CALL TO ACTION

for the translation of HIV research into local policy and practice in Latin America and the Caribbean.

We are working to respond to the HIV epidemic in Latin America and the Caribbean as advocates, researchers and scientist, clinicians, people living with HIV (PLHIV), representatives of key populations and other members of civil society. We gathered in Mexico City, Mexico, on 17, 18 and 21 April 2018 for a meeting with the theme, Translating Science to end HIV in Latin America and the Caribbean. The meeting was organized by the International AIDS Society to discuss strategies to timely translate the latest scientific findings into effective HIV programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly with regard to prevention strategies, such as HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis (nPEP).

We strongly believe that the defence of human rights, along with interventions based on scientific evidence, are the foundations to build an effective response to HIV. We are calling for collective action to work and influence decision making on policy uptake and implementation to accelerate access to evidence-based, high-impact HIV prevention interventions in our region.

We are aware of the different situations across Latin America and the Caribbean countries and local communities for PLHIV, men who have sex with men, transgender people, sex workers, adolescents and youth, and other groups in situation of vulnerability facing structural barriers to equitable access to quality health services, including cultural and socio-economic barriers, criminalization, stigma and discrimination. In this context, we propose the following five priority actions to effectively translate the latest scientific findings into services with a vision of human rights and right to health, especially focusing on most at-risk individuals and providing them with all available and most effective tools to remain HIV free:

1. EDUCATION AND IMPROVED HEALTH LITERACY ON SEXUAL HEALTH

   • Provide comprehensive and quality sexual health education, including PrEP and nPEP, to strengthen health literacy of key populations and other members of civil society.

   • Build knowledge and capacity of healthcare providers around the provision of comprehensive and quality sexual health services, including PrEP and nPEP, improving competences to provide differentiated care for specific populations.

2. ADVOCACY FOR PREP AND NPEP

   • Promote and engage in advocacy and demand creation for prevention services, including PrEP and nPEP, based on the right to health and the right to access all available and most effective tools to remain HIV free.

   • Build a strong narrative around PrEP as part of a package for sexual health and as part of HIV combination prevention interventions.

   • Seek opportunities for dialogue and discussion on HIV combination prevention, including PrEP and nPEP, in the public agenda.
3. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Promote and engage multi-sector effective communication dialogues for education and promotion of HIV combination prevention and sexual health, including PrEP and nPEP.

- Promote the adoption of differentiated communication strategies to target each audience with appropriate language and messages.

- Promote creative and tailored use of social media, along with involvement of community influencers, to amplify the reach of communication strategies.

4. ENABLING NORMATIVE, LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

- Develop or update national policies and norms on HIV prevention services, including PrEP and nPEP, and with a focus on key populations.

- Address regulatory requirements, such as registration of antiretroviral medicines for prevention, and use existing mechanisms of pooled procurement to reduce costs.

- Assign domestic financial resource for HIV prevention interventions, including PrEP and nPEP, within existing planning frameworks.

- Address legal barriers that make access to healthcare services difficult for key populations and others in situations of vulnerability.

5. EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Create a multi-sectorial committee for planning implementation and monitoring of PrEP including the review of the latest scientific evidence, involving academia and civil society.

- Create and reinforce models of peer educators and outreach for key populations to improve uptake, linkage and retention in services.

- Build mechanisms for supporting community delivery systems for HIV prevention, comprehensive care and treatment services that include PrEP and nPEP.