly 8 times a day on Twitter. We currently have more than 1,200 Facebook followers and around 250 Twitter followers, allowing us to expand our reach past our website's formal membership.

## **MSMGF Partners with Community-based Translators**

Contracts were signed with six community-based organizations abroad to carry out translation services to support the MSMGF's daily information exchange activities. These organizations are Alternatives Cameroun (Cameroon, for French), menZDRAV Foundation (Russia, for Russian), Helem (Lebanon, for Arabic), Grupo Dignidade (Brazil, for Portuguese), China HIV/AIDS Information Network, CHAIN (China, for Chinese), and Epicentro (Peru, for Spanish). Our partnerships with these organizations have allowed us to produce our Daily Digest updates fluidly in each language. These partnerships have also afforded us the ability to quickly translate statements, opportunities, and other important information within a 24 hour period with high quality at low cost.

## **Catalogue of AIDS 2010 Abstracts is Available on [msmgf.org](http://msmgf.org)**

The MSMGF produced a Catalogue of Abstracts on MSM and Transgender Issues at AIDS 2010, which is fully searchable by country and by topic. This catalogue has been translated into Chinese, Spanish and Portuguese. Arabic, Russian, and French translations are nearly completed. This service has been very well-received.

## **UNGASS Indicators Available on [msmgf.org](http://msmgf.org)**

MSMGF Staff extracted all data concerning MSM from all available United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) country reports, sorting it for easy reference on the MSMGF's website.

## **III. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

### **Technical Support to CONGA in the Development of its Global Fund Round 10 Proposal**

The MSMGF provided technical assistance and support to the Coalición de Organizaciones de la Diversidad Sexual en Centroamérica (CONGA) in the development of its Global Fund Round 10 proposal. MSMGF Program Associate Omar Banos attended several planning and application review meetings, including meetings held in Nicaragua and a meeting held in Peru at the end of August. CONGA invited the MSMGF to be listed as a possible sub-recipient in its proposal to continue our role is providing technical support should their application get selected for funding.

### **Technical Support for MSM Report Cards in Macedonia and Cambodia**

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), in collaboration with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and with technical support from MSMGF, will develop report cards for



MSM prevention and services in two countries namely Macedonia and Cambodia. The concept is based on the 25 national-level HIV prevention report cards focused on young women and girls developed between 2006 and 2009. Each Report Card will provide a summary of the current status of HIV prevention strategies and services for MSM in each country. The Report Cards will be based on four cross-cutting components, namely (a) legal, policy and cultural context, (b) availability of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and HIV services, (c) accessibility of SRH and HIV services and (d) participation and rights. The MSMGF prepared a technical report summarizing its review of the research dossier template and related processes and will continue to provide similar support through the completion of this project.

### **Technical Support for SRH and HIV Linkages Project in India**

The MSMGF was solicited to provide technical support to the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) on the development of an advocacy brief. This brief will showcase examples from India where SRH and HIV services are being linked at the policy, structural and service delivery levels for MSM. It will be used as an advocacy tool to demonstrate country level implementation and best practice for other countries trying to link SRH and HIV services for MSM. The development of this advocacy brief will be coordinated by the Family Planning Association of India and carried out by an in-country consultant.

### **Technical and Financial Support for amfAR-MSMGF Report**

The MSMGF worked with amfAR to develop a report titled, “Lessons from the Front lines: Effective Community-Led HIV and AIDS responses among MSM and transgender populations,” emphasizing the role of grassroots organizations in national AIDS responses. The MSMGF also supported translation of the report into three languages: French, Russian and Spanish. The translated versions of this report are currently available for digital download on the websites of both organizations.

## **IV. RESEARCH**

### **WHO Civil Society Consultation**

The World Health Organization (WHO) is developing guidelines for delivering an evidence-based essential package of interventions for the prevention and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people in the health sector in low- and middle-income countries. The WHO has formed a Guidelines Advisory Work Group, which will develop initial draft recommendations. The MSMGF is represented on the Advisory Work Group by its Executive Officer Dr. George Ayala. As a global partner to the WHO on the development of prevention and treatment guidelines, the MSMGF systematically solicited civil society input from MSM advocates through its ties to regional and country level networks as part of the guidelines development process. The MSMGF drafted a preliminary report based on this input and submitted it to the WHO Advisory Work Group in September 2010. Drafting of a final report is currently underway.



## **Global Online HIV Prevention and PrEP Survey**

The MSMGF conducted a PrEP/Prevention survey targeting MSM and providers of MSM worldwide. The online survey ran from June 25 through August 17, 2010. Thanks to our global networks and a tremendous amount of support from colleagues worldwide, we finished with over 5,000 participants and a total of 3,801 completed surveys, far surpassing our target goal of 1,000. The survey was completed in Chinese, English, French, Spanish and Russian.

Columbia University-based HIV social scientist Dr. Patrick Wilson helped develop the survey. Dr. Wilson presented preliminary findings from the first 700 responses during the MSMGF's Be Heard! Pre-Conference in Vienna in July. Since the closing of the survey in August, Dr. Wilson and his team have been cleaning the data and preparing it for a thorough analysis.

An initial review of the survey responses shows fairly diverse geographic representation. We finished with 11% (586) of responses coming from Central/South America and the Caribbean, 4% (190) from Africa, 35% (1,875) from East/Central Asia, followed by South/Southeast Asia (24%, 1,259) and North America (14%, 723).

## **International AIDS Conference Program Analysis**

Consultant Laurence Padua worked with MSMGF staff to conduct an in-depth analysis of the International AIDS Conference (IAC) Program to determine the representation of MSM, transgender people, sex workers and people who use drugs. The analysis revealed extremely poor representation of each population, catalyzing the development of targeted advocacy and communication strategies to encourage accountability and transparency with the IAC. To move these advocacy efforts forward, the MSMGF will collaborate with other global networks of most at risk populations, including Global Advocates for Trans Equality (GATE), Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) and the International Network of People who use drugs (INPUD).

## **V. PUBLICATIONS**

### **The MSMGF Launches *Sense*, a publication written by and for MSM Living with HIV**

The MSMGF launched its new online multimedia publication, *Sense* on September 21, spotlighting the stories of MSM living with HIV across the globe. The quarterly magazine provides an important platform for men whose voices are seldom heard in the global AIDS dialogue. Written by and for MSM living with HIV, *Sense* was created in response to a dearth of publications reflecting the needs and realities experienced by MSM living with HIV in a variety of contexts. Each installment will feature four writers from four different countries, exploring issues of stigma, wellness, activism, and empowerment. Each set of narratives is supplemented with updates on health and wellness tailored to the needs of MSM living with HIV. The inaugural issue features powerful stories of family, homophobia, and intimacy from China, Morocco, Romania, and Paraguay. Each essay is available in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese, in addition to audio recordings of the authors reading their work in its original language.



## ***War Diaries* is Launched at IAC**

We have completed the international dissemination of “War Diaries,” the fourth publication in a series developed by and for black gay and bisexual men. The collection of short stories, essays and poetry debuted at the International AIDS Conference in Vienna in July, where 990 copies were distributed to advocates and delegates from around the world. In August and September, we completed the domestic distribution with more than 7,000 copies distributed across the United States. Feedback has been extremely positive, with requests for copies coming from national leaders in France, local providers in Los Angeles and San Francisco, and a range of stakeholders nationally. We will host a public forum and discussion about the project at UCLA in Los Angeles on December 10, 2010.

## **VI. CONSULTATIONS**

### **Contribution to Progress Report on AIDS – Department for International Development (DFID)**

The MSMGF contributed an update of major accomplishments and key activities to the UK Government’s Department for International Development in response to a request for their progress report on AIDS scheduled for release on World AIDS Day December 1, 2010. This update also outlined the context and rationale for the global advocacy work that the MSMGF carries out on behalf of gay men and other MSM in low- and middle-income countries.

### **Consultation on Rights-based Approaches for MSM HIV Programs**

The MSMGF was tapped to join the planning committee responsible for a two-day consultation on “Integrating Rights and Health for MSM and other LGBT Peoples: The role of HIV/AIDS Implementers and PEPFAR”. Sponsored by amfAR and scheduled to take place December 16-17, this event seeks to bring together a diverse group of 40 stakeholders from around the world (including HIV program implementers, funders, researchers, policy makers, LGBT activists and human rights advocates) to explore the integration of rights-based approaches with HIV services for MSM. The MSMGF has been advocating for the inclusion of voices from the global south.

### **Input on UN Business Case on MSM, Transgender People and Sex Workers**

In June, UNAIDS published a new outcome framework that prioritized reaching MSM and other most at risk populations (MARPs). Following the formalization of this new priority, a number of UN agencies drafted a Business Case to help define how these new goals could be met. The MSMGF provided feedback that advocated for the deliberate engagement of community-based organizations, the training of healthcare workers, capacity development exercises and pro-active partnerships with key regional and global networks of civil society.

### **Input on the UNAIDS Strategic Plan 2011-2015**

The MSMGF Secretariat provided comments and edits to the first draft of the UNAIDS Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015, highlighting major gaps and omissions. The MSMGF was solicited for another round of feedback and input to the second draft of this strategic framework. MSMGF Policy





Associates Krista Lauer and Mohan Sundararaj will coordinate this effort with the MSMGF Policy Working Group members.

### **Input on the UNAIDS Partnership Strategy**

In response to a request for input, the MSMGF provided feedback identifying major gaps within the UNAIDS Partnership Strategy for 2011-2015. Major suggestions included a focus on developing partnerships with grassroots communities to help revolutionize the response, and encouragement of deliberate engagement with regional and global networks of civil society, particularly those of most at risk populations.

### **The MSMGF Serves on Panel Review for amfAR's MSM Initiative in Latin America**

MSMGF Program Associate, Omar Banos participated as a panel reviewer for amfAR's MSM Initiative in Latin America. amfAR convened the panel in Panama for two days to review several applications from the region in response their recent call for proposals.

## **VII. ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

### **UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation Application**

The MSMGF continues to engage in advocacy efforts to strengthen the UNAIDS outcomes framework and related strategies, particularly in the context of the epidemic among men who have sex with men (MSM). The UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB), the governing body of UNAIDS, is represented by 22 governments, UNAIDS Co-Sponsors, five NGO Delegates and five Alternative NGO Delegates. In response to a call for NGO delegation nominations, the MSMGF elected its Executive Officer Dr. George Ayala to apply as the North American delegate on the UNAIDS PCB resulting in a successful application. Dr. Ayala will represent the MSMGF on the PCB from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2012. The MSMGF will participate in the 27<sup>th</sup> Programme Coordinating Board meeting scheduled to be held in Geneva, Switzerland during December 6-8, 2010.

### **AIDS 2012 Programme Co-Chair Application**

In response to a call for Co-Chair nominations for the Programme Committee at AIDS 2012, the MSMGF elected its Executive Officer Dr. George Ayala to apply for this position within the Leadership and Accountability track. The application was submitted with support from external referees Hakimah Hammich, Chair of Association de Lutte Contre le Sida (ALCS) in Morocco, and James Robertson, Country Director for India at the HIV/AIDS Alliance. Results of this application are forthcoming.

### **MSMGF Partners with AVAC and IRMA**

The MSMGF worked to create eleven translations of HIV technical bulletins over the last quarter. We partnered with AVAC to translate their bulletin, "Fact Sheet: Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV Prevention" into Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. Print versions of these were disseminated at the International AIDS Conference in Vienna, and digital versions are to be available on the MSMGF website as well as AVAC's web portal.



We also partnered with the International Rectal Microbicides Advocates (IRMA) to translate their bulletin, “Rectal Microbicides: What you need to know” into Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese and Russian. Print versions of these were disseminated at the International AIDS Conference in Vienna, and digital versions are to be available on the MSMGF website as well as IRMA’s web portal.

### **Youth Committee Advises the MSMGF**

Originally formed as an advisory group for the *Be Heard* (pre-conference) Planning Committee, the Youth Committee has evolved into a standing group of youth activists from Nigeria, Kenya, Singapore, Jamaica, Belarus and the Philippines. The group has monthly meetings with the goal of developing and implementing a global YMSM strategy for the MSMGF. The first draft of this strategy is slated for completion on October 13.

### ***Youth Voices Count***

Communications Associate Jack Beck participated in the Hivos / World AIDS Campaign Youth Voices Count consultation in Bangkok, Thailand. He met with 40 young MSM and transgender advocates from all over Asia / Pacific, introduced the advocates to the work of the MSMGF and formed lasting connections that have already proved useful since the consultation in September. In addition, side meetings were conducted with Stephen Gu, President of APCOM, and Laurindo Garcia, HIV Programs Manager at Fridae.com, on potential partnerships for information exchange.

