

## Bridging the Gaps is seeking a **research consultant**

In support of 'Young, Wild...and Free? Bridging the Gaps in SRHR: prevention, treatment, care and support services for young key populations'

1 January – 31 March 2020

### **About Bridging the Gaps**

Launched in 2011, the Bridging the Gaps Alliance (BtG) is a partnership focusing on the health and human rights of key populations: sex workers, people who use drugs and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. Bridging the Gaps works towards a world where sex workers, people who use drugs and LGBT people can enjoy their human rights and access quality HIV prevention, treatment and care, contributing to the end of AIDS among key populations. The Bridging the Gaps Alliance brings together four Dutch organizations (Aidsfonds, COC, AFEW and Mainline), five global networks (GNP+, INPUD, ITPC, MPact and NSWP), and more than 80 partner organizations in 15 countries, in partnership with and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

### **About 'Young, Wild... and Free?'**

Young key populations experience additional barriers in accessing SRHR, HIV and harm reduction services, for a number of reasons. Service providers are confronted with laws and regulations preventing them from providing services to young people; friendly services for young key populations are often not available because service providers do not have sufficient knowledge on the specific needs of young key populations; and young key populations lack awareness on health risks and supportive networks and communities.

There is limited data around young key populations as they are often underrepresented in bio-behaviour studies. Epidemiological studies reveal that young people who use drugs, sell sex or who identify as LGBT shoulder a relatively disproportionate burden of new infections when such data is reliably collected. Young people are also, even within key population approaches, harder to reach. They have different needs and require an appropriate set of, and approach in, services. In addition to the regressive laws that criminalize and undermine key populations of all age groups, there are laws, regulations and social norms unique to young key populations that keep them from accessing services.

In the second phase of Bridging the Gaps (2016-2020) we started age-disaggregating data and we gained more insight into the extent to which partners in Bridging the Gaps reach young members of key populations. Across the programme, 30% of people who use services offered by Bridging the Gaps partners are 24 and younger. In a number of countries youth comprises a larger part of service users, such as Kenya, Ukraine and Vietnam. Based on these experiences, we are able to learn from good practice, and to share, adapt, and scale up these practices in other locations and countries.

To increase demand for and uptake of SRHR/HIV services by young key populations, systematic research into youth programming and the development and scale up of youth-specific approaches is needed. To be able to optimize services for and engagement of young people in all elements of our work, we are seeking a **research consultant or team of consultants** to help us with a desk research, a survey among Bridging the Gaps partners, and a model for systematic documentation of existing good practices, as a basis for learning and scale-up.

## **Bridging the Gaps is seeking a research consultant to support the project 'Young, Wild...and Free?'**

### **The assignment consists of three key elements:**

#### 1. A desk review

A desk review into:

- ♣ Existing normative guidance and its application in national level guidelines on providing SRHR/HIV health care for young key populations;
- ♣ The academic evidence base for successful SRHR/HIV programming for young key populations;
- ♣ Documented good and promising practices in increasing service uptake and quality of services for young key populations.

#### 2. A partner survey, complemented with in-depth (phone and Skype) interviews, to:

- ♣ Learn more about the current cohort of young people that are reached by Bridging the Gaps partners (e.g. age and gender division);
- ♣ Understand local laws and regulations, and how these play out in practice, in Bridging the Gaps countries that restrict access to services for young key population members (including those that apply for minors aged 15-17);
- ♣ Perceptions and ethical dilemmas of Bridging the Gaps partners with regards to working with young key population members, including their perception of needs, vulnerabilities, risks and barriers in reaching and serving young key populations;
- ♣ Effective and promising practices Bridging the Gaps partners might already engage in.

#### 3. Documentation of good practices

The consultant will document identified good practices in Bridging the Gaps, starting with Indonesia, Kenya, Ukraine, Vietnam, Kyrgyzstan and the EECA region, and in doing this, develop a model/template for systematic documentation of good practices identified via the partner survey and further into the programme. The good practices documentation will be done based on document review and (phone and Skype) interviews.

### **Deliverables and timeline**

- Desk review: a research report presenting the findings, including recommendations based on the findings to inform good practice in reaching and engaging young key populations. The report should be shared with partners by 21 February 2020. After review and validation, the final version should be submitted before 31 March 2020.
- Bridging the Gaps partner survey:
  - A first version of the survey ready for testing by 10 January;
  - The survey ready to be sent to partners by 17 January;
  - A report and the survey findings should be shared with partners by 21 February 2020;
  - After review and validation, the final version should be submitted before 31 March 2020.
- Documentation of good practices: documented good practices, validated by the 'good practice organisations/networks', ready for sharing with partners by 21 February.

## How to apply

Send your proposal, including CV/s demonstrating relevant expertise and experience and a financial proposal, to Aidsfonds by **Thursday 12 December**.

Proposals can be sent to Renee Groen: [rgroen@aidsfonds.nl](mailto:rgroen@aidsfonds.nl)

## We are looking for research consultant/s who:

- Have experience conducting research in the area of HIV/SRHR and key populations;
- Have experience in developing and conducting surveys; conducting interviews; and validation processes with sex worker, people who use drugs, LGBT and PLHIV communities across different countries;
- Are available in the period January-March 2020.

## Documents to be included when submitting the proposal:

1. **The proposal**, outlining the proposed methodology, tools and approaches for collection and analysis, including a timeline (max 3 pages).
2. **Motivation letter and CV of researcher(s)** to be involved, including past experience in similar projects and providing contact details for two references (max 2 pages per CV).
3. **Financial proposal**. Please include a detailed financial proposal, including number of days, daily rate and clearly stating the total amount, including VAT (max 1 page).

Interviews will take place in the week of 16 December.