

# INTERNATIONAL TREATMENT PREPAREDNESS COALITION (ITPC)

## *Fact Sheet*

### ***Six Million People Need Antiretroviral Treatment Today, Less than Ten Percent Have Access to It!***

*“Somewhere in the lives you lead, there has to be time carved out to shout from the rooftops....tell the world and its governments, especially the governments of the West, that an apocalypse has unfolded, and it has to be stopped in its tracks before it engulfs us all. If morality is found wanting in the actions of the governments, let it be rediscovered in the advocacy of individuals.”*

**- Stephen Lewis, UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa**

#### **What is the ITPC?**

The international Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC) is a worldwide coalition of people living with HIV/AIDS and their advocates. The ITPC advocates for universal and free access to treatment for AIDS for all HIV+ people and greater input from HIV+ people in decisions that affect their lives. We work to achieve these goals at the local, regional and international level.

#### **History of the ITPC**

In 2002, a group of treatment activists from around the world identified the need for a stronger international response to address the need to provide HIV/AIDS treatment to millions of people who require it around the world. In March 2003, one hundred and twenty five people with HIV/AIDS and their advocates from sixty-seven countries gathered in Cape Town, South Africa at the *International Treatment Preparedness Summit* to discuss strategies to establish and strengthen:

- Local and regional efforts to educate communities about treatment and mobilize them to demand access to these drugs and;
- local, regional and international efforts to secure the commitment and policy changes needed from governments, multilateral institutions and the private sector to expedite access to treatment for HIV/AIDS.

The ITPC grew out of this meeting as activists from around the world sought to join forces to advance these strategies.

#### **What Makes the ITPC Unique?**

ITPC is the only international coalition of people living with HIV/AIDS and their supporters solely devoted to advocacy on HIV/AIDS treatment access. It is a broad coalition of people from all affected regions comprised of people working in and for the community in their own countries and with strong expertise in HIV/AIDS treatment and related issues. As a community voice, it combines the knowledge of the grassroots with technical expertise, and has been successful in communicating the concerns of people living with HIV/AIDS who need treatment to governments, United Nations agencies, the large pharmaceutical manufacturers among other public and private bodies that influence the progress of the establishment, scale-up and sustainability of HIV/AIDS treatment programs.

#### **Collaborative Fund for HIV Treatment Preparedness**

Currently, the ITPC has embarked on a partnership with the Tides Foundation, to form the Collaborative Fund for HIV Treatment Preparedness to directly fund local and regional treatment literacy and advocacy efforts. The Collaborative Fund has set up Community Review Panels in each region to locally define funding priorities and make funding decisions on specific projects. Treatment advocacy and literacy workshops have been held or are scheduled in every region and a grant-making program has been initiated to support local organizations' work on these topics. So far, the ITPC and Tides Foundation have raised over US \$4 million for Collaborative Fund activities

from various donors some of which include the World Health Organization (WHO), the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Open Society Institute.

### **Other Activities & Accomplishments**

- *Solidarity Day in Support of Treatment Access in South Africa.* In April 2003, ITPC members joined in demonstrations in their own countries to urge the South African government to sign and implement a national treatment and prevention plan that includes antiretroviral treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS.
- *Solidarity Day in Support of Thai Drug Users Network.* In June 2003 ITPC members joined in demonstrations in their own countries to protest the extra-judicial killing of Thai drug users and to press for HIV/AIDS treatment for Intravenous Drug Users.
- *First meeting of people with HIV/AIDS with the Director General of WHO.* In November 2003, a delegation of eight people with HIV/AIDS and their advocates from ITPC travelled to Geneva for the first meeting between a Director General of the WHO and people living with HIV/AIDS from around the world. The group discussed the WHO's 3X5 initiative to scale-up antiretroviral therapy to 3 million by 2005. The group also met with senior staff at UNAIDS and the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to discuss access to treatment.
- *Inclusion of active drug users in the WHO 3X5 initiative.* In February 2004, ITPC members, supported by over two hundred people which included drug users, HIV-positive people and their advocates from around the globe, called on the Director General of the WHO to ensure the equal involvement of active drug users in the scale-up of antiretroviral therapy proposed by the WHO and take a leading role in recommending governments to make healthcare principles a priority over the law enforcement approach to illicit drug use.
- *Inclusion of Methadone on the WHO's List of Essential Drugs and Medicines.* In collaboration with harm reduction advocates across the world. ITPC members pushed for the inclusion of methadone on the WHO's list of essential drugs and medicines as a part of a comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS care. Methadone was approved for inclusion on the list in March 2005. This issue was first raised in the ITPC meeting with the WHO Director General in November 2003.
- *World Community Advisory Board Meetings with Brand-Name and Generic Pharmaceutical Companies.* In February 2004, ITPC members met with Boehringer Ingelheim, Glaxo Smith Kline and Roche to discuss concerns about drug pricing and research practices. In particular, ITPC advocated for new policies by multinational companies on pricing for middle-income countries. In January 2005, ITPC members met with generic drug makers, Cipla, Ranbaxy, Hetero and Strides, to discuss quality control over generic manufacturing, paediatric formulations, second-line regimens and pricing policies.
- *Solidarity Day with FrontAIDS in Russia.* In December 2004, ITPC members sent faxes to protest to the police station in Kaliningrad Russia, where dozens of activists from FrontAIDS were being held after staging a demonstration to demand access to treatment and human rights for drug users. All activists were promptly released from custody.
- *Advocacy for the revision of the antiretroviral procurement list in Moldova.* In 2003, ITPC members in the Newly Independent States discovered that Moldova was procuring an expensive, sub-optimal antiretroviral regimen with its grant from the Global Fund. Through advocacy with the Global Fund, the WHO and others, ITPC was instrumental in rectifying this situation.
- *Protest on Health Sector Spending Caps by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.* In September 2003, ITPC members sent a letter to the Managing Director of the IMF and the President of the World Bank to urge them to modify macroeconomic policies that keep health sectors from growing to meet the needs of the AIDS epidemic.

### **Governance & Structure of the ITPC**

The ITPC is a social movement, a coalition of individuals committed to treatment access, not a non-governmental organization or a network with a secretariat. This loose structure allows us to invest our energies and resources in our treatment advocacy and literacy work instead of having to sustain an organizational structure and move quickly to adapt and evolve to the changing realities of the epidemic. A Code of Governance for the ITPC is available at:

<http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/internationaltreatmentpreparedness>

### **International Steering Group, Regional Advisory Committees and Thematic Working Groups**

An International Steering Group (ISG) provides strategic guidance to the movement and deals with critical operational issues. The ISG is comprised of 30 treatment activists, 15 men and 15 women, from the following regions:

- Central & Western Africa;
- Eastern Africa;
- North Africa & the Middle East;
- Southern Africa;
- East Asia & the Pacific;
- South Asia;
- South East Asia;
- Caribbean;
- Central America;
- South America;
- The Baltic's & the Newly Independent States;
- Eastern Europe;
- Australia, New Zealand & Japan;
- Western Europe;
- The United States & Canada

Regional Advisory Committees (RACs) have been established to foster treatment literacy and advocacy efforts in their respective regions and identify issues to be addressed in the international setting. Finally, Thematic Working Groups have been established to foster work on specific issues (e.g. treatment literacy; women & girls; intravenous drug users; health sector development; drug development, pricing & procurement; trade and intellectual property; HIV-TB)

### **Funding**

The ITPC does not raise funds for day-to-day activities. Members donate their time voluntarily. Funds have been raised for certain projects initiated under the aegis of ITPC (e.g. meeting with generic antiretroviral drug manufacturers), but allied organizations act as the fiscal sponsor and provide financial management for these activities.

### **Membership**

As of August 2005, ITPC had over 500 members from over 100 countries. Membership is invited from all those individuals, people living with HIV/AIDS and their advocates, who are committed to fight for HIV/AIDS treatment access. Members are expected to participate and contribute to the best of their ability. While members are free to act under the name of the movement, they may only act in capabilities that enhance access to treatment, but may not act in formal capabilities such as fundraising without the approval of the International Steering Group. There is no fee or other requirements for membership in ITPC. The ITPC is a coalition of individuals, although members may be active participants or leaders in other local, regional or international networks, NGOs or other groups. Membership in the ITPC is initiated by joining the ITPC email group at <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/internationaltreatmentpreparedness>.