



Action against AIDS Germany

Life is a human right
www.aids-kampagne.de

Berlin, Dec. 10 2021

International Human Rights Day 2021

Action against AIDS Germany: World AIDS Day Conference on eliminating inequality for the human right to health

The international Human Rights Day on 10 December commemorates the Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

Action against AIDS Germany uses this day as an opportunity to publish the documentation of the virtual international conference held on 1 December. 177 participants from 38 countries spoke with international guests and civil society representatives about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. They also discussed, which experiences with the HIV, TB and malaria epidemics can be transferred to the work with COVID-19 and which role the new German government, sometimes referred to as a "Global Health Champion" could play in the measures to be taken and their financing.

GLOBAL HEALTH CHAMPION GERMANY?!

From HIV to SARS-CoV-2
– What have we (not) learned?

INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL CONFERENCE
DECEMBER 1ST, 2021

Aktionsbündnis gegen AIDS
Leben ist ein Menschenrecht

AIDS ACTION EUROPE

Deutsche Aidshilfe

gfan
ASIA - PACIFIC

GNP+
GLOBAL NETWORK OF NATIONAL UNITS WITH HIV

The timing of the conference was well chosen: The new federal German government is in the process of forming. In his inaugural speech this week, the new Chancellor Olaf Scholz emphasised the focus on eradicating poverty and hunger. In order to eliminate inequalities, the right to health in the sense of the SDGs must also be brought into focus. This is the only way to sustainably control existing and future pandemics.

Access to HIV medication is a question of survival for people with HIV. Even though much has been achieved in the last 20 years - according to UNAIDS, at least 30 million people currently have access to treatment, which is provided, for example, by Global Fund programmes - there are still around 10 million people with HIV waiting for treatment. There are additional 1.5 million new HIV infections in 2020.

In his report on the second session of the conference on changing the global health architecture, Filipino community activist from Thailand Jeffry Acaba writes:

"Two years after the discovery of COVID-19, we keep learning from the same mistakes we make with HIV: It is not enough to have the means to fight a pandemic. We need to pass on these funds as soon as possible. We need to ensure that we fund interventions that are delivered by the most affected populations. Whether the current global health architecture is redefined or reset due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the world needs an architecture that is more accountable, especially to those most left behind."

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic associated with Lock Downs is yet to be assessed. Prof Salim Abdool Karim presented a study from South Africa during the UNAIDS PCB meeting this week, according to which 47.6% fewer HIV tests were conducted in April 2020 compared to the previous year due to the lockdown. In the same period, 46.2% fewer people were able to start HIV treatment.

Figures like these are a reminder that the human right to health is far from being realised. To change the current plight, UNAIDS calls on the global community to eliminate existing inequalities. Only by eliminating inequalities and barriers in access to care systems, as repeatedly reported for people living with HIV and key populations living with HIV, can the HIV epidemic be ended.

That this also applies to COVID-19 pandemic is obvious: while enough COVID-19 vaccines from different manufacturers are available in countries with sufficient financial resources, vaccination rates in low-income countries remain far below the agreed and expected target lines. However, the pandemic can only be contained and overcome if every human being is protected.

It is now up to the new German federal government to prove itself as a "Global Health Champion" and ensure that all people have access to covid vaccination. This can best be done by temporarily suspending the TRIPS agreement on intellectual property rights on COVID-19 technologies, as called for by South Africa and India and supported by the majority of countries.

To end inequality, the inclusion of people living with HIV and the communities that represent them is another important prerequisite. Community activist Bryan Teixeira from France writes in his report on the last session of our conference:

"To date, GFATM has saved some 44 million lives and halved the number of HIV infections. Its return on investment is substantial. GFATM knows from experience that a lack of involvement and response to the AIDS pandemic by communities most affected by HIV leads to an overall weakness in HIV work in a country. Therefore, GFATM focuses on strengthening activities in communities, such as collaboration between people on the ground, community-led interventions, expanding spaces for communities, and rights-based approaches to address inequality."

Find out more about the conference here:

[Global Health Champion Germany?! From HIV to SARS-CoV-2 | Aktionsbündnis gegen AIDS \(aids-kampagne.de\)](https://www.aids-kampagne.de/en/global-health-champion-germany-2021-from-hiv-to-sars-cov-2-aktionsbuehndnis-gegen-aids-aidskampagne-de)

Links the conference videos in English, German and Russian:

[Internationaler Tag der Menschenrechte | Aktionsbündnis gegen AIDS \(aids-kampagne.de\)](https://www.aids-kampagne.de/en/internationaler-tag-der-menschenrechte-aktionsbuehndnis-gegen-aids-aidskampagne-de)

Links to the conference reports from a community perspective in English and German:

Jeffry Acaba:

[jeffry_acaba - what the world needs is a more accountable global health architecture - e.pdf \(aids-kampagne.de\)](#)

Bryan Teixeira:

[bryan_teixeira_championing_a_world_without_aids - e.pdf \(aids-kampagne.de\)](#)

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