



Religious Leaders and HIV/AIDS

The Regional/Arab Network Against AIDS participated in a forum on the role of religious leaders in the implementation of the Arab AIDS Strategy and fast tracking the AIDS Response in MENA. This took place on the 21st and 22nd of December 2016 in the General Secretariat of the Arab League's headquarters in Cairo. This event was organized by the League of Arab States, in coordination with UNAIDS RST MENA and UNDP. It gathered Muslim and Christian Religious Leaders who are active in the HIV cause, representatives from CHAHAMA the network of Arab Religious Leaders, and representatives from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The outputs from this forum were: 1- setting recommendations and 2- call for action from religious leaders. Religious leaders renewed their commitment regarding HIV/AIDS. RANAA was represented by its President and Executive Director, Mr. Elie El Aaraj and Ms. Golda Eid, by the support of Arab Human Rights Fund. Both made sure that the coordination with and the inclusion of CSOs in all interventions proposed by the religious leaders were highlighted as main recommendations for a better, more effective and efficient response.



The Fourth Power and HIV/AIDS



RANAA, with the support of Arab Human Rights Fund, actively participated in the regional meeting on the role of media leaders in accelerating the implementation of the Arab AIDS Strategy and the UN Political Declaration. This event was organized by the League of Arab States (LAS) in partnership with UNAIDS on World AIDS Day. This regional meeting took place on December 4-5, 2016 at the LAS headquarters with an objective to renew the commitment of media leaders to Fast-Track the AIDS Response in MENA. Key action points on key priority areas were identified towards the implementation of the UN Political Declaration and Arab AIDS Strategy at national and regional levels. RANAA highlighted the pertinent role of coordination and involvement of CSOs and made sure that this recommendation was mentioned in the final declaration.



On the same day, RANAA's president made open remarks on behalf of CSOs in the region during the World AIDS Day Celebration. This event was held following to the media workshop. Mr. Aaraj emphasized on the growing role of media as a key component in our societies; playing major role in the development of policies.

Awareness and Support

RANAA created a social media strategy on raising awareness on HIV, as well as supporting people living with HIV to continue living a healthy and happy life.

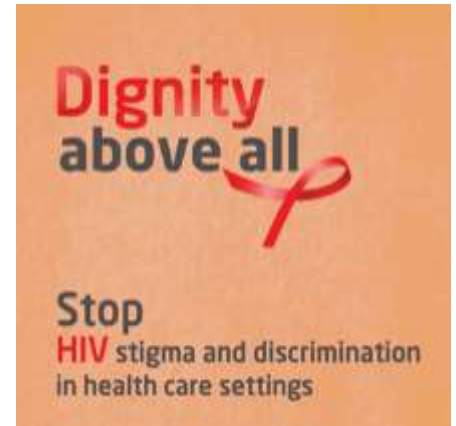
#DoYouKnow? #ItIsTime #NewResolutions





DIGNITY ABOVE ALL

RANAA has adopted the WHO slogan for the WAD 2016



A stepping stone in unifying the voices in-MENA !

RANAA, and in collaboration with the Middle East and North Africa Harm Reduction Association (MENAHRRA), **launched a regional coalition** comprising of the following HIV/AIDS and harm reduction regional networks: AFEMENA, ITPC-MENA, M-Coalition, MENA-L, MENAHRRA, MENANPUD, MENAROSA, RANAA and Y+.

The workshop took place in Beirut, from 28th till the 30th of November 2016 at the Commodore Hotel. The regional coalition focuses on building firm foundations that contribute to the creation of a conducive environment, safety, justice, and dignity and free of new HIV/AIDS and other sexual transmitted infections among key populations in the region.

and widely spread it on social media networks, and releases.

Law enforcement and HIV

RANAA attended the 2nd regional consultation on Law Enforcement and HIV response. This event was organized on the 21st and 22nd of November 2016 in Beirut –Lebanon with the purpose of building bridges between Law Enforcement and CSOs for the response to HIV in the MENA region.

The event was organized by [IDLO](#), [MENAHRRA](#), [UNAIDS](#), [UNDP LEAHN](#) and [UNODC](#).

The main objectives of this meeting were to discuss the importance of collaboration between Police and CSOs on harm reduction.



MENAHRA 3rd Regional Conference

Reduce Harm – Ensure Rights

RANAA participated in MENAHRA's 3rd Regional Conference: Reduce Harm – Ensure Rights, held in Beirut from the 23rd till the 25th of November 2016. The aim of the conference was to advocate for the adoption of harm reduction strategies in MENA and support networking among local community organizations and different stakeholders working in this field.

Since RANAA has been instrumental in mobilizing CSOs in MENA to fully engage in the development and advocacy for the Political Declaration, RANAA's



Executive Director was invited as a speaker during the plenary session: "Implementation of the 2016 Political Declaration on Ending AIDS by 2030: Priority Actions for Fast-Tracking in MENA".

RANAA's Executive Director alongside to MENAHRA's Network Coordinator, UNAIDS MENA regional Director and UNAIDS Goodwill ambassador, highlighted the important role

of CSOs as major key players in changing the face of HIV and in materializing the ambitions set in the Political Declaration.



Self—testing?

RANAA, in response to WHO's call for proposals, conducted a study on the community values and preferences regarding HIV self-testing (HIVST) and partner notification. The study was conducted in Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia with PLHIV (with emphasis on women), PWIDs, FSWs service providers and outreach workers. This study showed that knowledge of HIVST is limited and has been used by very few participants. This is due to the limited availability of the test. However, once informed about the HIVST, a big proportion of the participants, including the service providers, believe that HIVST is beneficial and should be made available. However, others dismissed the idea of including HIVST due to their belief that it could result in negative consequences if diagnosed positive without having any support, assurance and directives to future steps.

MENA Position Statement

RANAA in collaboration with the Middle East and North Africa Harm Reduction Association (MENAHRA) and UNAIDS RST MENA, invited regional Key Population (KP) networks and KP representatives to discuss and draft the MENA HIV/AIDS Position Statement (PS). The PS aimed at unifying the voice of Civil Society in the region and KPs in MENA and stipulated the region's concerns, needs, and demands. The ultimate objective of the PS was to advocate with stakeholders to include MENA's concerns in the UN political declaration to be endorsed at the High Level Meeting in New York.



Middle East and North Africa Position Statement
on HIV/AIDS
in the UN High-Level Meeting on AIDS



High Level Meeting in New York

RANAA, with the support of Arab Human Rights Fund and UNAIDS RST MENA, attended the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS that was convened in New York from 8-10 June 2016. The meeting's objective was to undertake a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS of 2006 and 2011 including successes, best practices, lessons learned, obstacles and gaps, challenges and opportunities. A new Political Declaration was developed in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and UNAIDS Strategy with the key target of ending AIDS by 2030.

RANAA President and Executive Director followed up with the national delegations in New York to push for the MENA PS in order to: 1- ensure that the most vulnerable groups are mentioned in the Political Declaration, 2- to safeguard that all issues under "human rights" are included within the global interventions, and 3- and to make sure that the critical points raised in the MENA position statement will be taken into consideration within the Political Declaration of the United Nations which will be released during the high-level meeting.

Further advocacy actions are needed to be done on national, regional and global level to cover shortcomings of the PD and to ensure an enabling conducive environment for PLHIV and KPs.



The Middle East Response Regional Meetings

RANAA attended the two regional meetings organized by the Global Fund in Amman in January and August 2016, regarding the Middle East Response (MER).

The MER is an initiative launched by the Global Fund to provide essential HIV, TB and malaria services to the refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs) and other conflict affected populations in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine and Yemen.

The objective of the meeting is to bring together national programs of the MER focus countries as well as partners and other stakeholders to discuss the scope of services and decide on key interventions and priorities for the grant.

Outcomes of the meeting should determine the direction of the MER, building on existing implementation arrangements while allowing for more flexibility and innovation to reach populations on the move.

MENA AIDS and LAW

RANAA attended the capacity building meeting on HIV-legal services providers in the MENA region, held in Amman- Jordan from 18 till 20th October 2016 organized by IDLO and UNDP.

During this meeting RANAA shared their experience on CSO networking and highlighted the challenges and solutions while creating a network.



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