

READY

RESILIENT & EMPOWERED
ADOLESCENTS & YOUNG PEOPLE

#WeAreREADY

READY NEWSLETTER #16 | JULY 2026



Celebrating **10** Years of READY!



Priscilla, Ghana

Welcome to the final edition of the **READY** newsletter! We're celebrating ten years of the **READY** movement – a decade of impact and learning.

What inspires me most about **READY** is young people's resilience, creativity and passion. Through advocacy, storytelling, peer support and community action, young people are bringing about change every day.

At the Global Network of Young People Living with HIV (Y+ Global), I've advocated for young people to be seen not just as beneficiaries, but as partners and leaders. My visibility across **READY+** has allowed me to represent the movement in regional and global spaces, bridging conversations between policy and lived realities. I've witnessed the power of young people standing together to demand accountability, equity and justice. I know that sustainable progress in the HIV response can only happen when young people are meaningfully engaged, resourced and trusted to lead.

A **READY+** future may be uncertain, but I believe in one grounded in solidarity, care and shared responsibility: where youth-led movements evolve to meet the challenges ahead. I will always remain a **READY** leader, committed to ensuring that no young person is left behind.

As you read this newsletter, I hope you feel inspired by the stories, reflections and achievements shared by young people across **READY**. #WeAreREADY for whatever comes next.

Priscilla Ama Addo
JUNIOR PROGRAMMES OFFICER,
Y+ GLOBAL

Partners' reflections on **READY+**



Mather Mawodzeke is the Head of Programmes at Zvandiri, Zimbabwe © 2026 Zvandiri

We asked members of the **READY+** consortium to reflect on their highlights, lessons learned, how they've overcome challenges and their hopes for adolescent and youth programming. Partners across Angola, Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe shared their insights.

Consortium members stressed the effectiveness of the peer-led model in improving treatment adherence, service uptake and retention in HIV care. Zvandiri emphasised the value of the holistic peer-led model that encompasses HIV treatment, psychosocial support and life skills development. According to [Mather Mawodzeke](#), Head of Programmes:

“ This has enabled young people to feel as whole individuals rather than patients.

A lesson learned is that young people should be included throughout programme design and implementation; when they are treated as equals, programmes become more effective.

ADPP and MACRO found that peer supporters require ongoing supervision and mentorship. ADPP underlined

the importance of links between the community and health facilities, and several partners stressed the role of caregivers and the community in tackling stigma and adherence challenges. PATA cited the [READY to Care scorecard](#) as a useful tool for community-led monitoring.

Challenges encountered included stigma, disclosure, caregivers' limited involvement and turnover of peer supporters. Partners addressed stigma by building trust and engaging communities. REPSSI found that helping parents/caregivers see that they're not to blame for their children's HIV status eased the burden. PATA found that collaboration helped overcome challenges, with [Heleen Soeters](#), Senior Programmes Manager, highlighting the power of partnership:

“ **READY+** has shown us that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Looking ahead, partners hope that the peer supporter model will be integrated into the national health system. Zvandiri noted that continued investment in young people as partners and leaders is essential to create sustainable youth-responsive health systems. Given their training, MACRO called for peer supporters to be prioritised for jobs in the ministry of health. PATA hopes that effective interventions like teen clubs will be scaled up and mental health screening will become standard within sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and HIV programming for adolescents. [Winile Dlamini Vermaak](#), Project Coordinator, NCM, sums up **READY+**'s legacy:

“ Today, it is inspiring to see them [young people] succeeding in different areas of their lives, becoming confident, responsible and empowered individuals. Watching their transformation and growth has been one of the most rewarding parts of this journey.

Supporting young mothers in Zimbabwe – Ellen's story



Ellen is a mother and a mentor to other young mums living with HIV in Makoni District, in northeast Zimbabwe. © 2026 Zvandiri

I was born with HIV. I accept my status and love the way I live my life. My baby is fine.

As a peer supporter, I was trained to help peers accept their HIV status and live their lives to the fullest. Now, through **READY+**, I guide other young mothers living with HIV. As a mentor mother, I love to support other young mothers through the ups and downs of parenting. I love to offer advice, share experiences and provide emotional support to them. They turn to me because I listen to them without judgement. They are free to tell me their concerns because we are of the same age and we have the same lived experiences.

I'm so proud because I'm helping other young mothers accept their status and to take good care of their babies. We need to provide HIV education to young mothers and let them know about sexual and reproductive health and family planning information.

I've also learnt that being HIV positive doesn't mean it's the end of the world. I can live happily, just like anybody who is HIV negative. All I need to do is adhere to my treatment and everything will be fine.

READY Academy: young people call for “Nothing about us, without us!”



Youth advocates congregate at the first ever Lusophone READY Academy in Maputo, Mozambique © Y+ Global 2026

BY MIGUEL OSÓRIO, ADVISOR: PROGRAMMES, FRONTLINE AIDS

Since 2022, the READY Academy, led by Y+ Global in partnership with Frontline AIDS and regional partners, has strengthened youth leadership across Eastern and Southern Africa. In June 2026, this vision reached an important milestone with the first Lusophone READY Academy, bringing together young leaders from Portuguese-speaking countries under the theme “Sustaining HIV and SRHR responses: strengthening youth leadership through meaningful youth engagement.”

Throughout the week, one message resonated strongly: “**Nothing about us, without us.**” More than a slogan, it reflected the Academy’s commitment to ensuring that young people are not only beneficiaries of programmes but active partners in designing, implementing and evaluating HIV and SRHR responses.

The Lusophone format created a unique opportunity for young people to engage without language barriers, enabling deeper conversations, stronger connections and more authentic participation. Fabiana Sapato, READY Academy participant from Angola, said:

“ I learned to build my self-confidence, giving me the courage to learn, actively participate, overcome challenges, and apply the knowledge I gained with confidence.

The Academy also celebrated diversity and inclusion, with strong representation from young women and young people living with and affected by HIV. This was reflected in the seed funding awards, where two grants were secured by key population groups from Angola and Mozambique – demonstrating that when communities are trusted with resources and opportunities, they deliver innovative responses grounded in lived realities.

As READY celebrates ten years of impact, the Lusophone Academy showed that stronger HIV responses are built when young people are heard, valued and empowered to lead.



Building on lessons learned from READY+

BY JOÃO E. CHONGO, POLICY OFFICER FOR REGIONAL SRHR AND HIV/AIDS PROGRAMME, EMBASSY OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS IN MAPUTO

Over the past ten years, READY+ has made an **important contribution to the regional SRHR programme**. One of its most significant achievements has been facilitating access to HIV services for adolescents, particularly adolescents living with HIV. This success is closely connected to the **peer-led model at the heart of the programme**, especially through the role of community adolescent treatment supporters (CATS). By placing CATS at the centre, READY+ has shown that young people are not only beneficiaries of services but also **trusted agents of change** who can support their peers with empathy, credibility and lived experience.

READY+ has also demonstrated the value of **integrating mental health and psychosocial support** into HIV interventions. This is particularly relevant when providing comprehensive sexuality education to young people, as information alone is not enough. Adolescents and young people need safe spaces, emotional support and practical tools to navigate treatment, relationships and stigma, and **enhance their broader wellbeing**.

Looking ahead, these lessons will continue to inform our new regional portfolio. Building on the evidence and experience from READY+, our new partners are also anchoring their interventions in peer-led models. Our ambition is to **strengthen youth leadership, community-based support and meaningful advocacy** so that young people can shape HIV and SRHR responses across the region.



Climate change and HIV in focus

‘Through the rains’

Through the rains is a new short film on the impact of climate change on young people affected by HIV in Malawi. Devastating floods can leave young people without vital access to treatment and support. But thanks to READY+, MACRO and Y+ Malawi are keeping young people in care, driving innovations and advocating for change so that young people can thrive.

Watch the film at: <https://youtu.be/EGQsZh8JPL0>



A decade of impact: developing a new generation of leaders



READY+ peer supporters in Zimbabwe pose for a group photo during a CATS coordination meeting at Zvandiri House. © Zvandiri 2026

BY CHENGETAI DZIWA, SENIOR ADVISOR: MONITORING AND EVALUATION, FRONTLINE AIDS

What began in 2016 as a programme operating in four countries has evolved into a movement, one that has been tested, refined and proven to deliver impact at scale in seven countries (Angola, Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe). READY+ supports adolescents and young people living with and affected by HIV across five levels: personal, community, health services, policy and livelihoods. At its heart is a model that places power in young people’s hands, enabling them to deliver differentiated services that improve their peers’ health and wellbeing.

Over the last decade, READY+ has:

- Reached over **60,000** adolescents and young people with **sustained peer support**.
- Helped **reduce HIV transmission rates** to under 1% among over **6,000** young mothers.
- Supported nearly **22,000** parents/caregivers to **better communicate** with their children.
- Improved quality of care, with almost **200** health facilities becoming youth-friendly and **600** healthcare providers trained to respond to young people’s needs and priorities.
- Trained **4,400** young people to lead advocacy within their countries and beyond.
- Shaped policy, for example, a law in Tanzania was amended to allow HIV testing at age 15 and clinical guidelines in Eswatini and Zimbabwe were transformed through youth-led advocacy.
- Empowered over **2,000** young people through skills training, opening doors to wider livelihood opportunities and greater self-sufficiency.

Beyond the positive impact on young people’s health, READY+ has strengthened communities to address stigma and harmful gender norms. An *evaluation* in 2020 showed that READY+ generates a social value of US\$1.81 for every US\$1 invested, projected to rise to US\$2.65, demonstrating its long-term impact.



FOLLOW THE MOVEMENT! Dates for the diary

26-31 July	AIDS 2026 (the 26th International AIDS Conference), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and virtually
12 August	International Youth Day
21-23 September	International Workshop on Adolescence, SRHR & HIV, Bangkok, Thailand
25 September	UN High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response, New York, USA
11 October	International Day of the Girl Child
25 November–10 December	16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence
1 December	World AIDS Day
10 December	Human Rights Day

Support the READY movement by following these events and posting to:



READYMovement



@READY_Movement



@readymovement



using **#WeAreREADY**. Visit <https://frontlineaids.org/ready>, readymovement.org and <https://www.yplusglobal.org/projects-ready-2.0> for news and updates.

Thank you!

In this – our final READY newsletter – Y+ Global and Frontline AIDS would like to say heartfelt thanks to:

- All the adolescents and young people at the forefront of this work.
- All the partners implementing READY projects: Ajuda de Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo (ADPP), Malawi AIDS Counselling and Resource Organization (MACRO), Nazarene Compassionate Ministries (NCM), Paediatric - Adolescent Treatment Africa (PATA), Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI), Swaziland Network of Young Positives (SNYP+), Young Africa and Zvandiri.
- All other organisations that are part of the READY movement.
- The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its support.