



# YouthNet

## From Barcelona to Toronto: Experiences and Lessons Learned in Youth Involvement

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# YouthForce: Rationale

- Insufficient numbers of youth participating
- Lack of participation and meaningful contributions by young people
- Little global awareness on value of youth-adult partnerships
- Need for a focus on youth HIV/AIDS issues: programmatic actions, advocacy



## Barcelona 2002



### Purpose:

- Raise the visibility of youth participants and youth issues
- Encourage organizations to involve more youth at future events

### Results:

- Tremendous buzz – press, MTV
- More youth attended than before
- Thai youth joined Bangkok planning
- Youth invited to African First Ladies Meeting
- Commitments to bring more youth to Bangkok

*Where  
are the  
youth?*



# Bangkok 2004



## Purpose:

- Enable young people to actively participate in the science and research sessions
- Promote youth involvement in mainstream agenda and activities

## Results:

- First youth pre-conference
- 450 youth attended
- Dedicated youth sessions
- Expanded visibility campaign
- Continued good press coverage
- *“Two to Toronto”*

**I'm a  
Youth  
Ally!**

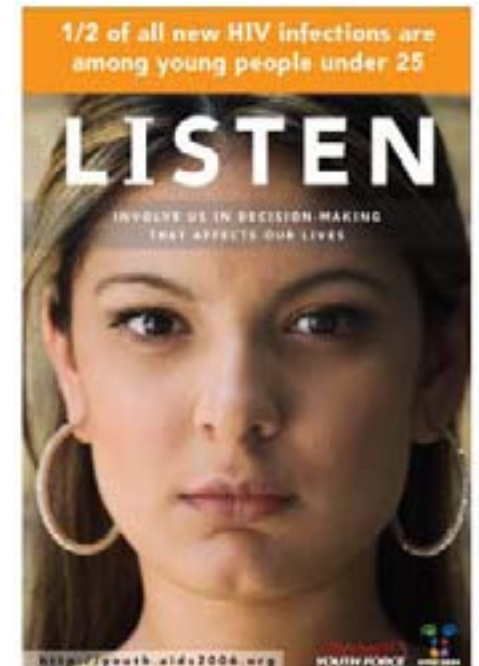


# Toronto 2006



## Purpose:

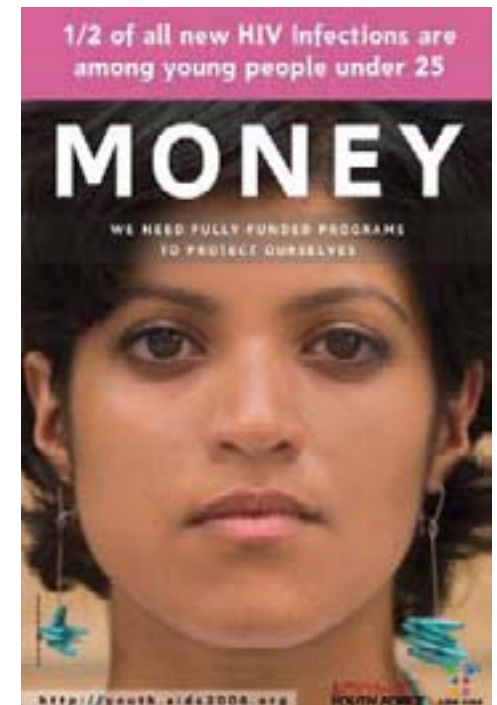
- Promote and facilitate meaningful youth participation and youth-adult partnerships
- Raise the visibility of youth HIV/AIDS issues before, during, after Toronto
- Promote concrete action
- *Building on past successes, purpose moved from solely youth participation to more strongly focus on youth HIV/AIDS issues*





# Toronto Results (1): Institutionalization

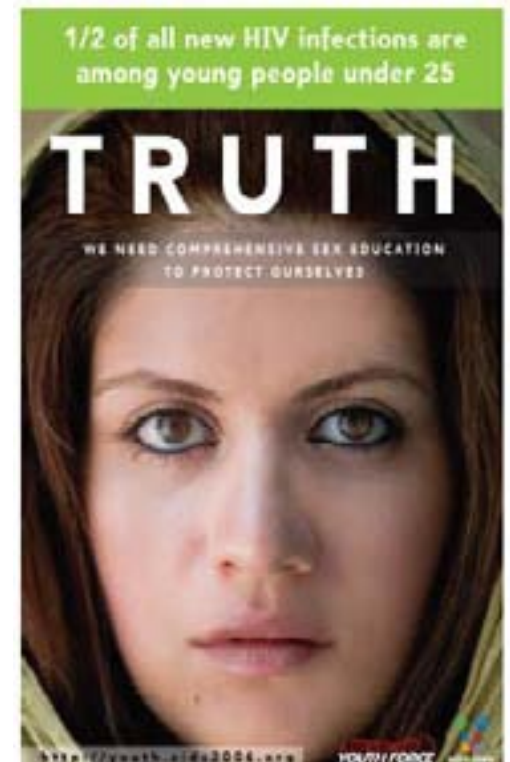
- Increased youth participation in the local host secretariat and program structure
- Increased numbers of youth scholarships
- Increased number of youth delegates: 1,000
- Pre-conference for 250 youth
- Youth presenters and youth-focused sessions





## Toronto Results (2): Successful Advocacy Campaign

- High impact media activities
- Success in moving beyond youth participation into “substantive” youth HIV/AIDS issues
- Use of key messages allowed youth to really be heard





## Toronto Results (3): Real Commitments Made

- Advocacy led to real action, not just “talk”
- High visibility and impact of commitments campaign
- 344 commitments made

1/2 of all new HIV infections are among young people under 25

# SEX

HIV IS MAINLY SPREAD THROUGH SEX  
WE NEED ACCESS TO CONDOMS  
TO PROTECT OURSELVES

Decision-makers are committing to youth

## I COMMIT to

creating a position of leadership in my organization for a young person

ensuring my clinic has youth-friendly services

collaborating with a local youth HIV/AIDS initiative

Visit the Youth-Adult Commitments Desk to make a commitment and see more samples (located in front of the Youth Pavilion)

# Commitments



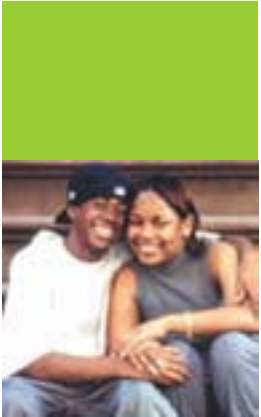
"For AIDS 2008 in Mexico, I commit to double the number of young people" – Minister of Health (Mexico)

"I will involve youth in the review of the Federal Initiative to address HIV/AIDS in Canada over the next year" – Tony Clement, Minister of Health (Canada)

"I commit to working to have youth more fully incorporated into the planning and participation of the international conferences by Mexico 2008" - Helene Gayle, President of CARE USA and President of IAS

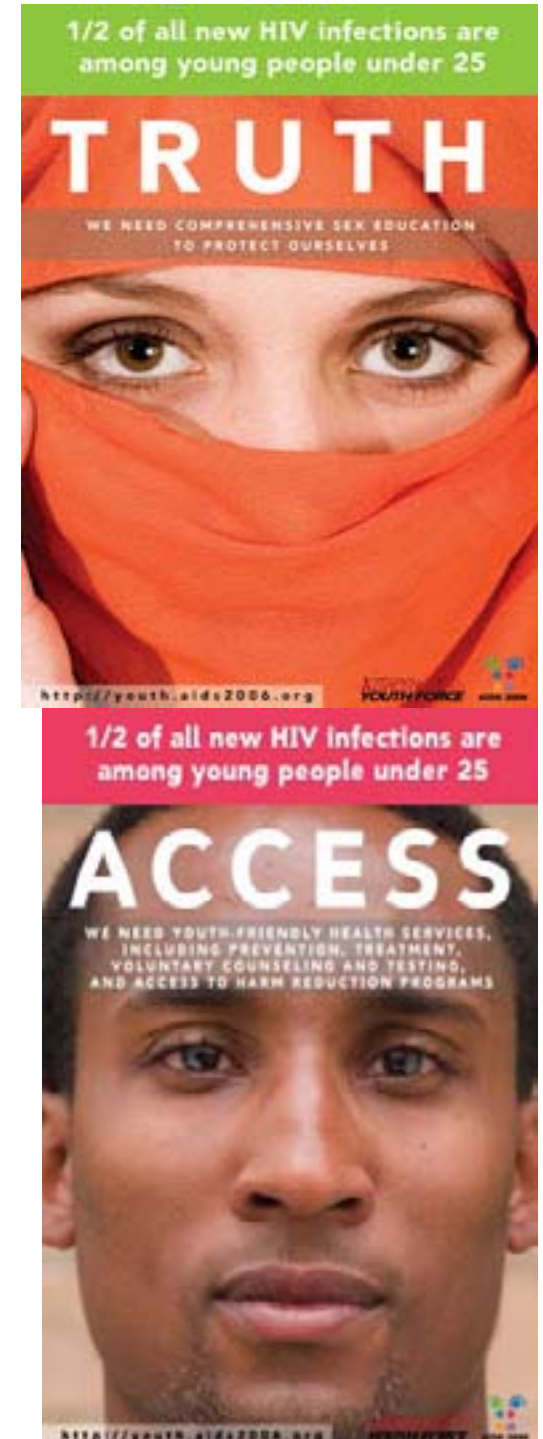
"I commit to allocate WHO resources and priorities to make information and knowledge available to young people...and making health service youth friendly" - Anders Nordstrom, Acting Director General, WHO





# From Barcelona to Toronto: What's the Impact?

1. Impact on Conference secretariat
  - Institutionalization of youth program
  - Recognition and use of youth-adult partnership model
  - Youth on the agenda
2. Impact on young people
  - Skills and capacity
  - At the Conference and elsewhere
3. Impact on leaders and partners
  - Recognition of value of youth participation and advocacy campaign
  - Real commitments





# FHI and the YouthForce: Value Added

- **Technical leadership**
- **Innovation**
- **Global Partnership**
- **Capacity building**

*“I know more about the YouthForce than anything else at the Conference”*

*Dr. Peter Piot, UNAIDS*

