

## LIGHT FOR RIGHTS – A Global Advocacy Project

### “Create-your-own *Light For Rights* Event” Tool Kit

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Go to the web site <http://lightforrights.org> for more information.

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#### BACKGROUND

First observed in 1988, World AIDS Day (WAD) has served to raise awareness about the epidemic, honor those who have died, focus attention on issues that are key to a successful response, and inspire positive action.

The WAD theme for 2009-2010 is “*Universal Access and Human Rights*”. To underscore the importance of human rights in the response to AIDS, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has reported to the UN General Assembly that reduced access to essential HIV services and commodities were occurring in many countries as a result of laws and policies that were inconsistent with their commitments to human rights. He stressed that where human rights were promoted to protect people living with HIV and members of vulnerable groups, there were fewer infections, less demand for antiretroviral treatment and fewer deaths.

The 2009 WAD event in New York was inspired by “Night without Light”, a project undertaken by Visual AIDS<sup>1</sup> in 1990. The emphasis in 2009 was, and in 2010 will again be on shining the light on access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support and human rights.

On WAD in 2009, several major NYC landmarks, including the host site of the Washington Square Park Memorial Arch, the Chrysler Building, Lincoln Center, Broadway theaters and Radio City Music Hall, were temporarily shrouded in darkness and then lit again during a memorable ceremony.

Building on the concept “Light for Rights” and the 2009 WAD event in New York, a global and expanded advocacy and awareness initiative is envisaged, using bold and innovative messages and visual graphics. The project would involve support through UNAIDS to countries to stage tailor-made “Light for Rights” events and local campaigns, with messages and materials adapted to local language and cultural contexts as necessary.

#### 100 CITY GLOBAL “LIGHT FOR RIGHTS” WAD SPECTACULAR

For World AIDS Day 2010, Michel Sidibe has announced that local World AIDS Day Event would share this consistent visual concept, theme and overall Human Rights and HIV messaging *culminate in high-profile “Lights for Rights” observance events in 100 cities worldwide.*

Assembly Special Session on AIDS at which the Declaration of Commitment was adopted. The World AIDS Campaign two-year theme is “Stop AIDS! Keep the Promise!” and would complement “Light for Rights”.

**Focusing on human rights and HIV will illuminate the path to information, prevention, treatment, care and support needed to allow people with HIV to emerge from the shadows into productive lives.**

<sup>1</sup> Visual AIDS, a group dedicated to using the arts to bring public attention to the AIDS crisis, is responsible for creating the red ribbon as an internationally recognizable symbol for the response to AIDS. Its projects include “Day without Art” and “Night without Light”, visual reminders of the impact of AIDS.

## OBJECTIVES

The campaign shall seek to:

- Draw global attention to the human rights of people living with HIV and vulnerable populations;
- Mobilize support for the protection of these rights in order to achieve universal access<sup>2</sup>; and combat all forms of HIV-related stigma and discrimination.

## “LIGHT FOR RIGHTS” LOCAL EVENT PROGRAMS and PARTICIPANTS

The “Light for Rights” event concept will be flexible in order to encourage the organizing of local events by interested civil society organizations, local elected officials, PLWHIV groups, faith based organizations and relevant stakeholders engaged in the HIV response.

Local partners will develop the programme, assemble talent and select and secure a local landmark building or monument to have its lights dimmed and relit using the “Lights for Rights” concept and visuals.

Short (30 minute to 1-hour) programmes will be designed in such a way that key messages focusing on locally relevant, specific HIV and human rights issues will come across strongly and that audiences beyond those already “converted” to the AIDS cause will be reached. It is suggested that all events be open to the general public. Efforts should be undertaken to ensure high media turnout and coverage.

## LIGHT FOR RIGHTS LOCAL PRODUCING PARTNERS

### Local Elected Officials

Are important possible partners especially if the architectural lighting on a Government Building or structure, a government park, or a City Street may be used in some way during the event. Such partnership arrangements assist with gaining government approval, permits and financial support.

### Local Civil Society Organization

Local civil society organizations, networks of people living with HIV, faith based organizations, or HIV service providers are good partners, as they are good partners for providing volunteers, helping to select and refine messaging, recruiting audience/participants, providing speakers and soliciting funds to underwrite the costs of the event.

### Local Private Sector Stakeholders

Local private sector partners are good collaborators as they are good sources for possible funding, connections to stakeholders and or suppliers to facilitate securing the goods, and services that will be needed to produce the “Lights for Rights” Event.

### Local Media Outlets/Journalists

Local media outlets or Journalists are good collaborators as help ensure that media attention is provided for the “Lights for Rights” event. Since a major goal is to draw public and media attention the importance of Human Rights in an effective global HIV response partnerships between HIV NGOs, multi-nationals like UNAIDS and PLWHIV add in the overall progress of the global HIV response.

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<sup>2</sup> As used in this document, “universal access” refers to the goal of “universal access to comprehensive prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010” (2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS)

## BRANDING

For the campaign the “Light for Rights” brand logo below and caption will be used to promote all events and accompanying materials.



The “Light for Rights” image , together with bold and relevant key messages, sample posters, post cards and this how-to kit to “Create-your-own *Light For Rights* Event” are also available on the campaign website ([www.lightforrights.org](http://www.lightforrights.org)).

We suggest you collaborate with local government(s) as well as civil society partners to organize and promote relevant activities in their own localities.

## ORGANIZING YOUR LOCAL EVENT

By organizing and participating in your local “Light for Rights” event, you will join other people all over the world who are “shining the light on HIV and human rights on this World AIDS Day. Scheduled events will range from large-scale efforts involving multiple venues in major cities to more intimate events in individual locations at a local government building, a house of worship, or a bridge of monument.

But no matter how big or small the event, we hope that the event will underscore the fact that we must focus on the fundamental rights all humans share if we are to eradicate HIV from the planet.

### TYPES of Events:

You can add a “Lights for Rights” component an existing World AIDS Day event and be included in our “Lights for Rights” 100 City Spectacular or organize a new event that best addresses the needs, human rights situation and epidemic that exists in your own community. Types of events that could include a “Lights for Rights” intervention could include:

1. A Candlelight Vigil
2. Protesting a Harmful Policy or Human Rights Abuse
3. A Networking Meeting
4. A Film Screening or Art Exhibit
5. A Rally or March
6. A Panel Discussion
7. A Fundraiser
8. A Music Event or Dance Event
9. A Commemorative Dinner
10. A Faith Based Event

*Or Whatever Else You Think of to “Shine a Light on HIV and Human Rights.”*

## PLANNING YOUR “LIGHT FOR RIGHTS” EVENTS

Consider the amount of time and money you have to spend on your event and be realistic in your plans.

- You can sometimes secure free or low-cost spaces such as churches, schools, meeting halls, community centers, theaters, or the offices of partner or supportive organizations.
- If you are considering an outdoor event, be certain to get any required permits in advance.
- Look for local businesses that might be able to sponsor the event in return for promoting them during your event, or putting up signs and banners at the event.
- Ask a larger organization to co-host the event; they may be able to donate resources.
- Always be clear with your partners about expectations.

### Pre-Event

- Where possible, work with other groups to collaborate and get the word out for the event. Collaborative groups can also be a good source of volunteers.
- Make sure you have adequate volunteers or staff in place to run the event smoothly.
- Publicize your event: There is no such thing as too much publicity. Spread information about the event in as many ways as possible: posters, fliers, newspapers, radio stations, public notice boards, email lists, blogs, partners' websites, Face Book and Twitter.
- Invite as many people as possible including community leaders, local politicians, organizations, and friends and family of all the organizers and volunteers.

### At the Event

- Document it! Make sure to get contact information for everyone who attends, if possible.
- Be sure to do a head count or estimate your numbers!
- Take pictures and videos!
- Let people know they can go to [www.lightforrights.org](http://www.lightforrights.org) to find more information.

### After the Event

- Upload pictures and videos of your event at [www.lightforrights.org](http://www.lightforrights.org)
- Meet with the key organizers and discuss and take notes on what went well and what didn't. This will be very helpful when planning future events.
- Start planning next year!