



**XV International AIDS Conference Bangkok 2004  
Community Program Committee Secretariat**

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***Report on Youth Activities at XV International AIDS Conference Bangkok 2004***

***Introduction***

Young people are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection and frequently carry the burden of caring for family members living with HIV/AIDS. Many are vulnerable to HIV because of risky sexual behavior or substance use, because they lack access to HIV information and prevention services, or for a host of social and economic reasons. Stigma can be particularly damaging to young people at a time when they are trying to consolidate their identity and establish their place in the world.

Youth were mentioned as 'hope' but not enough has been done in concern of youth problems. Even in the World AIDS Conference, youth were merely a decoration and given not enough space and attention. If the fight will have to go on, the future course of the epidemic depends on more efforts mounted today to prevent HIV infection among young people. World Society will have to help young people to stand up for themselves and force for change. Open up the world to accept those who are both infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, learn from past experience and prevent it from happening.

***Goals and Objectives***

As Youth need to be major actors in policies and program that are geared towards community prosperity, yet their initiative and actions are hardly applauded, endorsed and rewarded. The activities and program need to be connected to each other, to work together on a unified platform in order to facilitate experience sharing and present a common voice for collective prosperity. Youth organizations need a pool of resources to support smaller groups so as to ensure that all worthwhile initiatives of youth are delivered to their communities successfully. To address HIV/AIDS and other issues which affect youth, as well as related human development challenges and opportunities such as poverty and its alleviation, access to information, access to resource, access to care and service, access to policy making decision.

The aims of the Youth Activities at the Conference were to promote the importance of youth and bring youth to be part of the conference to have their voices heard and contribute.

⇒ To create permanent arena for youth in the conference. Bring out the understanding of importance of youth to both adult and youth themselves.

- ⇒ To address the problems of youth infected and affected by HIV and try to help youth find solutions.
- ⇒ To help youth exchange ideas and experiences in order to learn and share with others.
- ⇒ To develop youth global network that is functional and connected to world AIDS communities.
- ⇒ To build up youth leaders in the fight against HIV.

### **Development and Organizing**

The initial idea started in May 2003 on the need to include youth component in conference. The position of youth coordinator has been set up informally to draw up the proposal of youth activities and the way to include youth as major participant, ensuring all aspects of the conference is accessible to youth and responds to their needs. Conference Organizing Committee (COC) has passed the plan of ‘youth activities’ proposed by Community Program Committee in late November 2003 but with no commitment of conference funds. IAS has rule that our fundraising should not collide with the main conference. However the European Union was very keen to support this and committed a generous sum sufficient to cover all the youth activities including many youth scholarships. UNFPA was also a major help, contributing ideas and youth contacts detail as well as funding to support the activities under the Leadership Program session which were developed after the EU proposal had been approved. UNICEF also finally agreed to make a contribution to helping to prepare Thai youth for participation in the Conference, after many month of negotiation and many changes in the amount.

The plan drew up into 2 section; **activities and scholarship**. The activities divided into 2 parts; **Preparation for the Thai and Mekong youth and Activities at the conference**. The scholarship has concentrated on how to include youth which, for practical purposes, was divided into 3 major geographical areas; Thai, Mekong region and International.

### **The Activities Preparation Plan**

The coordinator has set up email contact with other existing youth organization around the world and received their suggestions and proposal which then drew up into the bigger pictures of the final proposal that sent to the COC. The application form has been drawn up to learn more about the type of activities and involvement that youth would like to see happened and then put on the conference website. The plan for the activities applications that sent in were selected and held at the Global Village spaces at the networking bar and meeting room.

The Community Program Committee (CPC) has set up Youth Advisory Committees where CPC member and organization working on the issue of young people around the world sent in the nomination. The roles were to advise and comment on the planning process and contents, and select the scholarship recipients and activities application that has been sent in. 15 names were selected (13 youth, youth coordinator and 1

representative from CPC). However as time went by only 7 youth committee members<sup>1</sup> were left as some have other prior commitment and some did not show their participation. The communication has been entirely based on email which most of the time has been more of informing the committee what happened and few comments were received (except for their very active role in rating scholarship applications). During the conference where the committee met for the first time, it was agreed that if there will be next committee, funding should be put to organize the committee meeting prior to the conference to shape detail of the activities and speakers selection.

The youth working group also set up in Thailand that met once every month to plan the logistic and detail activities from the suggestion of the International body. The working group consisted of young people and organization involve with young people base in Thailand that willing to participate (UNFPA, PATH, TYAP, HAT, PPAT). All information that has been work out then sent to youth committee to vote. However, the workgroup has been active party in both suggestion of the overall pictures of the activities. The meeting has been voluntary as there were not enough financial support to pay for the workgroup travel expense apart from young people outside of Bangkok.

#### Preparation for Thai and Mekong Youth

##### Full Report in Separate Report by Thai Youth Preparation Team

The idea was to prepare Thai youth on issue of HIV/AIDS to be able to communicate with the international community on the subject as well as to spread the understanding on the issue. The work group was set up by TYAP as a core to contact other organizations in each area of Thailand to help organized the regional forums/workshop (January 2004) then select youth to participate in the national forum/workshop (March 2004), participants selected according to existing contact and through school. The regional organizations together with youth that could not come to the conference were set up activities in each region to teach other on understanding of HIV/AIDS. At first there will be another 2 national forums/workshops during the conference and after the conference but funding could only cover the forum during the conference.

#### Preparation for Activities at the Conference

The issues and activities came from the proposal and suggestion from many youth organizations around the world as well as the application for activities that put on the website. All the topic and speakers apart from session at Global Village (session room and lounge) has been work out base on email discussion during January between youth committee, the working group and UN agencies lead by UNFPA. There are other organizations that show their interest at start but when the discussion started has back out to prepare their own agenda. The main issues and sessions worked out during February with detail follow in March. The speakers list could not finish until last week of May, due to the lack of respond from the email, and the difficulty of contacting the speakers. The schedule for job responsibility during the conference were given staffs, workgroup and volunteer in June. However, there were problem with the volunteer as less than 3

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<sup>1</sup> Youth Committee Member were Sujima Viravaidya (Youth Coordinator), Musimbe Kanyoro (CPC), Raoul Fransen (Netherland), Napat Phisanbut (Thailand), Akenji Ndumu (USA), Elizabeth Atieno (Kenya), Sphelile Kaseke (Zimbabwe), Natallia Aleksandrovich (Bolivia)

volunteers turned up on each session and most of those who turn up are the same people. The lack of responsibility from the Thai youth volunteer and the mismanage by youth staff who look after the matter had cause other staffs to work even harder and had to handle more than they should. Even all the sessions are covered and successful but staffs do not have spare time to go to other sessions/workshop to expand their knowledge.

## Project Detail

### Youth Forum

Speakers: Duong Le Thuy (Asia, Vietnam), Sepesa Sigatokacake (Pacific Islands, Fiji), Sam Ocen (Africa, Uganda), Marija Vasileva (Eastern Europe, Georgia), Emma Blakey (Western Europe UK), Fiona Otway (North America USA), Carlos Martel (Central America, Honduras) Henry Hudson (Positive Youth, Uganda)

The decision has been reached among youth committee that the forum should focus on give information to raise the understanding of the participant to the same standard on the conference, the activities available and the situation of each regions. Speakers are invited one and a half months before the conference, 2 speakers had problems with visa and could not attend, the replacement was notice only 2 weeks before the conference but everything come out satisfactory to everyone. The forum attract delegate of all age, organization working with youth, and media. The venue has been given free of charge from the agreement that Community Program Secretariat help made with the Congrex. Due to the change of ideas instead of subject matter that the committee felt had been cover enough in the program to issues based on region, and include one positive youth on the subject of being young and positive. Turn out very successful in number of participants, speakers gave very informative and heart felt personal experience and suggestion on the issues of each region, and media interest on the issue which voice out in many news coverage. The understanding became clear that in each region even issues are similar but the risk factors varies. The same goals were found but each need a different way in detail to achieve that ultimate goals.

### Difficulty and Recommendation

Main difficulty occurred involved logistic matter.

- Information and Venue  
The information gave out on the website has not been good enough as the information is not clear what the forum will be about and who will be the speakers. The schedule of orientation and the forum were gave out to those who listed in the email list of the youth organization team. As there are no map available and the forum is on the first day, delegate found it difficult to get to the venue.
- Speakers  
Speakers did not have enough time to prepare their material though everyone appreciate them but decision could be reach much earlier, we would be able to produce full material. The problem with transit visa was unexpected. There should be at least 2 speakers chosen and inform incase one could not perform, the other one could step in.
- Food

The lunch venue that held with Community Gathering is located outside of the building and delegate found it difficult to attend as it was the first day and many were not familiar with the place yet despite the direction given orally, given out map would be preferable. As for the afternoon break, many delegates did not feel like eating and we actually could skip them in the future.

- Translation

Ministry of Public Health, Thailand has informed the organizing team 2 days before the conference that there were to be translation boots and head phone available, however since we did not received the information in time, we had hire company to do the translation in Thai only. It would be better as other language were request translation.

- Media

The media were invited through media officer, some of the demands to interview specific criteria of youth (country, HIV status, background, religion background) could not be met as we could not find youth to fit the criteria in time, however if the information has been request before, we might be able to put it forward to youth delegates. Despite the problems, many youth were willing to help out and the media were keen on youth topics as many familiar faces follow the story on youth participant at the conference and gave very good comments in the news.

### Session Organized in Cooperation with the Unified Program of the Conference

In order to advocate effectively for youth issues, we decided on a judicious mix of youth only session and youth intervention/participation throughout the whole conference. The lobbying process has been conducted to stress the important of given the platform to youth on specific issues. The policy from COC has been to put youth issues as one of the priorities and that gave chance of abstract on youth be able to appear on the platform both oral and poster exhibition. The selection committee of track D has include 1 youth as a committee same as the Skill Building Team. The result came out as 16 oral abstracts specific on youth, 2 non-abstract session organized by youth activities team on youth issues, 6 skill buildings and more than 300 poster presentations. Also with the advert of the new Leadership Program, we were able to secure 3 session rooms for youth events.

### Special Youth Session Organized by Youth Activities Team

#### Youth Sexual Right and Sexual Reproductive Health

Speakers: Cecilia Correa (need & absent of need, Argentina), Natallia Aleksandrovich (changing generation, Bolivia), Sant Suwatharapinun (MSM youth culture, Thailand), Thaw Zin Aye (information & access, Myanmar)

Moderator: Dr.Geeta Gupta replace by Sujima Viravaidya (youth coordinator)

The aims of the session were to address the issue of need and the absent of need that the understanding that adult gave to young people are sometime not what young people want. The issues and speakers were nominated mostly by youth coordinator and Dr.Julitta Onabanjo (UNFPA) as no other responses were received. The speakers in the session are

very capable in speaking in front of audience. All of the speakers did research and prepare material to give out to the audience to be easy to understanding the generation gap and indicate the need of working together as partner, listening and try to solve problems as youth/adult partnership are what most needed in the matter before any fruitful result would come out. Due to the emergency at home, Dr. Geeta Gupta the moderator of the session has to flew home early that morning, the youth coordinator had moderated the session. As the person who know the most about the session and equipped with detail that speakers had sent prior to the sessions, everything turned out very well, the discussion on many related issues came up during Q/A, audience keen to participate and support the ideas that the panel gave. The room of 1500 people was nearly full after the session went for 30 minutes until end of session. The room agreed that the need of youth participant at every level are greater than ever.

### Positive Youth

Speakers: Natashya Yong (Begin young positive, Singapore), Elizabeth Atieno (Access to care and resource generation, Kenya), Sheriff Parker (Infection during War/Conflict, Sierra Leone) present by Sujima Viravaidya (youth coordinator), Yinka Jegede Ekpe (did not turn up at the session)

Moderator: Ms. Prudence Mabele

The session tried to portrait the life and difficulty of being a young positive, also to suggest the urgent need to help and find solution to the matter. However, lack of participant from organization dealing with positive youth who would know the issues and could shape the session had not been helpful and we had to went along with what we had even how many research has been done but without the help of those who work in the issues and really understand, the session had fail to identified the important topic of how to help positive youth in what they need. From 4 speakers only 2 turned. Mr. Sheriff Parker could not get visa as he waited until 2 weeks before the conference to applied for visa despite the urged that we asked him to prepare everything months before, however he sent powerpoint though email 4 hours before the session began where youth coordinator had to present the powerpoint. The session turn out to be a disaster as both speakers are very new to the platform and were very nervous, the presentation by Mr. Parker was complicated and stress on the War itself instead of epidemic, the moderator lacked of real understanding in the issues and of interest in moderate a good session gave comment and did not agree on other suggestion that conflict with her idea. The issue could be avoided if there are more people who understand about the issues would step in and help work out issues and speakers as well as moderator.

### Asian Youth Forum

Speaker: Chaowarith Dangsaon (Thailand), Vieng Akhone (Lao), Vikram Laishram (India), Qiu Zhaozhu (China, did not show up at the session)

Moderator: Anchana Asundi (Singapore)

Because the issue on approach to HIV in similar culture in Asia. The objective for this session is to raise issues of the problem concerning youth in Asia is some what differ from the rest of the world resulted from the cultural different. The topic was issues concern problem among Asian youth and the way to solve the problems. As the room was under Leadership Program, the room rental was given free of charge from the

negotiation conduct by CPC with LPC. The failure of the session came from the selection of speakers as the moderator take over the session and did not really let the speakers talk on the issues. Some of the speakers did not prepare their material well enough. The speakers has couple of hours before session to discuss which speakers felt not enough to form the same ideas on the issue. The organizing team should prepare the content, specific issue and angle to the speakers include the questions that might be asked. The language of the speakers also became the problem in communication with the audients. After the session went for 30 minutes, youth coordinator assistance change the way of session to Q&A with the audiences and start discussion from open floor.

### Youth Question Leaders

Speakers: Sphelile Kaseke (Zimbabwe), Violeta Ross (Bolivia), Sean Barry (USA), Vincent Abrigo (Philippine), Dr. Thoraya Obaid (UNFPA), Dr. Lieve Fransen (EU), Mr. Abdus Sabur (Religion Leader), Ms. Georgia Franklin (MTV)  
Moderator: Mr. Mechai Viravaidya

The objective for this session was for youth voice to be heard and get the response by Leaders of different sectors. To present on the different and similarity perspective on the same issue by youth and adult and to remind everyone that once all were young before and used to have problem as normal teenage do now. Also to address the idea and problem not only to political leaders but to media and population at large to bring more change to HIV fight at large through the commitment of leaders by youth. The leaders were from different fields of profession, national politic, business, religion, International politic, media, popular product business. The question will about access to resource, treatment, information and participate in policy making. Regardless of few turned up from the audience and media, the session was the most successful of all! The discussion got into detail plan of how can leaders help youth. Many great out come came out of this session from the leaders attending the session.

This was the most important session of all and we had asked all the youth organizations that will participate at the conference to avoid clashing with this session. So we were very disappointed with the Kaiser Foundation that announced one week before the conference that Mr. Richard Gere will attend their session, which could not help but entice many audience away from this Youth Question Leader Session. Actually, this was not the only disappointing action by the Kaiser Foundation in the months of supposed collaboration between us but probably the most frustrating.

The room that once thought to be free of charge was changed into budget we had not prepared to pay but UNFPA provided some funds at a late stage, and also gave many useful comments and suggestion on the topics then let the youth committee and speakers discuss them. The final decision reach only a day before the conference when everyone meet in person and many ideas came out. The session time has been move so many times and has been cut from 2 hours to 75 minutes because no one informed us that the room has been sold to ROCHE for a satellite meeting. We later discovered that the Leadership Program Secretariat had this information for at least 3 months, but kept quiet. We believe that Lunch Time Satellite should not happen in the future. We were chased out of

the room and abused by a Roche employee who slammed the door on youth coordinator fingers.

### Youth Closing Forum

The initial idea of this session was to capture the youth idea of conferring and how in the future could youth get involve in the conference. However, the idea changed as the mention of setting up Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS (GYCA) has came up in the email discussion and developed more seriously during the conference. There were 2 small meetings set up to gather ideas on GYCA resulted in 4 goals to help youth came together as a group and move in the same direction. The Closing Forum end up discuss around that 4 goals divided into regional discussion. The result from the session were used in developing the paper on GYCA which will be present to UNAIDS who promise to be major actor on the setting up GYCA.

### Global Village Session

#### Caucus

The team has gone through all the program session and exhibition that related to youth and those session that are interesting, and prepare all the information into sheet of what's going on each day. The morning sessions were to discuss what happened the day before and what will happen on that day, however, the report of each day could not finish on the daily basis as rapporteurs were not handing in their work. Many comments came that the caucus was too early and delegate could not either get up on time or could not catch the bus.

### Late Morning Forum

The Forum held in the Global Village Meeting Room (CV12), sessions were selected from the application sent in through email and letter. We end up with 2 workshops and selected 8 speakers for 2 sessions.

- The workshop on '**Youth in the Third Decade of HIV/AIDS**' by Dabesaki Mac-Ikemenyama and Henry Hudson went very well and received many media attention because the 2 speakers presented are exceptionally great, comments were that more material would be gladly welcome. The workshop/forum dealt with issue of youth have to help ourselves to fight HIV/AIDS as well as keep themselves to be alive from society.
- The workshop on '**Myth and Reality**' by Fred Ayifi present the beliefs in different region on HIV/AIDS that was not true and how to help people overcome that into understanding the society. The session had fewer turn up and the time were shorter because it run at the same time as 'Youth Question Leaders' and follow by the youth march to protect on opening ceremony speech by Mr. Kofi Anan, comment were that the topic was not interesting enough.
- The session on '**Young Women and HIV**' by Shivangini Sawhney (India), Sarah Stumba (USA), Alicia Ross (Australia) dealing with issue of young women in different part of the world such as prostitution, sexual violent, rape, force marriage, and teenage sexuality. The session received very warm welcome and best comments because of the selection of speakers and replacement were very

- good and their knowledge and experience on the subject is real and very useful to other people. Some of the speakers are replacement speakers and would appreciate more time to prepare their material as one could not get transit visa and another experience flight delayed, some of the speakers do not know what to say and very panic before the session, however during the session, they became very natural on talking to the audiences. The audiences were very keen on asking questions and wish to have more on discussion platform with speakers.
- The session on ‘Youth and the Changing Society’ has problems with speakers that had visa problems, could not attend and replacement could not be found in time for the session. The session supposed to be shortened but we had to cancel the session at the end as the 2 other speakers show up half an hour and an hour late despite the reminder message we sent a day before the session to the hotel.

### Networking Session

To give youth a general overview of the international organizations and players involved in international health and specifically the fight against HIV/AIDS and prepare youth with some background knowledge when these organizations are mentioned in conference sessions, and may help facilitate discussions with other conference participants. As well as discussion on specific careers in international health, and particularly HIV/AIDS, about different tracks and career possibilities in the health field, skills and qualifications needed for these careers. The 4 sessions; The Real ABCs - What Works in HIV Prevention Strategies, Youth-Adult Partnerships Formation for Effective HIV/AIDS Programming, Youth’s Role in the Global Fund, Building stronger, more sustainable partnerships between youth activists across the world, all were organized by YouthNet and has been well prepared, delegates enjoy all the session and received many ideas from the networking session to help related directly to their real life. The food that were prepared for delegates were too much and the number of food could be cut down, however the food was well appreciated as the session was finished at 7.30 pm.

### Global Village Youth Lounge

#### Lounge discussion area

The idea was proposal from the working group to the youth committee on the idea of the discussion forum and invited speakers and consultant for consultation table were invited from the contact of other networking bar. The area has been discuss and changed 3 times with Ovation Company who construct the overall Global Village design and has been very helpful in our need and urgent request. The overall design were to have discussion forum in the morning and afternoon, activities table, lounging table, consultation table, plasma screen to show the VDO sent in on youth activities around the world. The organizing committee has appointed one staff member to be lounge manager looking after all the activities at the lounge area and solve any problem that might appear. The lounge manager and delegate/visitor to the lounge commented that the area became more of Thai youth area than letting other international including other Asian youth join in because most of the seat was taken. The lounge manager discussed with Thai youth and tried to solve the problem, and the area got better however still dominate by Thai youth

who did not want to go to the session in the conference because the language barrier and felt that there are more to learn/do at the lounge area. The discussion was divided into morning session and afternoon session changed everyday. The most successful session was the policy making and involvement of young people where most turn up and discussion on how can young people be recognized as respectable leaders in their own right. Other sessions were sexual reproductive health education in-out of school, GLBT, IDU, young women, YFS, positive youth and treatment.

#### IT area

The area has been help by Ministry of ICT on the computer equipments and the system has been help by Whale project by Bundit Computer Center and PATH where we hired system expert to process the network and solve any problem that might occur. However, the chat room did not attract many users during the conference as they were all too busy with other things like chatting to real live people!

#### Food Corner

The discussion on food corner has change several time due to misunderstanding in the workgroup and the rental food stall as the demand from the food stall were to high and the team could not meet that demand that changing everyday. The contact representing the workgroup has not been in close discussion with the organizing team and has mislead the team and cause confusion. This is probably the workgroup came from those who has been working on high position and has not doing well in contacting and working with other people, regular meeting could help solve this problem.

#### Rally

The preparation was done during the conference at the lounge area to make banners, flags and T-Shirts. The comment was that there were not enough buses to go back to the hotel when the rally was over.

#### Other

During the conference due to the speech at the opening ceremony given by UN Secretary General Mr. Kofi Anan, that did not mention the important of youth as leaders, has upset many youth participant and the need to organized march to protect and be recognized were request by youth participants. The coordinator has check the fact with the UN Agency and consult with community liaison in the possibility of a peaceful and constructive march/protest and came out with the route of march from Hall L to the stage area in front of Hall 6. The stage has been given permission to use from the cultural program for period of 1 hours during lunch time. The arrangement was to give the letter of complaint to representative from UN Agencies which has been arrange with the coordinator the night before the march. Everything went successfully with the help community liaison, UN Agencies and the youth participant. At the rally 60 or more youth/adult turned up to help protesting. Many people stopped by to listen to the issue and showed support in our action as well as media who became very supportive in the issue.

## Scholarship

The youth scholarship has the purpose to bring youth to the conference as youth has few amount of funding needed to bring themselves to the conference. Many youth came under the scholarship but also help out in many activities and shown their leadership ability although not all performed as well as we hoped. The process of working out on logistic issues took most of the time from the staff. Next conference, youth should be integrate into the main conference scholarship as it was very confusing to many youth, staff both IAS and youth staff on the information and process. If there were only one head of command, the reinvention of the wheel would not have had to happen.

### Report on Scholarship Process

The Scholarship has been divided into 3 areas base on geographical areas; Thailand, Mekong Region and International. The reason was because of the specification in the funding received that selected the group that will receive the scholarship. The application has been drawn up based on the application form of the main conference scholarship. After selection process and traveling arrangement, when recipients arrived at the hotels, the organizing team placed 2 staffs at the hotel to solve any problems that might occur. The duty of staffs were to hand out allowance, information about the conference, information on hotel, travel, and Bangkok, and to look after the well-being of recipients. Even though many process has been made to make sure but problems still occurred and some of the problems were not known to the staff until after the conference.

### Thailand (Detail in Thai Youth Report)

Has used the local committee for selection process as the application is in Thai and selection process for Thai youth national include participation in camp and essays selection.

### Mekong

Due to the lacking of application that sent in by the Mekong region, the request has sent to organization that dealing with youth in each area to send in the names of youth that they would recommend. Up to 10 spaces were available for Mekong youth.

### International

Had received 241 applications, only have budget to select 50 international participations for full scholarship (registration, travel, accommodation, living allowance for 6 days). After discussing the logic and finance available with the main scholarship conference has turn out that the youth scholarship will be follow the example of the main scholarship in criteria and regional percentage roughly. Due to financial constraint around 20 or a little bit less have to be from Asia and Pacific Islands regions which left with 30 from anywhere in the world.

The scoring has been done according to youth committee judgment and after the final average score of 3 reviewers came out that score was determined in ranking according to region (i.e. Asia region - scholarship will be given to top 17 applicants who score the most). However a minimum of one scholarship would be awarded for each country with the applicant with acceptable score that meet the standard. Also the consideration that allocation by country in the state of HIV/AIDS epidemic were noted.

The committee has asked to ignore the 'Personal information and contact detail part' and concentrate on the other part especially the questions that applicants have to write in their answers.

### Scoring method

The following information was scored for allocation of a youth scholarship:

1. Please note which conference that you have attended  
Attended (5 points) (only if 'ATTENDED' , (3 point) for NEVER received Scholarship)
2. How long have you been involved in HIV/AIDS field?  
0-2 year (5 points) 2-5 years (10 points) 5+years (10 points)
3. Age  
12-17 (7 Points) 18-23 (10 points) 24-30 (5 points)
4. What do you think the priority issues related to HIV/AIDS? (10 points)
5. How will attending this conference benefit your community? (10 points)

The program has hire travel agency company M.O.C. to look after all the travel arrangement of the scholarship recipients. The accommodation has been book 6 months in advance with The Impala Hotel which has become the official hotel for the youth scholarship. The hotel has given special rate and helping with many problems occur during the participants stay. The transportation for the pre-conference has been arrange 3 month prior to the conferences with some difficulty and final change of plan the transport has not been final until the last day of the pre-conference. There were 2 volunteer staffs staying at the hotel during the period of the pre-conference until the last day of the conference to help the recipient in any need that might come up. The allowance provided was the same as the International Scholarship Program, ie. total of US\$108/person as participant will have to pay for their own Visa application, airport tax and travel from-to airport-hotel, and any extra in the hotel. 12 participants failed to pay for their hotel extras and did not check out properly. There was also a case of sexual misconduct by one of the participant which was completely unacceptable and the perpetrator will be recommended to disqualified for any scholarship award in future.

### Difficulty, Problems and Recommendation

- Staff Problems  
We had hired one staff to look after the scholarship in term of filing, email, answer any simple question that has been put in FAQ, contact travel agency on travel arrangement, confirm travel arrangement and send information about the conference to applicants. The staff has not fulfill the request and has cause confusion as she has sent wrong acceptance letter to those who did not received scholarship. In the first occasion, the coordinator though that it might be misunderstanding in the order request her to perform duty and has explain in detail about the requirement but second mistake came which cause time and money, in the third occasion we has asked her not to come back. There are also other small mistake that we have to rearrange whole new data applicants as some

emails and address are missed place. Suggestion that went the first mistake has been discover, coordinator should have closer look and ready to take actions as all the mistake staff made, the organization has to take responsibility about it.

- Email  
Many of applicants did not have a personal email address and used others addresses, such as an organization that had agreed to help them – but then, it seemed that the emails were not getting through to them. A lot of applicants also did not read email carefully and missed out on information in the longer email.
- Hotel and show up (Airline, Thai travel)  
There are scholarship recipients that did not read email carefully and did not know where and how to get to the hotel. What could be done was to inform in large bold letter that said '**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**', also to ask the recipient to reply email that they have received them.
- 1<sup>st</sup> time travelers  
Some youth are a 1<sup>st</sup> time traveler. Some travel alone and miss their home; they took time to adjust and needed help and kindness from staff team to help them adjust. The staffs that place on duty at the hotel were really helpful when problems like this occurred however, when it came to more serious problems, delegates do not really felt like discussing them with other people. Staff should be inform delegates that if there were any problems even how big or small, please do contact them immediately. Some of the youth also have problem with food as the taste is too spicy for them, thus they did not eat out from the restaurants of the hotel even we had inform that there are other food court nearby. Many of the youth do not look after their allowance well and come back and ask for more money when asked what they have done, answer was that they used the money to buy personal things (camera, mobile phone, cd player, etc.).
- Extra at the hotel  
Despite what the staff had inform the recipient about the hotel and money set aside for emergency, some of them did not do what had been asked to pay for their hotel extra and some left without returning the key. When asked to return the money that has been pay by the organization, we did not hear back from them again. There are 2 cases; alcoholic drink in the mini bar and phone call, recommendation that the next time hotel should take out all the mini bar and lock the overseas phone call, also the organization should make at least 3 letters (email when they first received notice of scholarship, email one month before the conference with all other detail about hotel and transport, and by letter that inform specifically on the hotel arrangement when recipients arrived). Some of them should be consider not received the scholarship again in the future. There are 3 levels of misconduct in which level 2 and 3 should be taken seriously;
  1. Did not pay but promised to send money
  2. Did not pay, disappear and could not get in contact again
  3. Did not pay, left without informing anyone before the end of the conference by changing flight without authorization.

#### - Sexual Misconduct

One case came to our knowledge after the conference was over. Apparently, one guy forced his way into girl's bedroom and would not leave until the girl that has been his target agreed to walk with him back to his room. He then forced her to come inside the room and locked her inside. Luckily the girl's roommate went to ask for help from other girls and a group of girls demanded the person to open his door and return the girl. The situation was fast enough that the girl has not been harm physically but emotionally tormented. Organization should understand that youth scholarship recipients may need more care than the adult recipients, and should have strategies in place to deal with difficult incidents like this. For example, if we had known about this incident during the conference, should the guy have been sent home?

### **Conclusion**

As the fight will have to go on, the next generation needs to be armed and join forces, among young people as well as partnership with other in the community. The line drawn between youth-adult will fade away. Equality, respect and understanding will create sustainable and successful network that equipped us in this endeavors. The future course of the epidemic depends on more efforts mounted today to prevent HIV infection among young people, make treatment available to sustain the well being of positive youth, and educate to create understanding in the society. As we have been expected as 'Leaders of Tomorrow', young people will need to step up and shape the world with our own hands. To do so we have to be given access to information, access to care and services, access to resource, and access to policy making to enable us to make the change happen.

### **Successful Outcomes**

- UNFPA under Dr. Obaid had change the rule of employment to reduce the minimum age for employment at UNFPA feom 24 years of age to just 18.
- MTV has change the idea of going on pure prevention advocacy to include other topics.
- Global Youth Coalition on AIDS is being developed and hopefully will see result by next year.

### **Recommendation**

During the period of organization and at the conference, many issues came up that need to be put clear for the conference that will follow. Three major issues have been discussed and questions was put forward in the evaluation sheet to raised delegate of youth and non-youth opinions.

- What age that should define 'Youth'?  
There are 2 ideas that went around from the start of the program of at what age should be define 'youth'. Most organizations working with youth set an upper limit of ages 24 years, and often a lower limit as well, eg. age 21. However, youth often defines themselves even older, eg. up to 26 years. From the evaluation and questionnaires, delegates at the conference defined the term youth as young people at the age of 26 and below. We felt that the older youth were very important to the movement, as the added maturity enabled them to contribute more effectively.

- Why should youth be part of the “community” (CPC) instead of having separate Program?  
Some issues of youth should be in separate session from other but in many other issues youth experiencing the same difficulty as adult. The issues should be solved together and not left it to one side only. Youth should be able to intervene/participate through the whole conference as well as having some specific session to discuss among youth and those adult who keen on the issues. We believe a mixture of youth-only session plus encouraging youth to join throughout the whole conference was essential.
- Duty of organizing team on ‘Youth Delegates’  
The organizing team felt that many questions prior to the conference were direct to the youth activities as ‘babysitter’. It should be made clear that the activities are aiming to create and give a chance for youth to participate, the judgment whether one is suitable for attending should be up to parents and not the organizing team. However the issue of looking after youth delegates is another issue that role should be defined clearer in paper.
- Organizer should put youth representative in COC, and other selection committee to make sure that all youth perspectives are integrated in every component of the conference.
- Include youth scholarship under the main scholarship, use the same method except for all youth application used another committee that have at least 3/4 youth.
- Be firm on the deadline and cut out all scholarship recipients who did not respond. Make sure all parties know on the condition has been agree and clear penalties for those who did not follow the agreement.
- Make sure that all speakers and moderator has 2<sup>nd</sup> choice prepared and waiting to step in, in case there was no show.
- National youth preparation is really a different task to developing youth activities within the conference. The national youth preparation may be better placed within the general outreach program, instead of with the youth team. However, if there is sufficient staff and funding in the youth team, then this work could remain with them.
- Do not invite those who had done wrong during the XV conference into other conference ever again.