

Healthlink attends International AIDS Conference 2010

The XVIII International AIDS Conference was held in Vienna, Austria from 18 to 23 July 2010. Over 19,300 participants from 197 countries attended with more than 248 sessions throughout the week. The theme of the conference was 'Rights here, Right now'. The event was seen as an opportunity to highlight the deadline for universal access set by world leaders at Gleneagles in 2005 and to expand access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.



Healthlink Worldwide stall in the global village

Healthlink Worldwide attended the conference along with eight of our partner organisations. Our representatives presented two posters and manned a stall in the global village, sharing information about our and our partner's projects and linking up with other organisations. The two posters were based on our experiences and lessons learned through the International Memory Project (IMP) and our Positive Action strategic grant. Both these posters can be downloaded [here](#).

A number of our partners ran sessions at the conference too. Felix Limbani, Director of Programmes at YONECO (Malawi), facilitated a participatory session on working with youth in addressing HIV and AIDS and Agnes Apea, Director of NAWCOLA (Uganda) spoke on a panel discussing approaches to home-based care. KANCO also had a stall in the global village and facilitated some sessions and exhibited posters at the conference. The UK Consortium on AIDS lead the UK response to HIV and AIDS, and had an exhibition stand to represent UK-based organisations working on HIV and AIDS.

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A rally for human rights took place on Tuesday, 20 July, which saw thousands of protesters march through the streets of Vienna supporting the 'Rights here, Right now' theme of the conference by calling for human rights to be included in all efforts to prevent new infections and provide care and treatment for people living with HIV. Annie Lennox, a HIV and AIDS campaigner (SING Campaign) performed and closed the rally, echoing calls for human rights as the fundamental component of the



Healthlink representatives at the rally

global response.

The Vienna Declaration was also launched at the International AIDS Conference. The declaration is a statement seeking to improve community health and safety by calling for the incorporation of scientific evidence into illicit drug policies. The declaration aims to bring these issues to the attention of governments and international agencies, and to illustrate that drug policy reform is a matter of urgent international significance. For more information and to sign up visit the Vienna declaration website <http://www.viennadeclaration.com/>

The conference provided an abundance of discussion, debate, new findings, innovative approaches and networking opportunities for all. It also celebrated the gains, particularly the record increase in the number of people accessing life-saving drugs, but clearly conveyed the need to maintain this trend and prevent a lapse in focus and financial commitments by global leaders.