

Report of LIVING2008: The Positive Leadership Summit

LIVING 2008 – organized by the LIVING 2008 partnership - was a momentous event, the first gathering of positive leaders from around the world in five years. It was an opportunity to take stock of where the PLHIV movement stands, what its challenges are and how to react to them, and where to go from there. The preparations for LIVING 2008 included a gathering of 40 HIV positive leaders entitled “HIV+ Monaco” held in Monaco from 24-26 January 2008.

One of the main achievements of the Monaco meeting was the identification of four key advocacy themes around which the deliberations of LIVING 2008 would be centered. These four themes are: Universal access to HIV treatment, care and prevention, SRHR of PLHIV, Criminalization of the transmission of HIV, Prevention, with a focus on Positive Prevention. In addition, the LIVING 2008 partnership organized an e-consultation between June and July 2008 that engaged a diverse group of PLHIV from different parts of the world to discuss issues pertinent to the four themes of the Leadership Summit.

LIVING 2008 participants issued a clear call to action to all PLHIV around the world to become more involved, be it in becoming experts regarding their own health, actively requesting the enjoyment of their SRHR, or in making themselves knowledgeable regarding criminalization. This, however, will require further empowerment and capacity building for the PLHIV community.

In summary, LIVING 2008: The Positive Leadership Summit was a re-affirmation of PLHIV leadership. It successfully focused the attention on main issues of concern for PLHIV and created renewed momentum for the PLHIV movement. The challenge now will be to move forward and act on the recommendations issued by PLHIV from around the world.

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