



## **Draft Governance Structure of Asia Pacific Network of PLWHA (APN+)**

### **Background**

APN+ was founded in 1994 in Kuala Lumpur by a group of PLWHA who met for a regional conference on HIV/AIDS. It was felt there was a real need to have a collective voice for PLWHA in the region and link Asia Pacific with other regional networks and the Global Network of PLWHA (GNP+). APN+ was formed in response to the growing number of people in the region living with HIV/AIDS and who, as a result, faced stigma discrimination in many spheres of their lives. The Network has grown to now represent people living with HIV and AIDS in over 24 countries in the Asia Pacific Region, with a secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand and an international steering committee established to oversee the functions and effectiveness of the Network. APN+'s mission is to provide a face to PLWHA in Asia Pacific Region and provide support and information to national networks of PLWHA throughout the Region on a number of topics including access to treatment, care and support services.

APN+ currently receives and manages grants on behalf of the POLICY Project and the Australian Red Cross/ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The grant from the POLICY Project is for core funding for the network and provides vital resources to enable the network to have a full-time coordinator and regional office in Bangkok. Such assistance facilitates the coordination and implementation of the Networks regional activities and helps maintain momentum and leadership for the country based networks.

APN+ is also working in partnership with the United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) regional GIPA program. This involves mobilizing and ensuring the greater involvement of PLWHA in the design and delivery of UNDP's GIPA Initiative and facilitating access to resources for PLWHA self help support groups in fourteen countries in the Region.

APN+ currently focuses its main activities around the following priority areas that have been identified by APN+

- advocacy on human rights and discrimination - building on UNAIDS funded research work by APN+;

- treatments access and care and support for PLWHA
- capacity building within APN+, including the development of a clear and workable governance structure;
- strengthening the role of the secretariat by seeking sustainable funds for a full-time coordinator and support staff;
- Developing materials to assist national networks in strengthening the response to HIV/AIDS.

## Objectives of the network

- a) To provide a strong, pro-active voice & advocate on behalf of PLWHA in the Region.
- b) To lobby for meaningful representation of PLWHA on all relevant decision-making bodies.
- c) To facilitate communication & exchange of information between PLWHA.
- d) To provide opportunities for PLWHA to develop a range of skills and build capacity.
- e) To give visibility to PLWHA in order to overcome the fear, ignorance and prejudice they face & to counter all forms of discrimination against PLWHA.
- f) To lobby for improved accesses to treatment, care & support.

## Representation

APN+ confirmed its commitment to gender parity at the 2003 Annual General Meeting (AGM) and APN+ actively encourages greater involvement of women. Country Representatives and alternate representatives are nominated by national networks of PLWHA and are required to provide a gender balance. APN+ strongly encourages the consideration of gender balance as a factor when countries are involved in the selection process for joining the network.

Each national PLWHA organisation will appoint a representative and alternate representative to APN+. This person or their alternate represents their national PLWHA organisation at the APN+ AGM and SGMs. All representatives are persons living with HIV/AIDS. Each representative will be appointed from and by their respective national PLWHA organization. Representative are appointed for a term of two years unless the representative either resigns or APN+ receives advice from the nominating organisation that the representative no longer has the support or confidence of the nominating organization.

A Country Representative must resign after two years but may be re-nominated by their respective nominating body. A **Country Representative** is elected by a national PLWHA body.. When there is no national network in a country, a **Key Country Contact** may be invited to join the Network. However every effort is made to assist in the establishment of a formal national network, where possible. Country Representatives and

Key Country Contact have one vote each at Annual General Meetings or Special General Meetings.

## **Decision Making Bodies**

Annual General Meetings (AGM) are held annually and are timed to coincide with other regional or international meetings, if possible, to maximise attendance and minimise travel costs. The AGM is the supreme decision making body in APN+ and is charged with the power of setting strategic directions for the organisation and making policy which is binding on the Steering Committee.

At AGMs decisions are taken to appoint the steering committee members, advisors and representative appointments to other partner organisation committees including:

- Asia Pacific Coalition of AIDS Service Organisations (APCASO)
- Global Network of PLWHA GNP+ (2 APN+ representatives, gender balanced, are nominated to act as GNP+ board members for a 2 year term)
- Seven Sisters coalition
- International Treatments Access Coalition (ITAC)

At the most recent AGM in May 2003 the following posts were appointed:

### **Co-chairs:**

Jose Cheng  
Frika Isklander

### **Steering Committee:**

Frika Isklander  
Jose Cheng  
Kamon Uppakaew  
Rachel Ong

### **Treasurer:**

Kamon Uppakaew

### **GNP+ Board members:**

Frika Isklander  
Banta Singh

### **6th ICAAP:**

Edwin Whenmouth

### **7 Sisters:**

Brenton Wong  
Greg Gray (alternate rep)

**APCASO:**

Robert Baldwin  
Celina D'Costa (alternate rep)

**APN+ Advisors:**

Susan Paxton  
Edwin Whenmouth  
Brenton Wong  
Paisan Suwannawong  
Rajiv Kafle  
Geena Davies  
Robert Baldwin

One of the tasks of the AGM is to appoint members to the above posts.

**Steering Committee**

Members of the APN+ Steering Committee are elected at the AGM. The Steering Committee comprises no less than 4 members: 2 co- chairs, a Treasurer and one other member (with gender and geographical balance taken into account). The steering committee can co-opt additional members as it deems necessary.

**Roles and responsibilities of Steering Committee:**

To set strategic and policy directions for APN+ in between AGMs, provided these directions are consistent with decisions of the AGM.

Ensure policies and strategic directions are implemented;

Oversee the work carried out by the regional Coordinator;

Set priorities for the network; and hire staff.

via the regional Coordinator. I THINK THIS IS A ROLE FOR THE COORDINATOR AND NOT THE STEERING COMMITTEE

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**Co Chairs**

The role of the Co-chairpersons is to act as spokespersons on behalf of APN+ at regional and international fora;

The Co-chairs are expected to chair the AGM or special general meetings and meetings of the Steering Committee (in predetermined rotation);

The Co-chairs provide day-to-day advice and direction to the regional Coordinator;.

The regional Coordinator is responsible on a day-to-day basis to the Co chairs, who are responsible for monitoring the performance of the Coordinator.  
The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the management of APN+ financial resources. This includes income and expenditure, cash flow, ensuring that financial accounts are correctly maintained and annually audited, submission of quarterly financial report to the APN+ Steering Committee and donors and an annual financial report to the AGM.

## **Working Groups**

Where necessary working groups are set up within the network to develop strategic plans and policies and oversee implementation of projects in priority areas that have been identified by the Network.

There are currently two working groups within APN+ that are focused on the following issues:

1. Access to treatment, care and support; and
2. Human rights working group.

The accountability of working groups is determined by the Steering Committee and is overseen on a day-to-dat basis by the regional Coordinator.

Working groups are required to provide regular updates to the regional Coordinator and the Steering Committee.

## **Regional Coordinator**

The roles and responsibilities of the regional Coordinator are to:

- Ensure the country representatives and key country contacts are kept informed of the activities of the Network
- Implement the policy and decisions of the steering committee and those made at the AGM or Special General Meetings.
- Provide advice and support to national networks and strengthen the communication ties between them and other key stakeholders and regional partners.
- Ensure the secretariat office is managed effectively and is accountable and transparent.
- Provide effective communication on the work of the Secretariat to the network membership, Steering Committee, donors, public and other partners.
- Develop rapport and strengthen new and existing partnerships.
- Regular reporting to the network membership via email with progress updates and quarterly reports.
- Facilitate and coordinate delegation and participation at meetings where APN+ is represented and ensure the Network is kept informed of the outcome of such meetings as well as ensuring a gender balance in representation.

- Supervise and manage any staff members, consultants or temporary staff or volunteers employed by APN+.
- overseeing the day-to-day management of APN+ finances, in consultation with the Treasurer and ensuring that sustainable funding is maintained.
- The regional Coordinator does not have any voting rights at AGM or SGM

## **Advisors**

Advisors are appointed or reappointed at each AGM and are all previous key country contacts or elected country representatives. Advisors will be people living with HIV. The role of the Advisors is to provide technical assistance and advice. Advisors are accountable to the Steering Committee and are co-ordinated by the Regional Coordinator. Advisors do not have voting rights at AGM or SGM.