

PITCH

Annual Report 2019



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Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ARASA	AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa
ART	Antiretroviral treatment
AYARHEP	Ambassadors for Youth and Adolescent Reproductive Health Programme
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
E.V.A Association	Russian Women's Network on Aids
EECA	Eastern Europe and Central Asia
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICDP	International Conference on Development and Population
ICJR	Institute for Criminal Justice Reform
ICWEA	International Community of Women living with HIV Eastern Africa
IDPC	International Drug Policy Consortium
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
NAFOPHANU	National Forum of People Living with HIV/ AIDS Networks in Uganda
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OST	Opioid substitution therapy
PEPFAR	U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PITCH	Partnership to Inspire, Transform and Connect the HIV Response
PrEP	Pre-exposure prophylaxis
REAct	Rights-Evidence-Action
SafAIDS	Southern Africa HIV & AIDS Information Dissemination Service
SAT	SRHR Africa Trust
SCDI	Supporting Community Development Initiatives
SDGs	Sustainable development goals
SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health rights
SWiM	Sex Workers in Myanmar
UHC	Universal health coverage
UHRN	Uganda Harm Reduction Network
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNYP	Uganda Network of Young People Living with HIV & AIDS
UPR	Universal periodic review
US	United States
VOLNA	Ukrainian Network of People Who Use Drugs
WHO	World Health Organization
Y+	Global Network of Young People Living with HIV
ZY+	Zimbabwe Young Positives

Approach taken in this report

In the following pages we are proud to present results to which PITCH has contributed in 2019. The complexity of advocacy means this is almost never a solo effort, and PITCH partners seek to make connections and collaborate with a wealth of other actors wherever they can.

This annual report documents the most promising examples of progress that PITCH made in 2019. To place these achievements in context, we have compared them with the gains made by the programme in 2018. Data has been included for the whole of the PITCH programme, in line with some of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' key Dialogue and Dissent indicators. We have done this to provide a clear understanding of how PITCH's results are contributing to the goals of the Dialogue and Dissent framework to strengthen civil society's capacity for advocacy.



1. Foreword

PITCH partners at Learning Event in Vietnam. James Duong for PITCH 2019

We are proud to share the key successes and learnings from the penultimate year of the Partnership to Inspire, Transform and Connect the HIV Response (PITCH). In 2019, PITCH advocacy has had inspiring results in the nine programme countries and has influenced global policy. In Nigeria, for example, PITCH partners have secured the country's first harm reduction pilots, and in Uganda they have persuaded members of parliament to take their first steps towards the decriminalisation of sex work. These changes, and the other examples in this report, mark important milestones on the road towards improved access to HIV services for key populations and adolescent girls and young women, and are cause for celebration.

At the global level, PITCH partners have overcome significant obstacles and achieved important firsts. As this report describes, in 2019 PITCH partners successfully used advocacy and campaigning to secure commitments on both HIV and the most vulnerable people in the Political Declaration agreed during the High-Level Meeting on universal health coverage (UHC). In the Ministerial Declaration that accompanied last year's UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, PITCH partners successfully lobbied for the inclusion of a stock-take of the last decade of drug policy and for the uptake of other key recommendations. In the face of an increasingly organised and vocal opposition to the health and human rights of key populations

In 2019 PITCH partners successfully used advocacy and campaigning to secure commitments on both HIV and the most vulnerable people in the Political Declaration agreed during the High-Level Meeting on universal health coverage

at the global level, these achievements mark significant steps forward.

In 2019 PITCH regional programmes in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) and Southern Africa were launched, adding valuable new dimensions to the programme. The EECA programme has increased recognition of the critical role community-based organisations play in providing HIV services, while the Southern Africa programme is helping to increase momentum in the age of consent for accessing sexual and reproductive health services in the region. Having more structured regional programmes has also created important new opportunities for synergies between the different levels of PITCH advocacy.

At the time of writing, the PITCH partnership, and the entire world, is adapting to an unprecedented challenge posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, with significant implications for health, human rights and the global economy. Naturally, country lockdowns and travel bans are affecting PITCH programme implementation. PITCH partners are having to adapt or delay their activities, and in some cases cancel them. PITCH staff at Frontline AIDS and Aidsfonds, as well as our country focal points, are doing all we can to support our partners through this crisis, helping them to adjust their work plans, budgets and operating models to mitigate the risks and continue our common effort towards achieving PITCH's goals.

In late 2019, following careful analysis, we made the strategic decision to invest nearly €360,000 in UHC advocacy and domestic resource mobilisation. In early 2020, before lockdown hit, we brought together global, regional, and national PITCH partners at our annual policy summit, with an

agenda focussed on UHC and sustainability. In the remainder of 2020, we will further strengthen partner capacity on these topics, and work with them to design and implement country-specific advocacy strategies on domestic health budgeting and UHC that respond to the new context of COVID-19.

Finally, as 2020 is the final year of the PITCH programme, we will heavily invest in cementing the long-term impact of our partners' work and of the programme as a whole. Through the PITCH Sustainability Initiative, we will support partners to document their successes, mobilise new resources, communicate about what makes them unique, and finely tune their capacities so they are able to fundraise for, and deliver, the next generation of inspiring advocacy..

Christine Stegling

Executive Director, Frontline Aids

Mark Vermeulen

Executive Director, Aidsfonds

Invest in cementing the long-term impact of our partners' work and of the programme as a whole.

2. The year in context

The move towards UHC has remained an underlying and cross-cutting focus for PITCH partners in 2019. PITCH focuses on ensuring that any roll out of a UHC system incorporates effective HIV services and is accessible to all vulnerable communities. UHC has the potential to ensure that HIV services become available for everyone who needs them, but there are also risks. Too often, key populations and adolescent girls and young women are still left out of discussions on the design of UHC policies and monitoring frameworks, and they face multiple obstacles to inclusion. This results in their needs not being addressed in the UHC packages being agreed at country level or means they are excluded in other ways. For instance, only a few concrete and inclusive mechanisms exist that enable civil society

to engage in discussions on UHC at country level. One of these operates in **Indonesia** where UHC discussions take place within the broader civil society sustainable development goals (SDGs) platform. While in **Vietnam**, a civil society organisation platform originally focused on HIV and social protection is now engaging with the broader UHC agenda.

In **Uganda**, PITCH organised a UHC workshop in February 2019 for all PITCH communities, in which both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the country's Ministry of Health participated. The communities argued for a UHC that works for everyone, regardless of sexual orientation and vulnerability. PITCH partners asked to be included in any future meetings on

The difference a year makes # 1

Measuring the extent to which decision-makers demonstrate a changed attitude towards people who use drugs on an issue or claim in **Myanmar**

In 2018, decision-makers often demonstrated a stigmatising and discriminatory attitude towards people who use drugs. PITCH partners were still trying to establish relations with government officials and find ways to reduce government-led stigma and discrimination against people who use drugs. The government largely rejected a public health approach to drug control.

By 2019, decision-makers were often demonstrating a respectful or supportive attitude toward people who use drugs. For example, a representative of Myanmar's House of Representatives publicly discussed the healthcare needs of women who use drugs in parliament for the first time, supported by discussion points prepared by PITCH partner Alliance Myanmar. This helped to secure the commitment of the Ministry of Health and Sports to support women who use drugs, for instance, by tailoring methadone maintenance treatment centres to meet their needs.

UHC going and to contribute to developing the UHC roadmap. They also demanded for a minimum services package to be funded under UHC. After this, a WHO consultant developed a UHC roadmap for Uganda, which PITCH partners are now well positioned to influence. In **Kenya**, the government has started to roll out a national UHC programme, which is currently being piloted in four counties. PITCH partners have helped to ensure that the experiences of people from vulnerable populations are not left behind in this national roll out, with a particular focus on sex workers. Against a backdrop of diminishing donor funding for HIV programmes, PITCH partners are advocating to ensure services for key populations and adolescent girls and young women are provided for free in government hospitals, thereby creating a safety net should external funding for specialised services targeted at these populations run out.

In 2019 a series of setbacks were experienced in the fight to tackle criminalisation and discrimination against key populations. A spike in the number of arrests of sex workers, people who use drugs, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community was noted in a number of PITCH countries. In **Nigeria**, women in particular have been the target of arrests. In April, more than 65 women were arrested in Abuja on charges of prostitution during raids on the city's nightclubs and restaurants as well as on nearby streets and 'hangout' spots. In the following days and weeks, more than 100 reports emerged of extortion, physical assault and rape perpetrated by police and members of the Federal Capital Territory Administration joint task force. This triggered a backlash against the task force and police in sections of the media, and men and women alike

In Zimbabwe, PITCH partners reported that, more than ever before, LGBT communities have been included and consulted in government policy development processes.

– sex workers or otherwise – took to the streets in protest. The country's National Human Rights Commission set up an investigative panel to review the allegations.

In **Uganda**, concerning setbacks occurred in relation to the criminalisation of the country's LGBT community. In October, a member of parliament claimed that the government was planning to reintroduce the Anti Homosexuality Bill, which if passed would have imposed the death penalty for same-sex relations and the "promotion and recruitment" of homosexuality. The public debate that followed has triggered a series of police raids, arbitrary arrests, and violence against the LGBT community, including the killing of a young LGBT activist Brian Wasswa. It was reported that three other gay and transgender people were also killed during the same period, while in August a group of motorcycle taxi drivers beat a young transgender woman to death near Kampala. Despite these setbacks, PITCH partners continue to advocate, at national and global levels, in support of the rights of LGBT people in the country.

While the environment in Uganda is increasingly hostile towards the LGBT community, in other countries more positive changes have been observed. In **Zimbabwe**, PITCH partners reported that, more than ever before, LGBT communities have been included and consulted in government policy development processes. There has been a softening of the government's stance towards key populations more generally, and an increased understanding among officials of the implications that excluding key populations from the country's HIV response will have in terms of preventing new HIV infections. This has been demonstrated by the publication of the National AIDS Council's Key Populations HIV and AIDS Implementation

Plan for 2019 – 2020. Furthermore, the government has authorised the rollout of the country's first population size estimates for transgender women and men who have sex with men, who until 2019 had been sidelined due to government-level discrimination against the LGBT community.

PITCH advocacy work is also contributing to change in **Myanmar**. The country has witnessed a decrease in the number of people who use drugs being arrested, which is part of a gradual softening of the government's position on drug use. At the end of 2019, Myanmar's National Drug Control Strategic Plan was finalised. This adopts the recommendations from UNGASS 2016 and recognises the harm reduction approach as a top-priority to respond to drug-related challenges at a national level. The new drug policy also recognises the relevance of public health interventions and has opened new ways of communication with decision makers to speak about decriminalisation. Reflecting this shift, for the first time police officers and administrators in Mon State participated in a Support, Don't Punish event organised by PITCH partners.

Elections in **Indonesia, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Ukraine**, and at the level of the **European Union (EU)**, impacted on PITCH partners' advocacy work in 2019. In **Indonesia**, where sex workers are effectively criminalised, regional candidates in West Sumatra, North Sumatra and West Java campaigned on a pro-criminalisation agenda, raising concerns on the morality of sex work in a cynical attempt to gain votes. In addition, parliamentary candidates in at least five cities and districts and one province (Indramayu, Cirebon, Garut, Depok, Padang and Aceh) used anti-LGBT messages in their campaigns. In **Ukraine**, the presidential and parliamentary elections disrupted the country's usual cycle of political activity and led to changes within the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Policy, and the Ministry of Interior. This affected both the dynamics behind the creation of Ukraine's Global Fund transitioning plan and the overall legal context. Due to the low capacity of the Public Health Centre of the

For the first time police officers and administrators in Mon State participated in a Support, Don't Punish event organised by PITCH partners.

Ministry of Health, which is responsible for transitioning from Global Fund support, continuity of service provision is at risk. In Europe, elections for the **EU** Parliament delayed progress in finalising negotiations for the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, which in turn affects decision-making on the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), through which support is given to global health initiatives. The new parliament was inaugurated in July. However, the new European Commission (EC) only took office only on 1 December due to lengthy and difficult negotiations between EU member states. While many feared a populist and euro-sceptic wave would emerge and shape these EU institutions, this did not materialise.

A breakthrough moment was achieved in 2019 regarding access for women of childbearing age to the antiretroviral drug Dolutegravir, which has been shown to be more effective and have fewer side effects than alternatives. In July 2019, at the International AIDS Conference on HIV in Mexico,

the WHO released updated guidance on the drug. WHO now recommends the use of Dolutegravir as the preferred first-line and second-line treatment for all populations, including pregnant women and those of childbearing age. This opened the door for PITCH partners and others to embark on successful advocacy at the national level in **Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda and Zimbabwe**. Another important change for women, specifically adolescent girls and young women, came in 2019 when both **Mozambique** and **Vietnam** parliaments passed laws to prevent and combat “premature unions”, thereby criminalising child marriage. Adolescent girls and young women have also been gaining access to advocacy spaces and policy processes. At the Women Deliver conference in Canada and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Nairobi¹, the **Kenyan** President reiterated his support for adolescent girls and young women. Overall there has been genuine support in the country for involving adolescent girls and young women in design, implementation and decision-making processes.



©GALZ/tashdowell 2019 | Zimbabwean members of parliament at men who have sex with men drop-in centre

¹ Statement by the President of Kenya (12 November 2019), accessed May 2020. Available at www.president.go.ke/2019/11/12/statement-by-his-excellency-hon-uhuru-kenyatta-c-g-h-president-of-the-republic-of-kenya-and-commander-in-chief-of-the-defence-forces-on-kenyas-commitments-during-the-official-opening-of IDPC (2018)

3. Investing in community advocacy



Anton Basenko, Country Focal Point in Ukraine, at PITCH Policy Summit in Ukraine. Hanna Hrabarska for PITCH 2019

3.1 Movement building between and within communities

Supporting movement building within and across communities has been a fundamental aspect of the PITCH programme since its inception. In 2019, PITCH partners continued to strengthen movements at the local, regional and global level, contributing to the advancement of vulnerable people's human rights.

Young people living with HIV have increasingly organised themselves in networks and community-based movements. Apart from providing a safe space and necessary peer support, these networks provide a mechanism through which young people living with HIV can advocate against stigma and discrimination and for better

service provision and support. In **Mozambique**, PITCH partner the Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative has driven the creation of a national advocacy platform for young people living with HIV. The platform has partnered with the Global Network of Young People Living with HIV's (Y+) READY programme, and is using READY's clinical data to advocate for better services for young people. Apart from providing a safe space and necessary peer support networks serve as a mechanism to advocate against stigma and discrimination and better service provision and support for young people living with HIV. In **Uganda**, PITCH's Flexible Investment Fund has supported country partner the Uganda Network of Young People living with HIV & AIDS (UNYPA) to create a movement led by young people to campaign for comprehensive sexuality education,

The difference a year makes # 2

Measuring the level of influence of country coalitions among sex work partners in **Zimbabwe**, based on a joint advocacy strategy

In 2018, the Sexual Rights Centre committed to establish an advocacy task force to help sex workers advocate for their needs.

Opportunities for advocacy were identified, with small engagement from PITCH coalitions, but no advocacy results were achieved.

By 2019, the Sex Worker Advocacy Task Force had been formed, making it possible for sex workers to be represented in national forums in Zimbabwe. The coalition is represented in advocacy platforms provincially, nationally and regionally, and has achieved some advocacy results, although follow up is required. One of the task force's members was elected as vice chairperson of the national key population forum in 2019. This will ensure that sex workers can influence national meeting agendas and that the voices of sex workers are amplified.

which is also unifying other stakeholders in the country, UNYPA has created dialogues in different regions to increase young people's participation in sexuality education advocacy and implementation. Meanwhile, PITCH has helped to strengthen the Y+ **Kenya** and **Zimbabwe** Young Positives (ZY+) groups, building their capacity to improve their organisational structure and achieve

impressive advocacy results, such as ensuring young people in Kenya are no longer given out-of-date antiretrovirals.

In **Russia**, PITCH partners AFEW and Russian Women's Network on Aids (E.V.A Association) have strengthened coordination between various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civic groups involved in the HIV response in St. Petersburg. E.V.A. Association has created a working group of NGOs, focusing on key populations and HIV prevention, which is consolidating testing and prevention efforts and helping to identify issues relevant to both key populations and people living with HIV. The working group is acting in close collaboration with the City AIDS Centre.

In **Zimbabwe**, the National AIDS Council hosted the first national sex workers conference, which enabled sex workers to strategise on movement building and policy advocacy. The conference provided the opportunity for PITCH partner the Zimbabwe Sex Work Association (ZIMSWA) to position itself with the National AIDS Council as the key representative of sex worker movements in Zimbabwe.

In **Nigeria**, PITCH partners Education As A Vaccine Against AIDS, the Association of Positive Youths Living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria and the Association of Women Living with HIV in Nigeria were central in creating a coalition that is advocating for lowering the age of consent to access sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV services. At the National Council on AIDS' fifth meeting, partners submitted a request to expand the lowered age of consent for HIV testing services to cover other SRH services for adolescents. The National Council on AIDS approved this request and has guaranteed its support for advocacy on this issue.

PITCH has also strengthened movements **globally** and helped to close the advocacy loop between country, regional and global levels. For instance, PITCH partner the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) led the seventh Support. Don't Punish Global Day of Action on 26 June

2019. The day aims to challenge the criminalisation of people who use drugs and to build political and public support for harm reduction approaches. IDPC was able to provide 113 small grants to local partners, and to support other partners around the world with advocacy and campaign resources and materials. This included long-time collaborators as well as new groups and networks of people who use drugs, sex workers, people living with HIV and the LGBT community.

In 2019, PITCH held its third annual global policy summit, which took place in Kiev, **Ukraine** between 27 and 29 March 2019. The summit's theme was 'Ensuring the sustainability of the HIV and AIDS response in the SDG era'. It brought together partners from all PITCH countries, plus the regional and global levels, to strategise around global advocacy. The focus was on ensuring that sufficient resources are made available to help sustain the HIV and AIDS response. The summit connected different levels of the programme in a global movement and resulted in the formation of joint advocacy goals.

3.2 Building advocacy skills and knowledge

Strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations as HIV advocates was given strategic priority in 2019 through the launch in January of a **Capacity Strengthening Task Force**. The task force aims to make the documentation, planning, and coordination of capacity-strengthening activities more strategic and better coordinated across the programme. Its work helped to inform planning for PITCH's learning event in Hanoi, **Vietnam** in November 2019. The event focused on using evidence to demonstrate PITCH's

contribution to advocacy outcomes through the use of advocacy logs and outcome harvesting. This has increased the capacity of partners to report on change and use the outcome harvesting methodology within the context of an advocacy programme.

The difference a year makes # 3

Measuring the capacity of five country partners in **Uganda**, working with adolescent girls and young women, to capture evidence aligned to their advocacy.

In 2018, these partners developed their skills in documenting evidence of human rights violations using REAcT. They also participated in trainings on using different research and data collection methods.

By 2019, partners were using these trainings to develop their own initiatives, and even providing training to community members. This indicates a positive shift in confidence on the part of PITCH partners in Uganda.

Over the course of 2019, the confidence, skills, and knowledge of PITCH partners to hold governments' accountable, capture evidence, monitor progress and plan and manage their advocacy improved significantly in comparison with previous years.

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dialogue and Dissent Strategic Partnership indicator	PITCH Indicator	2018	2019
DD4 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by civil society organisations, for, by or with their membership/ constituency	DD4 S2.2 # of country partners with evidence-based advocacy strategy or plan with clear policy targets and recommendations	44	105

Through the development of the HIV Prevention Shadow Reports, PITCH partners in **Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Uganda, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe** considerably improved their data collection and analysis skills. Compared with 2018, partners were more deeply analysing national policy documents and effectively interpreting data to compare progress. The process of compiling the reports demonstrated that partners were able to consult and build relationships with National AIDS Councils, Ministries of Health, and broader civil society networks. Partners showed improved project management skills as well as a stronger ability to identify the advocacy milestones and targets they wanted to reach.

PITCH partners in **Myanmar** also developed their capacity to capture evidence in 2019. For example, Sex Workers in Myanmar (SWiM) participated in training on using the Rights Evidence Action tool (REAct). Because of this, SWiM was able to collect and evidence specific cases of human rights violations experienced by sex workers. Drawing on the learning from these trainings, the organisation created a tool to assess people's perceptions of Myanmar's new Prostitution Bill. Advocacy from PITCH partners SWiM and the Aye Myanmar Association led to the new bill being drafted. Whereas the previous law sought to incarcerate people on the suspicion of sex work, the current bill proposes a 'three-strikes' policy, whereby anyone who is charged for the third time with sex engaging in sex work will be incarcerated. Although this is an improvement, PITCH partners continue to advocate for decriminalisation. In an effort to ensure the bill's content better reflects the fundamental rights of sex workers, PITCH's advocacy efforts have seen government responsibility for the bill shift from

the Ministry of Home Affairs, a law enforcement agency, to the Ministry of Social Welfare, which has a mandate to aid marginalised groups. This will increase the chance that further advocacy to amend the bill will be successful.

In **Uganda**, the National Forum of People Living with HIV/AIDS Networks in Uganda (NAFOPHANU) conducted 100 capacity-building sessions across five districts on combating gender-based violence and improving sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Sessions helped participants, mainly adolescent girls and young women, to develop a practical understanding of the current status of the laws, policies and practices that protects their bodily integrity and autonomy. The skills participants acquired have helped them identify and refer gender-based violence cases for further support, and to bring perpetrators to account.



4. Changing laws and policies

In 2019, longstanding efforts by PITCH partners to shape national policies came to fruition. For instance, in **Zimbabwe**, following advocacy from PITCH partners, the National AIDS Council significantly increased its commitment to key populations' needs. For the first time, the country's National Key Populations HIV and AIDS Implementation Plan (2019-2020) includes people who use drugs and transgender communities. This document has now informed both Zimbabwe's national AIDS strategy and the Global Fund grant-making process. The Zimbabwe PITCH country focal point was part of the steering committees for national strategies on AIDS, HIV and tuberculosis. Furthermore, PITCH advocacy has helped to ensure the national AIDS strategy outlines a minimum service package, which includes condoms and lubricants, HIV testing and counselling, antiretroviral treatment (ART)

In Zimbabwe, following advocacy from PITCH partners, the National AIDS Council significantly increased its commitment to key populations' needs. For the first time, the country's National Key Populations HIV and AIDS Implementation Plan (2019-2020) includes people who use drugs and transgender communities.

initiation, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post exposure prophylaxis, treatment of sexually transmitted infections, harm reduction interventions and mental health services.

In 2019, PITCH **EECA** partners played a decisive role in ensuring Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan signed both the 2014 Paris Declaration and the Zero Tuberculosis Declaration. In signing the Paris Declaration, cities pledge to 'fast track' ending the AIDS epidemic through a set of commitments. These commitments include achieving UNAIDS' 90-90-90 targets. The first step after signing the Paris Declaration for PITCH partner E.V.A. Association was to create a working group to develop Bishkek's 2019-2021 municipal HIV programme. The government worked closely with key population communities, including PITCH partners, to develop the city-level HIV programme, which includes social contracts for NGOs.

Advocacy towards policies and laws that support human rights and decriminalisation for key populations, adolescent girls and young women remained vital in 2019. In May, **Kenya's** High Court announced it would not repeal section 162 of the Penal Code, which criminalises consensual sexual conduct between two adults of the same sex. This decision was taken despite PITCH partners' concerted advocacy efforts to repeal both section 162 and 165, which they have been pursuing since 2016. Indicating the challenges ahead, commenting on the case President Uhuru Kenyatta said, "Kenya is a moral country, and this is not part of our culture." In October 2019, the National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission launched an appeal against the ruling.

The difference a year makes # 4

Measuring the number of policies formally proposed and/or accepted in relation to people who use drugs in **Nigeria**.

In 2018, PITCH partner YouthRISE Nigeria was in the middle of advocacy efforts to ensure that people who use drugs, male sex workers and the LGBT community were represented in Nigeria's national HIV prevention guidelines.

By 2019, as a result of these efforts, which were carried out for more than a year, YouthRISE was able to work with the National Agency for the Control of AIDS and influence the country's national HIV prevention guidelines. These were subsequently amended to include, for the first time, important references to people who use drugs, male sex workers and the LGBT community.

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dialogue and Dissent Strategic Partner- ship indicator	PITCH Indicator	2018	2019
DD1 # of laws, policies and norms, implemented for sustainable and inclusive development	L2.3 # of policies/laws/strategies currently being implemented to meet the needs of key populations, adolescent girls and young women as a result of programme contribution	21	38
DD2 # of laws, policies and norms/ attitudes blocked, adopted and improved for sustainable and inclusive development	L2.1 # of policies formally proposed/ accepted (e.g. bills, bonds, ballot measures, regulations, administrative policies)	34	42
	L2.2 # of policies formally blocked/retracted (e.g. bills, bonds, ballot measures, regulations, administrative policies)	12	14

In contrast, in June the **Uganda** Women's Parliamentary Association presented the draft Sexual Offences Bill 2019. This included amendments, such as provisions to decriminalise sex work, which PITCH partner the Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum proposed in partnership with other civil society organisations. This is the first time Ugandan parliamentarians have taken a positive step towards the decriminalisation of sex work.

This is the first time Ugandan parliamentarians have taken a positive step towards the decriminalisation of sex work.

In 2019, a campaign against the reform of the Penal Code in **Indonesia**, which PITCH began with the Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (ICJR), grew into a national movement. When Indonesia's parliament indicated that it would ratify a draft that still criminalised same-sex relations, sex work, condom promotion, extra marital sex, co-habitation and sex before marriage, this movement helped ignite a wave of protest throughout the country. These protests, alongside the ICJR's influence with the presidential office, caused the Indonesian President to postpone passing the new bill into law.

Moreover, PITCH advocacy has resulted in government officials taking up health-based approaches instead of implementing punitive policies towards people who use drugs. **Uganda's** President ordered police to stop arresting people for being "idle and disorderly" and to release people arrested on these charges. This has led to a breakthrough whereby the Ministry of Health and the Uganda AIDS Commission, in partnership with the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), are now supporting harm reduction interventions by developing national guidelines and funding Uganda's first medication-assisted treatment clinic.

PITCH partner Rumah Cemara's proposal to refocus the **Indonesian** narcotics law to concentrate on rehabilitation instead of punishment for people who use drugs was successfully included in a revision in April. This revision was included in the national mid-term development plan, which means it will become a policy priority.

With IDPC, Harm Reduction International and Bridging the Gaps, PITCH launched the first ever report on the universal periodic review (UPR) and drug policies. This research has helped to build the capacity of people who use drugs to better use opportunities presented by the UPR for advocacy purposes. The 62nd Commission on Narcotic Drugs was a historic moment; consensus was reached on the new Ministerial Declaration

The difference a year makes # 5

Measuring the extent to which PITCH **global policy** partners utilise advocacy opportunities to share policy positions and strategies with relevant stakeholders

In 2018, the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) successfully participated in, and engaged with, key stakeholders at the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, but follow-up on a number of advocacy issues was still required before results could be achieved.

By 2019, the 62nd Commission on Narcotic Drugs served as an important catalyst for change, allowing IDPC to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the Ministerial Declaration, including the uptake of key recommendations from its shadow report *Taking Stock: A Decade of Drug Policy*.

on Drugs, which will guide the next decade of policies. PITCH harm reduction partners worked collaboratively to secure in the Ministerial Declaration a 'stocktaking' of the past decade. This represents the most comprehensive analysis of the challenges of the UN's drug policy to date and sets the priorities for the Commission on Narcotic Drug's four-year work plan. There was clear uptake of messages from IDPC's *Taking Stock: A Decade of Drug Policy* report². PITCH and partners achieved advocacy successes by providing strategic support to networks of people who use drugs, targeting advocacy towards specific member states, and carrying out PITCH partner interventions in four UN consultation spaces.

² IDPC (2018) *Taking stock: A decade of drug policy*. Available at www.idpc.net/publications/2018/10/taking-stock-a-decade-of-drug-policy-a-civil-society-shadow-report

At the regional level, PITCH has also made progressive and significant gains on harm reduction. IDPC and YouthRISE **Nigeria**, with the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, facilitated the largest ever civil society delegation for an African Union meeting on drugs. PITCH partners carried out coordinated advocacy to secure strong commitments on harm reduction, decriminalisation and human rights in the new African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control, which sets the regional policy direction for 2019-2023.

PITCH has also worked in partnerships to drive policy change on the age of consent for accessing HIV and SRH services. PITCH's regional **Southern Africa** partners collaborated with country partners in **Kenya**, **Nigeria** and **Zimbabwe** to address this issue, which is a significant barrier for adolescent girls in the region. In **Zimbabwe** the Southern Africa HIV & AIDS Information Dissemination Service (SafAIDS), ZY+ and Zimbabwe National Network of People living with HIV (ZNNP+), together with other civil society organisations and partnerships, established a task force to coordinate advocacy on lowering the age of consent for accessing SRH and HIV services. ZY+ and SafAIDS organised a national dialogue in December in which the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee committed to draft a bill in that regard.

In July 2019 Mozambique's parliament approved the Law Against Forced Unions. The draft law had been submitted by the Coalition for the Elimination of Premature Marriages, of which PITCH partners are active members. It is one of only a few laws in **Mozambique** to have been generated by a partnership between civil society and parliament, instead of the government alone.

PITCH advocacy has resulted in government officials taking up health-based approaches instead of implementing punitive policies towards people who use drugs.



5. Improving access to affordable, high quality sexual and reproductive health products and services

5.1. Equitable access to services and prevention

In 2019, significant progress was made in improving access to key population-friendly services, quality medicines, and community-based prevention.

Ukraine's government successfully passed the key transitional point away from Global Fund funding and adopted a joint national strategy on HIV, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis until 2030. The strategy guarantees access to increased services and treatment for all key affected communities. PITCH partners contributed to developing the strategy and helped to set adequate coverage goals.

The antiretroviral drug Dolutegravir was adopted by national ministries of health in **Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Myanmar** and **Uganda** as the preferred first-line and second-line treatment for all women. In **Kenya** and **Zimbabwe**, the Ministry of Health amended treatment guidelines to end the discriminatory exclusion of women and adolescent girls who are not using contraceptives from accessing Dolutegravir. In **Uganda**, after the success in 2018 of updating national guidelines, in February 2019 the requirement for women of childbearing age to sign a consent form to take Dolutegravir was removed after further lobbying from the International Community of Women living with HIV Eastern Africa (ICWEA) and its

partners. ICWEA's advocates and activists are following up with the government and at community level to ensure access to Dolutegravir is guaranteed, and that it is quickly rolled out across the country to all women and girls living with HIV who want it. According to the Ugandan Ministry of Health, 540,000 people had been started on Dolutegravir by the end of 2019. PITCH advocacy directly contributed to these successes, which are in line with WHO guidelines.

As a result of evidence-based advocacy, young people living with HIV in **Kenya** convinced the Ministry of Health to swap the expired antiretroviral drugs being provided by some health centres to in-date, effective treatment. In addition, PITCH has supported young people living with HIV to be trained on treatment and diagnostics literacy and developed a guide on this subject for adolescents and young people.

Several harm reduction initiatives and pilots were launched in 2019. In September, as a result of PITCH's previous advocacy efforts, Alliance **Myanmar** was given the green light to start a pilot project in Kalay township. The pilot programme has a strong advocacy component. At the national level the focus is on the decriminalisation of drug use and scaling up community-led interventions, and is being supported by PITCH, UNODC, and

political support needed for the planned rollout of a needle and syringe programme pilot. The concept note was developed by a technical working group, which was set up after a series of consultations with the Federal Ministry of Health, PITCH partners and Global Fund partners in the country. For the first time, the **Vietnam** Administration on AIDS Control will start a pilot for take-home methadone. This is the result of advocacy efforts by PITCH partner Supporting Community Development Initiatives (SCDI), which organised a learning visit to Australia for a high-level delegation from the Vietnamese government and National Assembly. Furthermore, Hanoi's People Committee approved a pilot that will encourage police to refer people who use drugs to a health-based needs assessment instead of taking a punitive approach. SCDI will work as a technical partner in this pilot. In **Mozambique**, Rede Nacional Sobre Droga & HIV/ SIDA successfully gained the commitment of the Global Fund to support the expansion of harm reduction activities to Beira in 2020.

The LGBT community in **Indonesia** assisted public health clinics in Surabaya and Bandung to develop new standard operational procedures that ensure non-discriminatory care for LGBT people.

In **Nigeria**, sustained PITCH advocacy ensured healthcare worker trainings on providing care

without discrimination to men who have sex with men continued.

The November 2018 UHC workshop in Vietnam, which brought together partners from all nine countries and global-level advocates, built the confidence of partners to engage with UHC, both globally and nationally, in 2019.

Expansion of PrEP services to the provinces of Manica and Nampula in **Mozambique** occurred, following pressure from civil society, in which PITCH partner LAMBDA

the country's Drug Policy and Advocacy group. At the township level, existing service providers are targeted to adjust their services in line with Myanmar's new national drug policy, which came into effect in 2018. In **Nigeria**, the Minister of Health approved a strategic national concept note on harm reduction, which provides the

took a leading role. **Zimbabwe** committed to expand access to PrEP for sex workers during a dialogue organised by the Batanai HIV and AIDS Service Organization with Ministry of Health officials in Masvingo.

5.2 The role of civil society in universal health coverage: a key stakeholder

In 2019, PITCH began to reap positive results from the groundwork that had been laid by 2018 activities and capacity building on UHC. Civil society is a key stakeholder in the UHC debate at country and global level and PITCH partners have worked to ensure their voices are being heard. PITCH partners are taking a leading role in movement building around UHC, whereby strong ties exist between global and country partners. The #READY4UHC campaign, which creates an opportunity for young people, in all their diversity, to demand their health needs is a strong example of this. The #READY4UHC campaign is led by Y+ and supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Embassy in Maputo through the READY and PITCH programmes and

Paediatric AIDS Treatment for Africa. The campaign was launched at the 2019 International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa conference in Rwanda.

The first UN High Level Meeting on UHC, which took place in September, was a major focus for advocacy for many PITCH partners. This work demonstrates the great impact that PITCH has achieved by working together across all levels of the partnership. In April, the voices of PITCH partners from **Nigeria** and **Vietnam** were heard by member states at a UN multi-stakeholder hearing on UHC. Their interventions ensured national voices of marginalised communities most affected by HIV fed into their government's positions for global negotiations on the draft High-Level Meeting outcome document: the UN Political Declaration on UHC. At the World Health Assembly in May, PITCH organised a high-level side event



Front cover of the 2019 PITCH publication: A human rights perspective on universal health coverage. Advocates from Indonesia, Kenya, Southern Africa, Ukraine and Vietnam reflect on the challenges facing marginalised groups affected by HIV and the actions they are taking in the battle to ensure UHC truly leaves no one behind.

on the role of community-led responses in achieving UHC. The advocacy messages of PITCH **Kenyan** and **Ugandan** partners were heard by the Dutch mission to the UN in Geneva and the WHO Director General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. This resulted in Dr Tedros giving strong support to their calls for the inclusion of key populations in UHC policies by stating, "We need health for all not health for some, and this includes LGBT people, sex workers, and people who use drugs."

At the **global level**, in collaboration with Y+, the Free Space Process and other partners, PITCH used joint civil society advocacy messages, statements and a campaign call to action to influence the UN Political Declaration on UHC during successive negotiation rounds. Some of the issues PITCH raised were taken on, including three commitments on HIV and AIDS, and language on the additional barriers faced by marginalised and vulnerable groups. Other PITCH messages around global solidarity and recognition of the importance of community-based interventions were also incorporated.

The November 2018 UHC workshop in Vietnam, which brought together partners from all nine countries and global-level advocates, built the confidence of partners to engage with UHC, both globally and nationally, in 2019. In **Vietnam**, youth-led organisations were actively involved in the civil society movement on UHC, which PITCH partners created in coalition with the Ministry of Health, the National Aids Council, the WHO, and UNAIDS. **Indonesian** partner Rumah Cemara helped build a national coalition for UHC advocacy, which includes other PITCH partners, and has led to the development of a UHC roadmap and position paper, which has been submitted to the Ministry of Health. In **Ukraine**, the Alliance for Public Health, in its role as focal point for the civil society engagement mechanism on UHC, led the country's HIV and tuberculosis parliamentary platform to write a joint letter on UHC, which was shared with the Ukrainian President ahead of the UN SDG Summit. This led the president to commit to meet the SDGs, specifically SDG 3, and adopt an order to reach the SDGs by 2030.

In February 2019, PITCH's global report Towards transformative integration of the HIV and AIDS response into universal health coverage: building on the strengths and successes of the HIV and AIDS response was launched.³ Its findings were used to influence the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board's thematic segment on UHC. The findings have also helped to progress national advocacy. For example, in Kenya these findings were used in a multi-stakeholder dialogue, which was convened to prepare key population networks to participate in national UHC debates and influence preparations towards the UN High Level Meeting.

Since the High Level Meeting in September, partners have used the UN Political Declaration on UHC to further their national advocacy. In **Mozambique**, PITCH partners led the process to embed UHC at country level. On the International Day of UHC, PITCH partners in the country demanded for adolescent girls and young women and key populations to be at the centre of UHC. The government did not stop around 230 young people from marching to demand inclusive UHC. In doing so, they secured inclusion of transgender people in the country's new HIV strategic plan, and a promise from the Ministry of Health to include civil society organisations in the development of the 2020-2035 health sector financing strategy.

Building on these successes, PITCH began a UHC capacity-building initiative. A **Southern Africa** regional workshop, held in Johannesburg, strengthened partners' understanding of UHC advocacy and improved their connections with the African Union and the WHO. A regional civil society call to action was developed and an agreement made to advance UHC in a way that included key populations and HIV. Partners adopted this for advocacy at country level.

³ Available at www.globalfundadvocatesnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/PITCH_Global-Report_UHC_WEB.pdf

Women living with HIV demand equal access to antiretroviral drugs

For years, people living with HIV have suffered side effects from different drug regimens. Research shows the antiretroviral drug Dolutegravir has advantages over other drug regimens due to better rates of viral load suppression, higher tolerability, and a lower pill burden. This has made Dolutegravir the antiretroviral of choice for many women in East Africa.

In May 2018, the WHO raised safety concerns about Dolutegravir for women and girls of childbearing age, after research from Botswana linked the drug to serious defects in unborn children. These preliminary results were never confirmed. Many countries began prohibiting women of childbearing age from using Dolutegravir. PITCH partners began to campaign against this policy, starting at the International AIDS conference in July 2018.

PITCH partners in **Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zimbabwe** joined forces with other civil society organisations to advocate for a reversal of these measures on the grounds that they were preventing young women from making choices about their own treatment.

Marching to be heard

In April 2019 in Nairobi **Kenya**, 500 women and 100 men marched to bring attention to the importance of Dolutegravir being available for all women, including those of reproductive age. The peaceful march was part of a greater initiative by the Am-

bassadors for Youth and Adolescent Reproductive Health Programme (AYARHEP), supported by PITCH, to ensure HIV treatment for young women is client-specific and focuses on individual needs. The march and the media attention resulted in the Ministry of Health committing to increase the involvement of people living with HIV in government discussions on HIV-related health issues. In May 2019, the Ministry of Health invited AYARHEP and Y+ Kenya to join the National Aids Control Council and the National AIDS and STI Control Programme for a strategic meeting on the reformulation of the country's National AIDS Guidelines.

PITCH partners in Kenya mobilised other adolescent girls and young women networks to stop healthcare providers forcing women of childbearing age to sign consent forms before being provided with Dolutegravir. This coalition's advocacy efforts led to the Ministry of Health issuing a directive in July 2019, which allows the use of Dolutegravir as a first line treatment option, including for women of childbearing age and pregnant women. Moreover, the Ministry of Health, the National AIDS and STIs Control Programme and the National AIDS Control Council have committed to continuous engagement with people living with HIV. In September, further advocacy from PITCH partners resulted in the Ministry of Health withdrawing guidance that required women of reproductive age to sign a consent form before accessing Dolutegravir.



Women's march in Kenya. Photo by Stephen Rich from AYARHEP 2019.



6. Improving funding for community responses to HIV

PITCH partners at Learning Event in Vietnam. James Duong for PITCH 2019

PITCH partners' work to increase funding for the HIV response, focusing on both international and domestic financing, remained as vital as ever. When it comes to key populations, funding from international donors continues to be more substantial, reliable and accessible than domestic funding, although there is still not enough funding going directly to key populations. In 2019, PITCH launched a sustainability initiative to help maintain programmatic achievements and organisational development, and build partners' capacity to meaningfully influence domestic health budgeting.

The largest ever replenishment of a global health institution was seen in 2019 when the **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria** secured €12.9 billion in donor pledges for the period 2020-2022 during its 6th Replenishment Conference. This outcome is critical for ensuring

In the United States, successful advocacy on Capitol Hill, led by Washington-based civil society organisations and supported by PITCH, contributed to the first US funding increase to the Global Fund in six years and the third largest increase in US funding since the Global Fund began.

sustained and scaled-up funding for the HIV response as well as for human rights and community responses. PITCH contributed to this success in several ways. In the **United States** (US), successful advocacy on Capitol Hill, led by Washington-based civil society organisations and supported by PITCH, contributed to the first US funding increase to the Global Fund in six years and the third largest increase in US funding since the Global Fund began. PITCH's advocacy efforts in **Brussels**, together with other EU advocates, resulted in an early EU contribution of €580 million to the Global Fund. This was achieved through regular, direct engagement with the EC, organising high-profile events, and sending coordinated advocacy letters. In parallel, at the policy level, PITCH engaged with the EU political processes that were key to securing the resources for the EU contribution to Global Fund for the period 2021-2027; namely, the negotiation of the EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework and the EU elections. These efforts prompted the exiting EU parliament to support a €1.5 billion increase to the financial envelope dedicated to Global Challenges under the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, which will be the main pot of funding for the Global Fund.

PITCH continued to advocate to the European Parliament and the EU member states to increase support for global health initiatives, which contributed to a budget increase from €3 to €5 billion.

PITCH partners in **Kenya** secured €16.6 million from PEPFAR to provide HIV and SRHR services to the LGBT community. In **Mozambique**, PITCH partner Lambda was elected to represent civil society in the consultation process on the PEPFAR Country Operational Plan 2019 and secured

€924,550 for monitoring the quality of services and €2.8 million for specific interventions focussed on the LGBT community. In **Uganda**, through the Uganda Key Population Consortium and the PEPFAR Country Operational Plan consultation process, PITCH partners jointly advocated for funds to be directly allocated to key population-led interventions. This has been instrumental in securing €9.2 million from PEPFAR, and PITCH partners are involved in deciding its allocation. In **Nigeria**, for the first time, people who inject drugs were included in the 2019/2020 round of Global Fund grants.

With support from AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa (ARASA), PITCH partners in **Zimbabwe** lobbied policy makers for more investment in health. This resulted in an increased allocation from 8.2% to 10.2% of the 2020 national budget.

The **EECA** regional programme played a significant role in Kyrgyzstan where, for the first time, the **Bishkek** City Council allocated more than €50,000 for HIV programming, including social contracts for NGOs. This more than doubled municipal funding for HIV for 2020-2021.

PITCH advocacy also achieved notable successes in increasing domestic funding. In **Vietnam**, antiretroviral drugs are now included in the country's national health insurance scheme, whilst the opioid substitution medications methadone and buprenorphine are now covered by the government. As the result of a long-haul advocacy strategy, community-based interventions for sex workers have also been shortlisted for local government funding.

In **Ukraine**, the Cabinet of Ministers, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance adopted all necessary legal acts to implement the transition from Global Fund to domestic funding. This group has secured €2.7 of State budget for the second half of 2019, and budgeted €7 million for 2020 to cover the basic package of HIV prevention, care and support for people living with HIV, people who use drugs, sex workers, and men who have sex with men. By December 2019, the Ministry of Health's Public Health Centre had signed more than 70 contracts with NGOs to provide services for different key populations.

PITCH advocacy also achieved notable successes in increasing domestic funding. In Vietnam, antiretroviral drugs are now included in the country's national health insurance scheme, whilst the opioid substitution medications methadone and buprenorphine are now covered by the government

The difference a year makes # 6

Measuring the level of involvement of country partners in local and national strategy and policy formation in relation to people who use drugs in **Vietnam**

In 2018, after four years of incremental progress in developing, rolling out, and scaling up a community-based addiction treatment model, PITCH partner SCDI started to advocate for legislative change at the national level to help sustain this progress.

By 2019, through targeted advocacy with different national government departments, SCDI have successfully contributed to the governments's new guidelines on addiction treatment counselling. These guidelines have since been integrated into Vietnam's official training syllabus for addiction counsellors, supporting SCDI's ongoing work advocating for the benefits of community-based treatment over compulsory rehabilitation.

A photograph of three men smiling and hugging. The man on the left is Black with a beard, wearing a black jacket. The man in the middle is Black, wearing a blue and white checkered shirt. The man on the right is Asian, wearing a black jacket with white text. They are all smiling and appear to be in a joyful embrace.

7. Putting human rights legislation to work

PITCH partners at Learning Event in Vietnam. James Duong for PITCH 2019

PITCH continued to make a notable contribution to upholding human rights. Several PITCH countries went through UPR processes at the **UN Human Rights Council**. During these reviews, PITCH supported three **Kenyan** LGBT people to make civil society statements to the Human Rights Council in Geneva. As a direct result of advocacy by PITCH partners the Kenya Legal & Ethical Issues Network on HIV and AIDS, the Key Population Consortium, the Kenya Sex Workers Alliance (KESWA) and others, recommendations on issues relating to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and HIV were included in the UPR report to the Kenyan government. PITCH will now use these recommendations to lobby for a review of laws and policies in Kenya. Furthermore, this advocacy

work has helped PITCH partners to strengthen partnerships with human rights organisations, and develop a joint civil society shadow report with LGBT organisations in preparation for the third cycle review in 2020.

For the first time, Mozambique's community of sex workers was involved in the development and presentation of the country's shadow report at the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

At the country level, Alliance **Myanmar** inputted into the UPR report based on cases of rights violations identified using the REAct human rights monitoring tool. Together with UNAIDS and other NGOs, the UPR report was validated in 2019 and submitted to the Human Rights Council in March 2020.

Finally, PITCH continued working to achieve zero discrimination through different mechanisms. For the first time, **Mozambique's** community of

sex workers was involved in the development and presentation of the country's shadow report at the **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**. In the report, the poor quality of local health services was denounced, identifying the high levels of stigma and discrimination at these services as a particular barrier for sex workers. CEDAW member states subsequently raised questions with the Mozambican government, helping to hold government health officials to account.

Brian Machariah from Gays and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya, Wanja Ngure PITCH Country Focal Point in Kenya, Seanny Odera from Trans Alliance and Alexadra Ogeta from Jinsiangu at the Human Rights Council in Geneva in 2019.





March in Nigeria to raise attention for the Abuja raids in 2019.
Photo by Anthony Nkwocha, PITCH Country Focal Point

8. Gender transformative programming

The need to address the gendered aspects of the HIV response is a vital focus for PITCH. PITCH continued to strengthen its application of a gender-transformative approach across a diverse range of advocacy activities. In doing so, PITCH has focused on strengthening the capacity of its partners to understand and analyse the role of gender and to apply a gender-transformative approach, addressing harmful gender norms and practices and transforming harmful gender norms through policy and advocacy work. This approach has paid off and partners' capacity to report on gender, and provide gender analysis, has significantly improved.

PITCH has focused on strengthening the capacity of its partners to understand and analyse the role of gender and to apply a gender-transformative approach, addressing harmful gender norms and practices and transforming harmful gender norms through policy and advocacy work.

Dedicated training workshops on adopting a gender-transformative approach took place in **Indonesia** and **Nigeria**, while gender training sessions took place in **Myanmar** and **Uganda**. Following the training, **Indonesian** PITCH partners Indonesia Positive Women Network and Inti Muda conducted an analysis of how they could implement a gender-transformative approach in their programming. In **Uganda**, as part of the gender transformative work, capacity strengthening on harm reduction services was provided to members of the Uganda Harm Reduction Network (UHRN) and young women who use drugs. Women who use drugs were also recruited as peer educators and paralegals, and specific clinical and outreach days initiated at the UHRN Drop-in Centre.

Addressing harmful gender norms has a direct impact on the success of HIV programmes. In **Southern Africa**, PITCH partner SRHR Africa Trust (SAT) organised community dialogues with traditional leaders to discuss the need to address attitudes on including adolescent girls and young women in SRH service provision. In **Botswana, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe**, PITCH mobilised communities and targeted traditional and religious leaders to sensitise them on the need to support, and quickly act upon, the rights of adolescent girls and young women to access HIV prevention and SRH services.

Following advocacy by PITCH partners and other LGBT organisations, transgender people were

Following advocacy by PITCH partners and other LGBT organisations, transgender people were added to the Kenya AIDS Strategic Framework 2019/2021 for the first time. This is a huge accomplishment and a breakthrough moment. It has provided an avenue for service provision and funding for trans programmes.

Women who use drugs are often invisible, but due to these joint efforts more women who use drugs in Kampala took up health and legal services.

In **Russia**, conversations with government authorities have led PITCH partners to increasingly recognise that accurate statistics on gender-based violence, which they require to support and inform their HIV advocacy, are lacking. To address this situation, E.V.A. Association searched for opportunities to identify relevant statistics and participated in several meetings, workshops, and trainings. In February 2019, E.V.A. Association organised a meeting with board members and an external consultant to review the organisation's national strategy to ensure its gender responsiveness. Shortly after this meeting, E.V.A. Association organised a press conference to raise awareness of issues relating to gender inequality and women's health and rights.

added to the **Kenya** AIDS Strategic Framework 2019/2021 for the first time. This is a huge accomplishment and a breakthrough moment. It has provided an avenue for service provision and funding for trans programmes. This has been a collaborative effort between Trans*Alliance, Jinsiangu, Pwani Trans* Initiative, the Key Population Consortium and the National Transgender Advocacy Network, hosted by Trans*Alliance. PEPFAR took another important step and reaffirmed its commitments to support transgender healthcare programming in Nairobi, Kisumu, and Mombasa. This milestone builds upon both Trans*Alliance and Jinsiangu's engagement with the PEPFAR team and the Key Population Consortium.

During the 16 Days of Activism, in **Uganda** PITCH partner ICWEA raised issues with the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the media, and

UN and embassy representatives, including the Dutch ambassador. These issues included the negative effects of poor media reporting on the HIV response and in relation to gender-based violence. As part of this work, ICWEA launched a one-year campaign on ending violence against women and girls. During this campaign, ICWEA will highlight the impact negative media reporting can have in relation to HIV-related stigma and discrimination and promote responsible media reporting. ICWEA also commissioned a team of 12 champions to combat gender-based violence. One of these champions is the Dutch Ambassador to Uganda who has committed to supporting programmes aimed at reducing violence against women and girls, following up on a commitment made at ICPD in Nairobi, Kenya. In **Ukraine**, PITCH partners united to conduct a study entitled Barriers of access for women living with drug dependence to substitution maintenance treatment programs and SRHR services.⁴ PITCH partners used data from the study to support targeted advocacy with community-level decision-makers, police officers, and medical workers to reduce the stigma experienced by women who use drugs.

⁴ Available at www.hopeandtrust.org.ua/bareri-dostupu-zhinok-ya-ki-zhivut-z-narkozalezhnistiu/

9. Learning and collaboration



PITCH partners at Learning Event in Vietnam. James Duong for PITCH 2019

9.1 Evidence is key for successful advocacy

In 2019, PITCH partners have successfully collected, analysed and used data and evidence to inform and support their advocacy efforts. Tools such as REAct and Ona have been used to capture evidence on, and respond to, human rights violations. Major publications have been developed and presented at a variety of advocacy platforms.

In **Mozambique** PITCH partners, including the National Sex Workers' Rights Platform, effectively analysed the data available to them to identify

evidence to support their advocacy with law enforcement agencies and healthcare providers. Awareness among law enforcement agencies and healthcare providers of sex workers' rights has improved thanks to this work. More specifically, in combination with efforts from the Bridging the Gaps programme, it has resulted in monthly meetings with the Police Violence Office to address sexual and gender-based violence against sex workers. In part, this was made possible by staff from the National Sex Workers' Rights Platform participating in Ona training at a national meeting in June 2019.

The difference a year makes # 7

Measuring the number of sex work country partners in **Mozambique** with improved capacity to capture evidence aligned to their advocacy.

When collecting data in 2018, PITCH partners found it difficult to analyse and systematise data on sex workers' experiences of stigma and discrimination in relation to their HIV status and/or gender/sexuality.

By 2019, PITCH partners working with sex workers were better able to gather information in a systematic way using Ona, WhatsApp groups, and through their websites.

In **Southern Africa**, SAT has recruited and supported adolescent girls and young women as 'champions', whose role it is to strengthen advocacy on HIV prevention, address gender inequalities and increase access to SRHR within their communities. In 2019, the champions collected data from local health facilities in **Malawi** and **Zimbabwe** to understand young people's level of uptake of SRHR services. The champions have effectively used this data to advocate for lowering the age at which young people can access healthcare to 12 years, reflecting the age at which some young people first engage in sexual relationships. Some district authorities in Zimbabwe continued the data collection in schools to ascertain the health status of school students and to promote available health services, including ART. The youth champions have since worked with SAT to engage the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to scale up the school health programme, based on the evidence documented.

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In **Uganda**, PITCH partner NAFOPHANU carried out the second national People Living with HIV Stigma Index survey.⁵ The report shows that high levels of stigma against people living with HIV are still a reality. The findings were used to target national strategic plan development processes and resulted in recommendations made on the basis of the Stigma Index being taken on board. These recommendations included for anti-stigma interventions, prevention and social protection to be scaled up; for the Uganda Law Reform Commission to review the 2015 HIV Criminal Law and assess its implications for people living with HIV and the national HIV response; to engage faith-based and traditional leaders; and for a case-based surveillance system to be adopted to improve on client tracking while maintaining confidentiality. In addition, several stigma reduction interventions have been designed, some of which specifically target adolescent girls and young women. NAFOPHANU's executive director was invited by the Office of the Presidency to present the Stigma Index's findings and provide guidance on how stigma interventions should be integrated into the Office's work. Of particular significance is the fact that a new anti-stigma policy has been cleared by Uganda's Solicitor General and is currently awaiting approval by the Board of the Uganda AIDS Commission.

⁵ See NAFOPHANU (2019) The PLHIV Stigma Index, Country Assessment, Uganda. Available at www.stigmaindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/PLHIV-Stigma-Index-Report-Uganda-2019.pdf

CIVICUS and PITCH jointly developed the report *Activism and AIDS: Protect Civil Society Space to End the Epidemic in Indonesia, Ukraine, Vietnam and Zimbabwe*, and at the **global** level. A summarised version of the report was launched at EU level in November, in advance of World AIDS Day 2019. The research findings published in the report were presented at a hearing organised by the Development Committee of the European Parliament. In addition, the Dutch Permanent Representation to the EU hosted a briefing for EU member states as well as a number of bilateral meetings with members of the EC and the European External Action Services that cover human rights programming. The full report will be launched in the run up to the AIDS2020 conference.

In **Zimbabwe**, in 2019 PITCH partners published the report *Legal Environment Assessment for HIV, Tuberculosis, and SRHR*. The report highlights the challenges faced by key populations due to the criminalisation of sex work, same-sex relations and the possession of drugs for personal use. The Zimbabwean government, together with

civil society organisations, has started using recommendations from the report to scale up and improve HIV interventions and inform the design of ongoing HIV programmes in the country. For instance, the government has embraced the need for policy review through engagement with policy makers, and this has been adopted as a pillar of the draft HIV and AIDS Strategy. The report has been used to support the development of Zimbabwe's HIV and AIDS Strategy for 2021-2025 as well as the Global Fund grant-making process. Under the Global Fund application, policy engagement dialogues have been included for funding, and PITCH's report cited as reference source. The partners hope that earmarked funding from the Global Fund to address policy barriers will open space for increased government buy-in, as the Global Fund is a major influential donor to the government. The focus on policy barriers in the new AIDS strategy will increase pressure on the government to act on the key population policy needs, and PITCH partners will use the national document to demand increased accountability from the government.



Sylvia Mbatia from CIVICUS at the hearing of the European Parliament
© European Union 2019 – EP/Eric Vidal

People who use drugs in Ukraine successfully challenge the quality of opioid substitution therapy

In Ukraine, people who use drugs have been experiencing frequent side effects from taking government-procured methadone and buprenorphine, which are made in the city of Kharkiv. Despite numerous complaints to the responsible government authorities, no action had been taken. So the Ukrainian Network of People Who Use Drugs (VOLNA) decided to act.

VOLNA submitted a complaint to two key Ministry of Health bodies containing around 170 individual cases from across Ukraine. Ukraine's national opioid substitution therapy (OST) hotline, run by VOLNA board member and PITCH partner Hope and Trust, was critical in collecting many of these complaints and documented more than 500 in total.

Disappointing setbacks

Much to the regret of advocates, both government bodies dismissed the complaints, saying the side effects were normal. This was not the only setback. Under mounting pressure from medical staff, many complainants withdrew their cases.

In June 2019, VOLNA responded by sending samples of the treatments to the State's drugs and medicines testing service. The lab results did not lie. They revealed that government-procured buprenorphine did not meet the prescribed quality criteria, as the concentration of active substance was 25% weaker than the norm, something that is known to cause side effects.

Hard-won triumphs

Due to the concerning lab results, this version of buprenorphine has now been removed from the market.

To ensure that OST medicines are of high quality, VOLNA has requested to test all government-procured buprenorphine and methadone, and to make this testing mandatory before it is supplied. The Public Health Centre of the Ministry of Health has selected another national buprenorphine producer, and VOLNA is now monitoring the procurement process for 2020 to ensure pre-shipment testing is done.

Serious concerns remain on the quality of Kharkiv-made OST medicines. As Ukraine is one of the suppliers of such medicines to the EECA region, the issue may have far-reaching consequences. VOLNA has been monitoring the situation through the Eurasian Network of People Who Use Drugs. It is now raising awareness about the quality-risks of these drugs and providing support to people who use drugs from across the region.



9.2 Partnership and collaboration: the cornerstones of PITCH

The relationships and partnerships between the country, regional and global levels of the PITCH programme are now firmly established. The global policy programme has supported partners in **Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Ukraine, Vietnam** and **Zimbabwe** to engage with country-level EU delegations. Advocacy has focussed on the programming of EU aid to partner countries for 2021-2027. Although a well-established process for engagement with civil society is lacking, contact has been established and meetings held in **Indonesia, Uganda** and **Zimbabwe**. In parallel, PITCH is making efforts to influence the EU's programming guidelines in Brussels to ensure they address PITCH priorities.

In July 2019, PITCH organised a side event at the **UN High Level Political Forum** on the SDGs. Strong statements made by PITCH country focal points at the side event and during Indonesia's Voluntary National Review secured a three-hour discussion with the Indonesian Permanent Mission. This provided the Indonesian mission with information regarding the challenges faced by key population communities and adolescent girls and young women, and helped to inform Indonesia's input into official statements and UN declarations. This unprecedented access to decision-makers opened up new avenues of communication with the Indonesian government.

Partnerships with more than 20 different NGOs and regional networks representing key populations in the Commonwealth of Independent States have been strengthened.

Within the regional **EECA** programme, PITCH partner the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has established strong relations with multilateral and national



organisations within the region. In September 2019, a new Memorandum of Understanding for Collaboration was signed between IFRC Europe and the WHO Regional Office for Europe. It captures the commitment of both organisations to work together in order to achieve common aims: to improve the lives of the most vulnerable and reduce or eliminate avoidable inequities in health conditions. IFRC is a member of the WHO Europe Collaborative Committee on Tuberculosis, HIV and Hepatitis C and the HIV High-Level Working Group of the Russian Ministry of Health. Together with WHO, IFRC will use this opportunity to promote innovative models and approaches of advocacy. Partnerships with more than 20 different NGOs and regional networks representing key populations in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) have been strengthened.

On 21-22 November 2019, an International Forum of civil society organisations representing people living with HIV and key populations, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of CIS countries, was organised in Moscow, **Russia**. The main aim of this Forum was to develop a common position on existing legal, social and health barriers impeding adequate access to health services for people living with HIV and to develop the Model Law On equal access to HIV prevention and treatment services in CIS countries within the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Commonwealth of Independent States. The fact that this model law is being considered in itself can be seen as progress, seeing that this has never been on the agenda of the CIS.

The capacity of PITCH partners in **Mozambique** to address the structural barriers to HIV prevention has been strengthened through their collaboration with regional Southern Africa partner ARASA. Mozambican partners are now using these skills to connect their advocacy to regional developments affecting adolescent girls and young women, particularly those relating to the policies of the Southern Africa Development Community.

The need to build partnerships beyond the 'usual suspects' has become even more important in light of declining international funding and attention for the HIV response. To this end, in July 2019 70 multi-thematic Members of Parliament visited the Gays and Lesbians of **Zimbabwe** Mutare Drop-in Centre, marking a first for this type of engagement. The Sexual Rights Centre also welcomed a parliamentary delegation to its offices in 2019. These visits have enabled the sex worker and LGBT communities to share their experiences with decision-makers in Zimbabwe. The legislators described the engagement as eye-opening and pledged to unlock avenues for continuous discussion within parliament and constituency platforms.

In **Mozambique**, people who use drugs have made great strides in building relationships with the police and changing their attitudes. In 2019, the first ever Harm Reduction Law Enforcement Conference was held in the country. In addition, PITCH partners successfully advocated for Mozambican police and policy makers to participate in the 26th Harm Reduction International Conference in Portugal and the 5th International Conference on Law Enforcement and Public

Health in Edinburgh. A coalition of PITCH partners from **Kenya, Mozambique, and Uganda** also organised a workshop in Maputo on how law enforcement can benefit people who use drugs.

In Mozambique, people who use drugs have made great strides in building relationships with the police and changing their attitudes.

The strategic partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its embassies has continued to contribute to PITCH's results. Embassies have used their position to support the PITCH programme. For instance, in **Zimbabwe** the Embassy facilitated a lunch event with parliamentarians during the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. In **Kenya**, the Embassy supported PITCH partners to obtain approval to attend the 25th ICPD/ICPD. In **Uganda**, the Dutch embassy has been a key ally in protecting LGBT people from spurious charges following police raids on shelters and LGBT-friendly venues. Dutch ambassadors also attended the policy summit in **Ukraine** and the learning event in **Vietnam**. In **Indonesia** and **Ukraine**, PITCH is an active partner within the tripartite initiative. In **St. Petersburg**, the Dutch Consulate is fully supportive of PITCH's **EECA** regional programme. This has been demonstrated by its coordination of activities with the city government, and the contact it has made with Rotterdam, which is twinned with St. Petersburg. Rotterdam has agreed to host a learning visit in 2020.

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dialogue and Dissent Strategic Partnership indicator	PITCH Indicator	2018	2019
DD3 # of times that civil society organisations succeed in creating space for civil society organisations-demands and positions, through agenda setting, influencing the debate, and/or creating space to engage	S4.1 # of meetings/foras/symposiums with decision-makers in which country partners represent themselves...	807	976
	DD3 M1.1 # of country coalitions with a joint advocacy strategy	99	103



10. Looking to 2020

PITCH partners have made 2019 a decisive year for change. The aim for 2020 is to continue this work and, despite global challenges, to push for sustainable change toward the goals of PITCH and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the final seven months of 2020, PITCH will invest in the long-term impact of our partners' work and the outcomes of the programme. By doing so, we aim to preserve PITCH's legacy around community advocacy and lay a solid foundation for the years ahead.

Connecting and linking all levels will remain one of PITCH's main strategies. As we did in 2018 and 2019, we will bring together global, regional, and national PITCH partners to strategise and coordinate their global advocacy. This year, discussions will focus on UHC and sustainability, with a view to securing long-term impact on the HIV response.

As PITCH enters its fifth and final year, we look back with pride and look ahead in expectation. After a challenging initiation phase, PITCH has now matured into a solid and well-run programme, thanks to experienced staff members, capacitated partners and established processes for cooperation and collaboration. As such, PITCH is strongly positioned to brave the challenges facing us in 2020 and still achieve valuable outcomes and lasting impact. At the time of writing, most of the world is engulfed by the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences. While it is impossible to predict the trajectory of the pandemic and its immediate and longer-term consequences at all levels, it is already clear that COVID-19 will significantly impact on PITCH activities and outcomes in the final year of the programme.

Appendix 1:

PITCH Dialogue and Dissent results 2019

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dialogue and Dissent Strategic Partnership indicator	Total PITCH 2019
DD1 # of laws, policies and norms, implemented for sustainable and inclusive development	38
DD2 # of laws, policies and norms/attitudes, blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development	56
DD3 # of times that civil society organisations succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage	1079
DD4 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by civil society organisations, for, by or with their membership/constituency	563
DD5 # of civil society organisations with increased lobby and advocacy capacities ⁷	580
DD6 # of civil society organisations s included in strategic partnership programmes ⁸	91

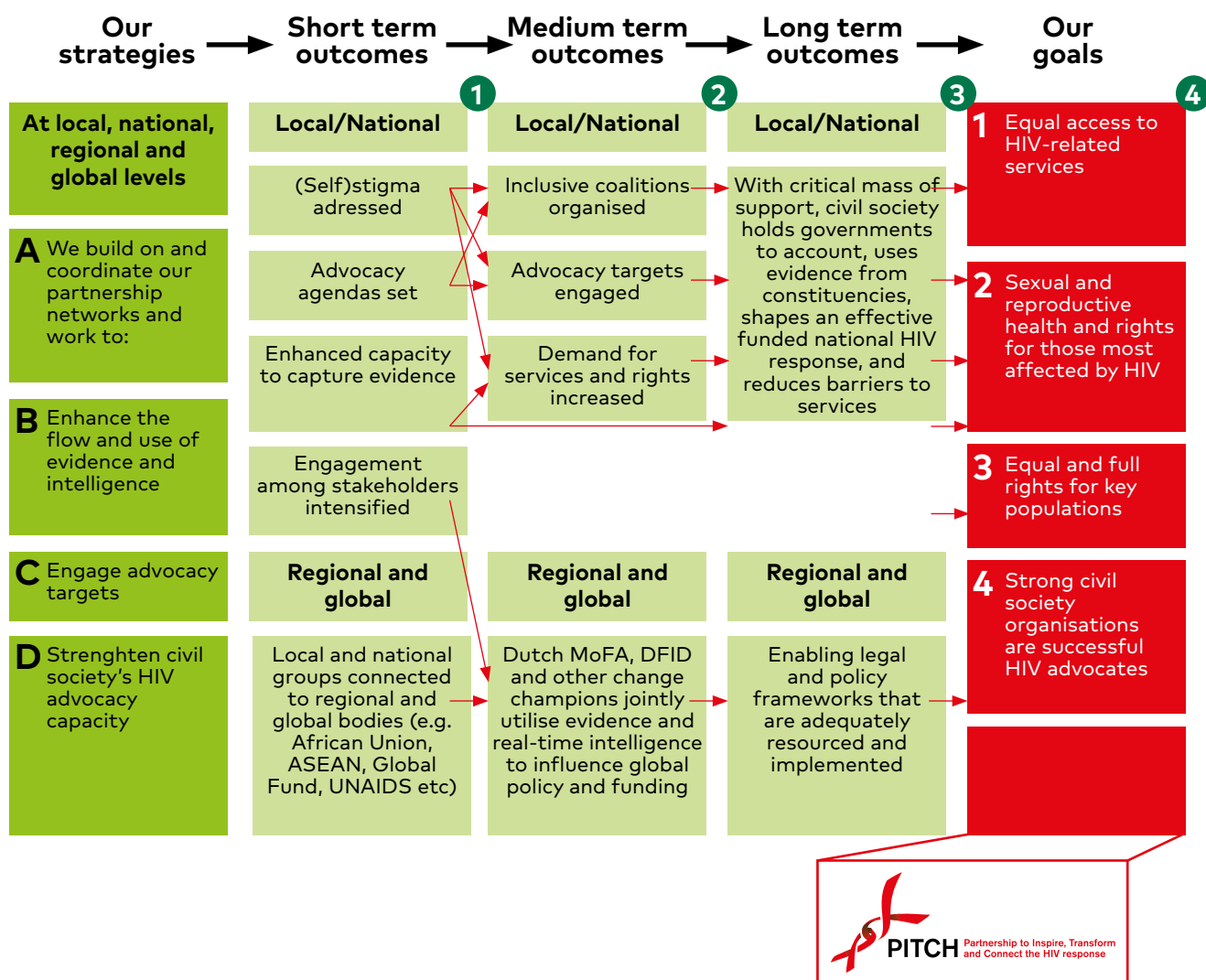
⁷ Please note that partners will also increase capacity of other community-based organisations that may not be directly funded by PITCH. Because of this the recorded number is higher than the number of contracted partners through PITCH. However, this does contribute to movement building

⁸ Please note DD6 cannot be aggregated. This is the number of partners contracted which slightly fluctuates per year

Appendix 2:

PITCH Theory of Change

AIDS is still a major killer, and the biggest kiler of women of reproductive age. Two million people are infected with HIV every year. Discrimination fuels the epidemic. None of this is inevitable. We advocate to beat the AIDS epidemic



The success of this partnership assumes that:

- > We can capitalise on the changing spirit, nature and methods of activism
- > Service delivery continues to provide evidence of bad, good and best practise
- > Civil society is not suppressed to the point of no longer being able to function

Key risks related to this theory of change are the:

- > World power shifts that undermine human rights
- > Growing conservatism and fundamentalism
- > Political instability and fragility
- > De-prioritisation of the AIDS response

Appendix 3:

List of PITCH publications 2019

Integrating the HIV response into universal health coverage: Building on the strengths and successes of the HIV and AIDS response – February 2019

aidsfonds.org/work/pitch/resource/integrating-the-hiv-response-into-universal-health-coverage

Making the Universal Periodic Review work for people who use drugs – April 2019

aidsfonds.org/work/pitch/resource/making-the-universal-periodic-review-work-for-people-who-use-drugs

Advocacy brief: Community responses for health - A gamechanger for primary health care and UHC – May 2019

aidsfonds.org/work/pitch/resource/advocacy-brief-new-definition-old-problem-towards-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-for-all

Advocacy brief: New definition, old problem: Towards sexual and reproductive health and rights for all – May 2019

aidsfonds.org/work/pitch/resource/advocacy-brief-new-definition-old-problem-towards-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-for-all

On the frontline of gender and HIV – May 2019

frontlineaids.org/resources/on-the-frontline-of-gender-and-hiv/

Photo case studies by marginalised communities – October 2019

frontlineaids.org/resources/photo-case-studies/

HIV prevention shadow reports 2019 – December 2019

frontlineaids.org/resources/hiv-prevention-shadow-reports-2019/

A human rights perspective on universal health coverage – December 2019

aidsfonds.org/assets/work/file/Human%20rights%20perspective%20on%20UHC-online.pdf



PITCH Partnership to Inspire, Transform
and Connect the HIV response



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