The Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF)
AIDS 2016 Pre-Conference and Other Activities

FINAL REPORT
SUMMARY

The MSMGF organized its seventh Pre-Conference Event at the 2016 International AIDS Conference (IAC) in Durban, South Africa focused on HIV among gay and bisexual men and other men who have sex with men. To our knowledge, this Pre-Conference Event is the largest global gathering of activists, researchers, implementers, and donors focused on the sexual health and human rights of gay and bisexual men to date. Titled, Access + Action: Rights and Demands of Gay and Bisexual Men in the Global HIV Response, the Pre-Conference was offered free of charge to nearly 750 attendees. Plenary sessions were recorded and will be made available on the MSMGF’s website later this year.

The MSM Pre-Conference provided a skills building and networking platform focused on the most recent research, best practices, and advocacy strategies that advance the overall goal of unfettered access to HIV-related services. The MSMGF Pre-Conference Program included five plenary presentations and 20 skills building workshops or panel sessions. Topics addressed included: implications of shrinking resources and donor withdrawal from the global HIV response; task shifting demands on LGBT-led community-based organizations; barriers and facilitators of HIV service access; technical capacity of healthcare systems to address the sexual and reproductive health needs of gay, bisexual men and other men who have sex with men; PrEP demand generation and roll-out for gay and bisexual men worldwide; and coalition building to tackle growing fundamentalism and threats to human rights.

Our one-day Pre-Conference Event took place on 16 July 2016 at the Durban International Convention Center. The overall goals of the Pre-Conference Event as well as activities immediately preceding and following the week of AIDS 2016 were to;

1) Elevated awareness at the global-level about the disproportionate impact HIV and AIDS is still having on gay and bisexual men worldwide;

2) Improved community-led service delivery and prevention approaches tailored to the needs of gay and bisexual men to effectively reduce new HIV infections in these communities;

3) Re-energized, better informed, and inter-connected activist networks of gay and bisexual men working to end HIV and promote the sexual health and human rights of their respective communities; and

4) Strengthened MSMGF partnerships with other networks other networks working at the global and regional levels as well as with African groups led by or working with key affected populations.
The MSMGF gathered input from its constituencies to inform the pre-conference program and strategic participation at AIDS 2016. This feedback gave MSMGF staff a good starting point for focusing our efforts and for building pre-conference and global village programs that were responsive to the concerns of our constituents. Input solicitation and program planning was led by an MSMGF AIDS 2016 Pre-Conference Planning Committee (PCPC) that consisted of MSMGF Board and Steering Committee Members, MSMGF Youth Reference Group Members, strategic partners, and African LGBT advocates that met three over six facilitated teleconference calls leading up to the event. The PCPC conducted its work mainly by email, given the wide time zone spread of its participants. The PCPC was central to developing a conference agenda and series of break-out sessions that were as inclusive as possible. The MSMGF also partnered with ANOVA Institute and the Durban Lesbian and Gay Service Center to coordinate the pre-conference event and maximize participation from community members.

Aligned with AIDS 2016’s theme—*Access, Equity, Rights, Now*—MSMGF’s Pre-Conference theme shined a spotlight on gay men’s community-level contributions to HIV advocacy and service delivery, with an emphasis on the *action* and *access*. Unabated HIV epidemics among gay, bisexual men and other men who have sex with men, undermine accelerated HIV services and human rights targets set by the United Nations. *Action + Access* was geared towards advocates, program implementers, government officials, and researchers interested in aligning their efforts in response to the 2016 Political Declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Participants strategized approaches to fast-tracking the HIV and human rights responses. *Action + Access* also shined a spotlight on gay and bisexual men’s community-level contributions to the global HIV response.

The MSMGF conducted the following main activities in the lead up to and immediately following our pre-conference:

1) Convened an international planning committee of advocates linked to regional networks that assisted MSMGF in its communications and program activities;

2) Intensified MSMGF’s social media presence focused on significant policy and advocacy events through July 2016 and tying them back to AIDS 2016 as a strategy for directing attention back to the conference;

3) Released one policy brief and one fact sheet focused on HIV among gay, bisexual men and HIV worldwide;

4) In partnership with the International AIDS Society, composed and submitted a letter to the editor of JIAS (in review) focused on gay, bisexual men and HIV in Africa, prepared by MSMGF staff and stakeholders;
5) Worked with the International AIDS Society on creating a conference road map focused on gay, bisexual men and transgender-specific sessions, workshops and events at AIDS 2016;

6) Collaborated with stakeholders worldwide to produce the Action + Access 1-day preconference event focused on gay, bisexual men and other men who have sex with men, HIV and human rights for nearly 750 participants;

7) Video recorded Pre-Conference plenary sessions and mad recordings available online through msmgf.org;

8) Co-organized a media event during the week of IAC focused on key populations and HIV;

9) Disseminated 4 blog postings and video coverage of AIDS 2016 in collaboration with Mark King;

10) Recorded and post a series of short video testimonials featuring gay and bisexual men speaking about the importance of being and remaining BOLD (uploaded to the MSMGF’s YouTube Channel as a strategy to draw attention back to Durban);

11) Supported a week of programming at the Global Village, featuring the photography of artist and archivist Ajamu;

12) Convened MSMGF Board of Directors, Steering Committee, Youth Reference Group; and the Consortium of MSM and Transgender Networks.

The MSMGF Pre-Conference became an official part of the IAC program. MSMGF staff members built working relationships with the IAS Secretariat staff and collaborated with them in the development of non-abstract driven sessions and a press event focused on key populations. In addition, members of both the PCPC and MSMGF steering committee members at large, together with MSMGF staff undertook behind-the-scenes lobbying with members of IAS’s Conference Coordinating Committee (CCC) to ensure a stronger IAC program than in previous years, with better coverage of MSM and transgender issues. MSMGF holds a seat on the CCC through 2018. Several MSMGF staff and Steering Committee members also brought leadership to this process in their roles as co-chairs on various program committees and as presenters during the conference. This work led to a conference program of which nearly 40% focused on key populations, including plenary sessions given by prominent gay men on a variety of issues, including criminalization, discrimination, stigma and their impact on the delivery of HIV services.
In the following pages, we summarize select activities to illustrate achievement toward the above stated outcomes. We begin with presenting feedback submitted by pre-conference attendees.

**MSMGF PRE-CONFERENCE PROGRAM**

The MSMGF pre-conference Action + Access featured 4 plenaries and 20 break-out sessions that took place on July 16th. Each break-out session lasted for a total duration of 90 minutes and featured a Moderator/Chairperson and an illustrious panel of experts from around the world. An online version of the program is available at [www.msmgf.org](http://www.msmgf.org).

**Plenary #1 The Global Economic Cost of Homophobia** – Jose Antonio Izazola (UNAIDS)

**Plenary #2 The Role of African LGBT Movements in the Global HIV Response** – Bisi Alimi

**Plenary #3 We Liked the Way He Moved: Exploring the Power of Photography, Oral Histories, Art and the Contemporary Queer Archive** – Ajamu and Pato Hebert

**Plenary #4 Getting The Math Right: Counting Gay and Bisexual Men into the 90-90-90 Equation**, Moderated by Mandeep Dhaliwal (UNDP), Keletso Makofane (MSMGF), Meg Davis (NYU/Center for Human Rights and Global Justice), Midnight Poonkasetwatana (APCOM), Sergio Lopez (SOMOSGAY)

MSMGF staff were closely involved in shaping and guiding the scope of each session in close collaboration with PCPC members. 10 of the sessions took place concurrently in the morning and 10 others took place in the afternoon. The sessions were themed across a range of topics identified and finalized by the MSMGF pre-conference planning committee including one special session dedicated to the importance of African LGBT movements in the global HIV response.

The 20 break-out sessions were titled around themed their respective topics:

1. Community-based Programs and Services Hot Topics: Bare-backing, Chemsex, Risk-reduction and Pleasure;
2. Intersections of Sexuality, Human Rights, Health, Migration and Race: LGBT Migrant Key Populations in the Global HIV Response
3. Expanding PrEP Across the World with Tailored Approaches
Each session was assigned a rapporteur whose responsibility was to summarize 2-3 key actions items and/or outcomes from each session. Based on input provided by rapporteurs, a summary of the major outcomes is listed below across three thematic categories (see figure).

**FEEDBACK FROM PRE-CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS**

Participants to the preconference were invited to give feedback on the event through a brief anonymous paper survey at the end of the first day. The MSMGF asked attendees to rate on a scale from 1(Poor) to 5(Excellent) the various program components of the pre-conference. Averages were then tabulated and summarized below.

About 3-quarters of the respondents were men, and of those men, 5-sixths were gay or men who have sex with men. Two trans women and two people who identify as gender-queer also filled evaluation forms. Respondents represented 32 countries with large contingents from the US (29%) and South Africa (14%). Slightly more than half of respondents were researchers (35%) or service providers (20%). The rest had a variety of roles including representatives of
multi-lateral agencies or donor agencies; government officials; and policy advocates and activists.

For each session, 66%-83% of respondents rated the session as “Very Good” or “Excellent”. The morning breakout sessions had the lowest approval with 66% of respondents rating them as “Very Good” or “Excellent” and the afternoon breakout sessions had the highest approval at 83%.

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Written feedback about the preconference revealed some common highlights including the Plenary talk delivered by Bisi Alimi and the afternoon session, *We Liked The Way He Moved*. Respondents found the breakout sessions and opening plenary informative and useful for supporting advocacy. There was a desire by a handful of participants, however, to change the political tone of the event from being comfortable to being angry: “Doing social justice work often requires that we move out of our comfort zones. Today I felt a little too comfortable. Please shake us up in the future.”

A number of respondents were especially appreciative of the sessions on PrEP, and of the diversity of voices and experiences in breakout sessions. Some respondents wished that there were fewer parallel breakout sessions, or that the sessions were organized into tracks. Some wished there were more time for speakers, and some wished there were more time for discussion and engagement.
The venue of the pre-conference was a source of frustration for a number of respondents. In particular, the breakout rooms in the basement of the Durban Convention Center were difficult for people to find, had bad lighting, and were noisy. One respondent wished the event was away from the main conference so that it would be more intimate. When volunteers were mentioned, however, it was always in a positive light: they were described as polite and helpful.

The pre-conference was seen as a community space, and respondents appreciated meeting like-minded people from around the world, with some describing the event as a reunion with friends. In this vein, there was some disappointment at not having more breaks during which to network - one respondent even wished for structured networking time. Some wished that the MSMGF had had more scholarships to fund MSM respondents to attend.

**MSMGF AT AIDS 2016**

The MSMGF actively contributed to the main conference program through presentations, workshops and panel discussions. In many instances, we partnered with other organizations and networks to organize sessions. They include, two poster presentations, one workshop and several panel presentations. Select titles from those sessions are listed below:

- Experiences of Provider Discrimination in Accessing Medical and HIV Prevention Services by Men Who Have Sex with Men including Transgender Men Globally;

- Structural violence reduces quality of life among global sample MSM: community engagement moderates some negative impacts;

- Designing, Implementing and Scaling-Up Comprehensive HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections Programs with Men Who Have Sex With Men;

- HIV criminalization and the intersection with other criminalized and marginalized groups: How we can build a broader, inclusive movement;

- No More Lip Service, Trans Access, Equity and Rights, Now! One-day preconference focused on transgender people and HIV;

- Clinical Skills Needed to Provide Competent, Affirming Health Care to Gay and Bisexual Men/MSM and Transgender Women as Broader Context for HIV Care Prevention;
• Linking Community-Level Interventions with Health Care Delivery Systems;

• Picking up the Pieces: I Was Diagnosed HIV+, Now What;

• Leaving No One Behind: How to Bring Key Populations HIV Services to Scale;

• Take Your Meds! Why Blaming the Patient May Be Misguided: Exploring Adherence Issues Among Men Who Have Sex with Men and Transgender Women in the Caribbean;

• When the Rubber Meets the Road: Moving Self-Testing from Theory to Reality for Africa;

• Using Funding Data to Advocate for Global and Domestic Resources in the Critical Push towards the End of AIDS;

• MSM: Diverse Realities Require Nuanced Programmes;

• Trans People Moving Forward Together

• Adapt or fall: is civil society at risk of being left behind – symposium; and

• HIV Prevention Literacy: Remembering What We Have Learned.

**ADVOCACY AT AIDS 2016**

In addition to conference presentations, the MSMGF was actively involved in side meetings and advocacy actions during the week. What follows is a roundup of the week’s activities.

**“Beyond the Blame: Challenging HIV Criminalization”** Pre-conference, July 17.
The meeting was convened by HIV Justice Worldwide and involved ARASA, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, GNP+, HIV Justice Network, ICW, Sero, and PWN-USA – with local partner AIDS Legal Network, and in collaboration with UNAIDS and UNDP. The session explored the ways in which HIV criminalization is linked to other struggles for social justice and initiated discussions about strengthening alliances across movements to address this challenge. We discussed about how criminalization of key populations and criminalization of HIV transmission are intersectional / linked and heighten people’s vulnerability to HIV. MSMGF was able to build stronger alliances with activists and organizations working specifically on criminalization issues.

**Using Funding Data to Advocate for Global and Domestic Resources in the Critical Push**
towards the End of AIDS, 21 July, organized by Funders Concerned About AIDS (FCAA), in partnership with AVAC. The session brought together key organizations involved in resource tracking efforts (AVAC, Kaiser, TAG, CECGAA and UNAIDS) to help advocates understand the importance of funding-related advocacy, and how to access and use available data. This workshop covered current topics in AIDS Funding including the changing environment in Foreign Aid, competing investment priorities and country ownership. It also gave the audience an understanding of how to track resources and use funding data as a tool in their advocacy efforts.

MSMGF also attended different meetings organized by OSF and ICSS focused on middle income countries and countries transitioning away from Global Fund and other international donor support. The meetings’ purpose was to enable civil society to effectively engage with transition planning and implementation.

MSMGF joined other advocates in meetings with the U.S. Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) to discuss PEPFAR funding estimates for key populations. Discussion points included: 1) country-level funding and targets 2) bogus key population size estimates and their implications; 3) the need for better data on key populations; and 4) setting program targets in the absence of quality data on key populations.

MSMGF met with country- and global-level activists to discuss PEPFAR advocacy. Discussion points included: 1) Sharing experiences from the 2016 COP process; 2) Looking ahead to implementing advocacy wins in 2016/2017; 3) Using quarterly reviews to move forward in areas not yet won; and 4) Strategizing improvements for the 2017 COP process.

We attended the launch of the Kaiser Family Foundation/UNAIDS Report, which presented alarming data that 13 of 14 donor governments reduced funding in 2014-2015 to low- and middle-income countries. Chris Beyrer, President of the International AIDS Society noted this reduction in funding is expected to disproportionately affect key populations, including gay and bisexual and other men who have sex with men, as donor governments that contribute to the Global Fund and PEPFAR are far more likely to support key populations programming than their domestic government counterparts. MSMGF advised advocates to use the report as an advocacy tool in their lobby work with donor governments.

MSMGF participated in the march for treatment on the opening day of the conference. Over 7000 activists from across South Africa and around the world joined the Treatment Action Campaign, Section 27, and Health GAP as we marched through the streets of Durban. Together we demanded that world leaders deliver on their promise to end the epidemic by ensuring
access to treatment for ALL people living with HIV. A memorandum of demands was delivered to key decision-makers, including South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large Deborah Birx, UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, Executive Director of UNAIDS Michel Sidibé (UNAIDS), and Global Fund Executive Director Mark Dybul.

Over 150 activists, including MSMGF, took part in an advocacy action directed at Gilead Sciences. The Action was led by the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition. Activists took over Gilead Sciences’ booth to protest the exorbitant price of their Hepatitis C drug. In the United States, a 12-week course of Gilead’s Sovaldi costs approximately $84,000 and in South Africa it is priced at R 158,000—prices that put it far out of reach for the majority of people who need it.

MSMGF gathered members of the Consortium of MSM and Transgender Networks present in Durban, to hold discussions focused on policy and advocacy. The meeting was an opportunity for peer-to-peer information exchange. The Consortium also participated in a Grantee meeting and networking event organized by the Robert Carr Civil Society Network Fund (RCNF). This linking and learning session offered RCNF grantees the opportunity to provide input on the planning and implementation of the newly announced PEPFAR Key Populations Investment Fund (KPIF).

MSMGF participated in several Global Fund-related advocacy events, including a panel with Princess Mabel Oranje-Nassau (Netherlands). MSMGF contributed to the GFAN report, Global Fund Replenishment 2016: The Cost of Inaction. The report argues that inadequate investment in the Global Fund will threaten millions of lives and result in billions of dollars in additional costs. Additionally, the report describes how simply maintaining current levels of investment could result in a rise of drug-resistant strains of HIV, TB and malaria that are even more costly to treat. You can find this report here.

Finally, MSMGF offered significant input into the report Key Populations and the Global Fund: Delivering Key Results. The report explains why ending AIDS, TB and malaria will be impossible without working with and addressing the needs of key and vulnerable populations. The report details the unique role the Global Fund has played in: supporting and mobilizing domestic resources for key populations; challenging human rights barriers to health; and providing opportunities for communities to participate in development and implementation of programs that affect them.
The following is a list of sessions that took place at the MSM NWZ – July 18-22:

- Turning the Corner: Investing in Community Systems and Key Population Community Strengthening for an Effective HIV Response. Hosted by APCOM.

- The Sex Worker Implementation Tool: How to Turn a Book into Action. Hosted by Global Network of Sex Work Projects.

- Meet (the gays of) the YRG! Hosted by the MSMGF Youth Reference Group.


- Advising Young Gay Men to “Suck. F*#k. Test. Repeat” – Lessons Learned from Sex-Positive Testing Campaign in Bangkok. Hosted by APCOM.

- Moving on from a High Level Failure: Advocacy entry points and follow-up to the United Nations High-Level Meeting to End AIDS Political Declaration. Hosted by the MSMGF.

- The Impact of Technology (Mobile Apps) on Gay Men and Online Interaction. Hosted by the MSM Outreach Program (AfriQueer) at Africans in Partnership Against AIDS (APAA).

- Community Strategies from Gay, Bisexual Men, and other MSM in Central Asia. Hosted by Kyrgyz Indigo and Equal Opportunities.

- Starting the Ignition: Engagement with Young MSM and Young Transgender People Towards Ending AIDS by 2030. Hosted by Youth Voices Count.

- Unusual Suspects: How to Build Your Social Justice Family. Hosted by International Coalition of Women Living with HIV.

- MSMGF 10 Year Anniversary Reception.
The MSMGF received strong media coverage in the lead up to, during and after AIDS 2016. Coverage in the lead up to conference included:

- 21 video submissions from prominent global HIV activists and celebrities including David Furnish, Graham Norton, Mark S. King, Shaun Mellors and Bisi Alimi
- 12 blog posts and Mail Chimp e-blasts beginning in December 2015 regarding registration, abstracts, scholarships, videos and pre-conference information and publications
- Multiple social media posts echoing the same information expressed in website communications

Outreach, advertisement, and media coverage was also robust during the Conference. We had or distributed:

- 5 bloggers, video blogger, videographer, photographer;
- 24 blog posts;
- 38 Facebook posts;
- 5 Mail Chimp e-blasts and 2 Mail Chimp recap digests with multiple articles and links back to the MSMGF website and blog;
- 137 retweets referencing @MSMGF;
- 9 original MSMGF tweets with a total of 214,818 impressions;
- 10,000 palm card inserts in every conference bag with MSMGF logo pins attached;
- 700 Pre-Conference programs
- 700 Pre-Conference logo tees;
- 700 Pre-Conference logo messenger bags;
- 300 Networking Zone schedules and MSMGF info one pagers;
- 141-page Pre-conference slide deck for opening and intermission featuring donors, mission statements, imagery, logos, website content, publications, etc.;
- Podium logo signage
- 2 Pre-conference pull up banners used on stage
- 1 Networking Zone banner
- Preconference stage table signage in triplicate
- 2 Networking Zone logo table skirts
- IAS co-sponsored press conference on key populations
- 3 press releases
- 8’x10’ logo step and repeat wall with social media hashtag #HIVbold
- Gained approximately 300 Twitter followers during the one week of the conference which is 4.5% of our total follower base of 6,634
- 5 video blogs from Mark S. King shared widely on our website as well as TheBody.com and Queerty.com
• 5 hours of Pre-Conference video from IAS which need to be edited down
• 3000 red “objection’ cards with our MSMGF logo on one side for attendants to use during the conference

Media mentions during AIDS 2016 included:

https://www.queerty.com/take-hiv-meds-granted-people-consider-luxury-20160719
http://www.thebodypro.com/content/77991/at-aids-2016-the-global-village-rocks--and-activis.html?ic=sanext
http://www.thebodypro.com/content/77958/aids-2016-inside-the-massive-hiv-treatment-access-.html?ic=sanext
http://www.bizjournals.com/prnewswire/press_releases/2016/07/20/DC51036
https://www.poz.com/article/two-hiv-groups-inaugural-grantees-10m-lgbt-fund
CO-SPONSORS

Categories are named after ancient rivers

**NILE – $75,000**
Robert Carr Networks Fund
International AIDS Society

**MURRUMBIDGEE – $50,000 – $74,999**
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Gilead
USAID/PEPFAR/LINKAGES/FHI 360

**INDUS – $10,000 – $24,999**
AIDS Project Los Angeles
Pangaea

**YANGTZE – Up to $9,999**
American Jewish World Service
ANOVA Health Institute
International HIV/AIDS Alliance
Legacy Community Health
Musagetes
Victorian AIDS Council

PHOTOS

Photos from the Access + Action MSM Pre-Conference can be found using the following links:

Pre-Conference
[https://goo.gl/photos/Yh4obyze5zziwQZw8](https://goo.gl/photos/Yh4obyze5zziwQZw8)

Pre-Conference Breakout Sessions
[https://goo.gl/photos/vuAje6Q5JxwYicmJ6](https://goo.gl/photos/vuAje6Q5JxwYicmJ6)

Durban March
[https://goo.gl/photos/T2XWZxyxQoGvKyqE7](https://goo.gl/photos/T2XWZxyxQoGvKyqE7)