

LIGHT FOR RIGHTS

A GLOBAL ADVOCACY PROJECT





Light for Rights World AIDS Day 2010 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 information, prevention tools, treatments, and services is occurring in many countries as a result of laws and policies that are inconsistent with their commitments to human rights. He stressed that where human rights are promoted to protect people living with HIV and members of other vulnerable groups, there are fewer infections, less demand for antiretroviral treatment in addition to fewer deaths.

Objectives of the campaign:

- Draw global attention to the rights of people living with HIV and vulnerable populations
- Mobilise support for the protection of these rights in order to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support and combat stigma and discrimination

When did Light for Rights begin?

Lights for Rights, organised by amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research; UNAIDS; Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS; and World AIDS Campaign, is inspired by the concept “Night without Light” undertaken by Visual AIDS in 1990. The launch event was held in New York City on the 1st of December 2009 in Washington Square Park. The event included speeches and performances by celebrities and the UN Secretary General and coincided with New York City buildings including Lincoln Center, Broadway Theaters, Chrysler Building and Radio City Music Hall being temporarily shrouded in darkness and then relit. Events also happened in Paris and Cape Town. To see photos of these events, visit: www.lightforrights.org/photos_video.php

This year there are plans for over 100 cities to be involved in Light for Rights events.

We are asking campaigners from around the world to join on this important initiative. The more cities and events there are, the brighter the light will be on HIV and human rights.

How do I get involved in Light for Rights?

There are many ways you can be involved. You can organise a Light for Rights event, include a Light for Rights element into your existing World AIDS Day plans, or attend an event happening in your area or online.

By organising or participating in an event, you will join people from around the world in “shining the light on HIV and human rights” on World AIDS Day. Events can range from large-scale efforts, involving multiple venues in big cities to intimate events at a local church, community center or town square.

The Light for Rights concept is flexible and we encourage campaigners to adapt key messages around human rights and universal access locally. To learn more about why universal access and human rights are important, please visit www.worldaidscampaign.org.

What does a Light for Rights event look like?

Many of the events already planned for the 1st of December 2010 will include the lights on important buildings or monuments in cities being dimmed and then relit, alongside a short programme of speeches or performances that include local figures and talent.

However, we encourage you to think creatively about your event! Other ways you could carry out a Light for Rights event could include:

Coordinated lighting of one or more public buildings in your city or town with a red light

Organising a candlelight vigil

Coordinating glow sticks, lighters or mobile phone lights at a key time during a concert or march

Creating a virtual Light for Rights event – momentarily blacking out your website and just displaying the Light for Rights icon

Producing a television or dramatic production that involves theatre lights or spotlights

Any other creative event involving Light for Rights lights!

Materials for your event

www.lightforrights.org will have materials available online to help promote your event. Many of the tools can be adapted for your local event. Using the Light for Rights imagery in your event will help connect your event to the global campaign. There will be a global events calendar where you can promote your event online. You can also use the other tools World AIDS Campaign has available on their website for World AIDS Day.

Events for 2010

There is initial planning for major events already happening in cities such as London, New York, Beijing and Cape Town. World AIDS Campaign is working with partners and campaigners around the world to promote this event concept for World AIDS Day 2010. In South Africa, for example, World AIDS Campaign is working with UNAIDS and other partners to organise a large-scale event in Cape Town and march in Ciskei, with local partners.

Organising an event: A few things to consider (to learn more visit www.lightforrights.org)

- 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 organisations.
- 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 organisation 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.
- Publicise 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, Facebook and Twitter
- Invite as many people as possible including community leaders, local politicians, organisations, and friends and family of all the organisers and volunteers.
- Let the media know! Invite your local media to your event and give them as much information about key issues around the event as possible
- Post your event on www.lightforrights.org! So people in your area can get involved and others around the world can know what you are doing. Be sure to include your contact information.

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 to find more information.

After the Event

- Upload pictures and videos of your event at www.lightforrights.org
- Meet with the key organisers and discuss and take notes on what went well and what didn't. This will be very helpful when planning future events.
- Email us and let us know what you did! Worldaidsday@worldaidscampaign.org.
- Start planning for next year!





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