

PITCH

End Term Evaluation Report

Executive Summary



Project background



Partners from Indonesia and Vietnam share learnings and insights

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Cover photo: "Regard me as a human being, not just a sex worker."
Myanmar © Pan Nu/Frontline AIDS/PhotoVoice/2018

The Partnership to Inspire, Transform, and Connect the HIV response (PITCH) is a strategic partnership between Aidsfonds, Frontline AIDS, and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). PITCH was designed as a five-year (2016-2020) advocacy-based programme focused on building the capacity of local CSOs to advocate for equal rights and access to services for key populations, and adolescent girls and young women. Partner organisations have carried out HIV-focussed advocacy at the country level in Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Ukraine, Uganda, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. Advocacy at the country level has been complemented by the work of PITCH partners at the regional level in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) and in Southern Africa. This was further strengthened by advocacy at the global policy level, for example at the United Nations in Geneva and New York, the European Union in Brussels, and with the U.S. Government in Washington DC.

As outlined in the programme theory of change, PITCH pursues four goals:

- 1 Equal access to HIV-related services;
- 2 Sexual and reproductive health and rights for those most affected;
- 3 Equal and full rights for key populations; and
- 4 Strong civil society organisations which are successful HIV advocates.



Advocates in Ukraine mark the 'Support Don't Punish' global day of action

Evaluation background

The purpose of the End Term Evaluation conducted by Results in Health (RiH) has been to facilitate a critical analysis of the programme's contribution to evidence-based changes in relation to the PITCH theory of change.

This evaluation has also sought to identify the strengths as well as opportunities for improvement in the programme's approach to external and internal collaboration, as well as the sustainability of the programme's achievements.

The evaluation questions that RiH has set out to respond to are presented as follows: ▼

▼ Objective

1 To assess the outcomes and impact of PITCH, as well as their sustainability, in the context of the programme's Theory of Change

Wanja Ngunjiri, Country Focal Point, Kenya



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Evaluation question

- 1.1** Which significant advocacy outcomes has PITCH made a measurable contribution to? To what extent does evidence exist to support these claims of contribution?
- 1.2** How has PITCH contributed to any positive or negative unexpected outcomes? What lessons have been learned, and how have these unexpected outcomes influenced partners' advocacy planning?
- 1.3** Which PITCH advocacy strategies have been most effective in allowing PITCH partners to achieve their advocacy asks? What lessons can be learned from this?
- 1.4** Reflecting on structural and legislative changes, how sustainable are the achievements of PITCH beyond the programme's lifetime, and in the absence of significant external funding?
- 1.5** To what extent has PITCH measurably and sustainably strengthened the advocacy capacity of PITCH partners, including the capacity to capture evidence to support their advocacy?
- 1.6** To what extent has the capacity of PITCH partners to apply a gender transformative approach to their work been strengthened? How has this been achieved? What impact has this had on the outcome of PITCH country level advocacy activities?
- 1.7** What lessons can be learned about how gender informs advocacy carried out on behalf of Key Populations and Adolescent Girls and Young Women?
- 1.8** From the perspective of different PITCH stakeholders, including implementing partners, which programmatic strategies and approaches have partly or entirely failed? What lessons can we learn from this?

ResultsinHealth have reviewed and evaluated the programme period from its inception in January 2016 through to July 2020, when the evaluation data was collected. The findings of the evaluation are the result of a comprehensive desk review, as well as a robust analysis of data collected through a series of reflection meetings with PITCH partners, as well as key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussions (FGD) with a wider range of internal and external stakeholders. The Outcome Harvesting methodology was applied when planning, facilitating, and analysing the results of the

evaluation reflection meetings. Data was gathered from all nine intervention countries, as well as from the regional and global policy partners. As part of the data analysis and interpretation process, the Story of Change (SoC) methodology was used to document and present key advocacy achievements contributed to by PITCH, capturing the journeys and processes that PITCH partners engaged in as a key part of their work, as well as presenting lessons learned from programming. Nine Stories of Change were developed, with each representing one of the nine PITCH countries.

▼ Objective

2 To understand the extent to which internal and external PITCH stakeholders have benefited from collaborating with each other

Advocates and stakeholders participated in the launch of the #UHC4ALL campaign in Uganda



Evaluation question

- 2.1 To what extent have country partners and global policy partners benefited from/connected with each other's advocacy activities?
- 2.2 To what extent have country partners and regional programme partners benefited from/connected with each other's advocacy activities?
- 2.3 To what extent have regional programme and global policy partners benefited from/connected with each other's advocacy activities?
- 2.4 To what extent have PITCH partners formed or joined coalitions with other civil society organisations that have helped to advance their advocacy, raise the profile of the experiences of Key Populations and Adolescent Girls and Young Women, and to set the advocacy agenda?
- 2.5 To what extent can examples of effective collaboration at the country level be demonstrated between PITCH and other MoFA funded programmes working to address HIV/AIDS?
- 2.6 To what extent have working relationships between PITCH, and the Dutch embassies and Permanent Missions in the PITCH countries, contributed to advocacy outcomes through strategic collaboration?

¹ An Advocacy Ask is a statement developed by a PITCH partner that identifies the specific change they seek to contribute to through their planned advocacy work

Summary of the main evaluation findings and conclusions

Understanding impact through the harvested outcomes

This evaluation found that, overall, PITCH was successful in contributing to **significant advocacy outcomes**, in line with the goals and anticipated outcomes presented in the programme's original theory of change. This included advancing HIV advocacy for KPs and AGYW, increasing access to HIV services and realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all, and lastly contributed to developing strong CSOs who can act as HIV advocates in all the nine PITCH countries.

In total, **117 positive outcomes have been harvested** through reflection meetings with partners at the national, regional and global level, each of which demonstrated a significant change in behaviour of relevant social actors, contributed to by PITCH partners' advocacy.

117 of the harvested outcomes were positive and contributed to meaningful and significant change for key populations and adolescent girls and young women. This number also included **eight unexpected positive outcomes**. The fact that the number of unexpected outcomes is low is an indication that PITCH did well in defining their intended outcomes in the programme level theory of change, which gave space to adapt advocacy planning according to the evolving needs of partners and communities.

These unexpected outcomes demonstrate the flexibility and capacity for adaptive management by PITCH implementing partners. Reflecting on the achievement of outcomes in line with the PITCH theory of change, most of the harvested unexpected outcomes relate to goal 2 (sexual and reproductive health and rights for those most affected by HIV) and goal 3 (equal and full rights for key populations), rather than to goal 1 (equal access to HIV-related services).

Six negative outcomes were also harvested as part of the evaluation. As the PITCH programme fundamentally seeks to challenge existing power relations and increase the voice of marginalized communities, resistance to these changes is to be expected.

Significant outcomes were achieved under PITCH which will make important steps toward sustainable changes for key populations and adolescent girls and young women. In three cases, important legislative changes (or blocked negative law change) will continue to make a difference beyond the PITCH programme lifetime. They include changes in laws in Mozambique, Vietnam and Nigeria. PITCH partners contributed to 33 policy and strategy decisions taken by policy makers which the evaluation team is confident will guide the behaviour of mostly governmental actors at the local and national level.

In half of these 33 cases, the implementation of these policies could be observed at the time this evaluation was conducted. Noteworthy achievements were made in increasing budgetary allocations by national governments as well as the Global Fund, which will ensure funding is available for critical activities to serve the needs of key populations and adolescent girls and young women for several years to come.

Additionally, 21 harvested outcomes were concerned with changes in relationships and particularly the formalization of relations between PITCH partners and government. These were very often facilitated by their participation in different platforms (e.g. the National Platform for the Rights of the Sex Workers) that have allowed for meaningful dialogue. However, it is important to note that the continued participation of PITCH partners in these platforms will depend on their ability to locate sustainable sources of funding, a factor which the evaluation was unable to ascertain.

The evaluation also identified 16 changes in the practices of individuals who act as community role models including religious and other

community leaders, judges, key population-friendly health workers, journalists or the police.

Whilst these do not constitute a structural change in policy or practice, they are important in creating long-lasting change at the community level in terms of attitudes toward key populations and adolescent girls and young women. Although the evaluation team cannot be confident of the sustainability of outcomes which have influenced public debate around HIV and the rights of key populations and adolescent girls and young women, it is hoped that these outcomes will influence social norms more broadly beyond the life of the PITCH programme. The harvested outcomes that relate both to changes in relations between civil society and government, and changes in the practice of influential individuals (e.g. community or religious leaders), indicate a shift toward changing social norms on key issues. These include the acceptance of same sex relationships as well as improved social attitudes towards sex workers, and people who use drugs, crucial to achieving long-lasting change.

Strengthening the capacity of civil society

The strengthening of the capacity of PITCH partner organisations to advocate on behalf of key populations and adolescent girls and young women was one of the key successes of the programme. PITCH invested significant resources in this area of work through training programmes, increasing the availability of funding, and creating common spaces for learning and collaboration. Strengthening the capacity of PITCH partners as HIV advocates played a major role in enabling partners to achieve their advocacy asks.

Partners learned how to strategically develop and implement advocacy strategies. In a variety of areas, increased advocacy capacity had a positive impact on the effectiveness of partners' advocacy strategies. PITCH partners were also able to collectively advocate in coordination with PITCH partners, as well as external CSOs. Participating in the PITCH programme increased

linkages between partners in, and across countries and regions which resulted in cross-learning, improved collaboration, and stronger coalitions. Partners also drastically improved their ability to generate and use good evidence in their advocacy work with Vietnam and Mozambique providing exemplary examples of this. The evaluation found that the introduction of new technology to enhance data gathering and knowledge management (such as Wanda, ONA and REAct), enabled more systematic tracking of advocacy activities and results.

Other key areas of strengthened capacity among PITCH partners which contributed to the success of their overall advocacy efforts included: mapping advocacy targets and stakeholders; engaging with the media; connecting with legal professionals; the training and increase in specific technical knowledge (such as SRHR); informal advocacy dialogues to influence key stakeholders; and enhanced engagement with the community' and enhanced engagement with key population communities, adolescent girls and young women, and with the wider community.



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Patriciah Jeckonia, Senior Technical Advisor, LVCT Kenya



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Myanmar MSM Transgender Network changed its name and vision to reflect gender inclusivity

Gender sensitive and transformative approaches in the PITCH programme

Whilst gender sensitive and transformative approaches (GSA/GTA) were not built into the PITCH programme from the outset, increased capacity building and the establishment of a fully resourced Gender Working Group dramatically improved the ability of partners to apply these approaches in their work. Of particular note is the increased attention and efforts of PITCH partners to identify and address the often overlooked gendered needs of key populations. This included working with women who use drugs, male sex workers, and transgender women, addressing gender-based violence concerns (especially for sex workers and transgender populations), and working to meet the needs of LGBTIQ groups. The application of a gender sensitive and gender transformative approach by PITCH partners as part of their advocacy manifested in not only the inclusion of

more women in the programme but also an enhanced consideration of the gendered needs and experiences of different communities.

Overall, increased capacity was most commonly demonstrated through the critical reflection of PITCH partners on how gender norms, attitudes and beliefs shape individual interactions between PITCH partners and key population communities and adolescent girls and young women, as well as the development and application of work place policies and programme activities. This is considered an important and promising foundation for the development and implementation of gender sensitive and possibly gender transformative action in the future. However, internalized harmful gender norms and discriminatory attitudes as experienced by key populations and adolescent girls and young women within the wider community were not as effectively addressed by PITCH partners.

PITCH partners demonstrated their capacity to apply a gender sensitive or transformative approach through their advocacy, , across all PITCH countries, as demonstrated by changes and the reform of laws, and policies, and the allocation of resources to achieve gender equality in countries including Mozambique, Ukraine, Vietnam, and Kenya. Despite the fact that the principles of gender transformation have not always been understood well by partners, their



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work practice often reflects a degree of gender sensitivity, which has further increased in the second half of the programme.

Connections between partners

In general, connections among PITCH partners at different programme levels (country, regional and global), as well as with external CSOs and other Dutch MoFA funded programmes, have been established. However, it emerged that these collaborations were more of an ad hoc nature than a structural activity within a well-defined overarching programme strategy. The evaluation found differences in the degree of the different collaborations, as well as the nature of the benefits of these collaborations.

Although no structural connection between country partners and global policy partners was established, relevant linkages have been made on some occasions. PITCH has supported connections between the country and global level mainly through the provision of funding, and to a smaller extent through the provision of technical support. Benefits from the connection between national and global partners was more prominent in the second half of programmes. Among the main benefits experienced were the creation of spaces for national partners to speak at global advocacy events by global policy partners, guidance (although fragmentary) provided to

national partners during the engagement in global advocacy spaces and processes, and to a small extent the provision of evidence by country partners to global policy partners.

The engagement in international advocacy did not only contribute to increases in the advocacy capacity of country partners and country focal persons involved, but also helped them to strengthen their relationships with their national governments. The evaluation team found that country and regional partners have not actively connected with each other under PITCH and the opportunity to link advocacy levels through country and regional partners has not been effectively accomplished. According to some PITCH regional programme partners, contact with the global policy partners usually only occurred during the annual PITCH policy summits. Even though the connection is limited, some benefits were reported.

The value of alliances and coalitions

PITCH partners formed or joined coalitions with other CSOs in all countries. Working more closely with organizations who have similar goals, issues, focus, or targets helped them to advance their advocacy, raise the profile of the experiences of key populations and adolescent girls and young women to set the advocacy agenda. These partnerships and networks provided: a safe space for collaboration and

Advocates campaign for gender equality in Uganda during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence © ICWEA



information sharing; the possibility to unify multiple voices toward one goal; mechanisms to support collective advocacy efforts; and a strategy to ensure sustainability beyond the programme lifetime. In all countries, one or more PITCH partners have collaborated with another MoFA funded programme, with different levels of collaboration depending on the context. PITCH partners reported that they collaborated with partner organisations involved in the Bridging the Gaps, GUSO, Right Here Right Now, and READY programmes. When collaboration happened between partners involved in PITCH and those involved in these programmes, it was considered effective and contributed to the achievement of some important harvested outcomes (such as outcome #23 in Kenya and outcome #59 in Myanmar).

However, it appears that such activity was ad hoc and no clear strategy was developed under PITCH to strategically or systematically build links between these programmes. In general, there has been a good level of collaboration between the PITCH partners and the Dutch embassies in the PITCH countries.

The intensity of collaboration does differ per country. In general Dutch embassies played a key role in facilitating meetings of CSOs involved in MoFA funded programmes, introductions to relevant stakeholders such as national government representatives and UN agencies. This kind of support helped partners to expand and strengthen their in-country networks. Dutch embassies have also engaged in activities organized by PITCH country partners.

Assessing programme gaps or weaknesses

The evaluation found that no specific programmatic strategies failed, although some features or dynamics of the programme have been identified as problematic. It is important to note that some of the issues reported may not be specifically a result of issues with the

strategies or approaches implemented as part of the programme, rather that they simply reflect the challenges and complexity of the overall programme. Similarly, the weaknesses reported may also be closely connected to the individual capacity of PITCH partners and the country context.

Some of the specific issues mentioned by PITCH stakeholders include the complexity of the programme and layered structure which resulted in confusion for some partners. Meanwhile, different lines of coordination regarding who was responsible for what, as well as questions related to the ownership of processes, were not always adequately communicated. Some PITCH global policy partners noted their experiences of limited collaboration earlier in the programme. Some observed that this was mainly due to the limited time available at the start of the programme for setting up processes to support collaboration and communication within PITCH as well as issues related to PITCH governance at the beginning of the programme's implementation.

The different priorities among PITCH partners also posed challenges in unifying the programme's advocacy agenda and in focusing on a common cause. Some evaluation interviewees reported that given the ambitious nature of the programme's goals, more resources were required compared with what was allocated in order to achieve these goals and to ensure the sustainability of their achievements. Other key gaps or weaknesses included the aforementioned delay in introducing and implementing a gender transformative approach across PITCH. However, as noted, this was corrected over the course of the programme.

Another concern raised by partners involved in the EECA regional programme as well as in Kenya, Ukraine and Vietnam was the perceived lack of promotion of PITCH and its activities. It was noted by these evaluation participants that this subsequently resulted in low levels of awareness among different stakeholders (local

governments, policy makers and general public) at the country and regional levels, impacting the effectiveness of these partners' interventions.

Lastly, the COVID-19 global pandemic has posed considerable challenges for PITCH implementing

partners in completing their activities in the final year of the programme. To the best of their ability, partners have tried to find ways to implement their activities where possible by adapting their advocacy to online spaces and platforms.



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Ko Moe Kyaw Myanmar, MSM and Transgender Network and U Min San Tun, Myanmar Positives Group

Conclusion



Yulia Paskevskva (Ministry of Justice of Ukraine), Halyna Korniienko (Hope and Trust) and Yevheniia Kuvshynova, Executive Director, Convictus, participate in CND 2020



Drawing from the results of the evaluation, it can be concluded that the PITCH programme was overall successful in making a plausible and measurable contribution to 123 outcomes that helped advance the HIV advocacy agenda of the programme while achieving its four goals.

According to the results of this evaluation, the programme progressed as intended. The outcomes are relevant for all key populations and adolescent girls and young women, with a slightly higher proportion of outcomes and Stories of Change relevant to the work of PITCH partners working with people who use drugs.

The role of the PITCH country focal points and PITCH staff at Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS was frequently valued and appreciated by PITCH partners. Furthermore, the evaluation found that PITCH partners often used multiple strategies to achieve their outcomes and their advocacy asks. This was often made possible by partners' newly strengthened capacity as facilitated by PITCH.

One of the most notable successes of the PITCH programme was the strengthened capacity of PITCH partners and other CSOs. PITCH implementing partners in all nine countries reflected positively in this regard. While many PITCH partners would benefit from further investment in training and other forms of capacity strengthening, the evaluation demonstrates that investing in the capacity of CSOs can lead to meaningful, positive outcomes for those most vulnerable to, and affected by HIV. Like most complex programmes such as this PITCH experienced some challenges.

Although there is still room for improvement, the evaluation team found that the strategy of building partnerships between CSOs as HIV advocates has helped partners to achieve their advocacy asks. PITCH country partners collaborated among themselves, and with regional and global partners, as well as external CSOs and Dutch MoFA funded programmes. However this collaboration was often not systematic and was somewhat ad hoc. Whenever collaborations and partnership happened, it was beneficial.



I am a proud transgender woman and sex worker - see me smile.

I want to live in a world where sex work is recognized as work and rights and services are made available to those whose profession it is.

People who sell sex live in fear and at risk of contracting HIV. Rape by clients, harassment from the police and violence through ignorance are an everyday occurrence for sex workers. We remain stigmatized, discriminated and marginalized from health services. The red represents the blood shed by sex workers facing this reality.

Decriminalization of sex work is the most effective way to increase sex workers' uptake in SRHR [sexual and reproductive health and rights] services - Isn't that what we all want?

Recommendations

For PITCH implementing partners

- To increase collaboration and coordination with similar programmes at country, regional and global level through the formation of coalitions or the establishment of formal agreements such as MoUs.
- To increase collaboration between PITCH country partners, regional partners and global policy partners by developing a joint advocacy agenda and/or activities.
- To increase the visibility of programme results and successes in country, through testimonials or audio-visual materials which can be based on more than just impact given the limited timespan.
- In lobbying, traditional evidence is difficult to produce. A good system to provide evidence should take the challenges posed by informal advocacy into account. The evaluation team suggests that beneficiaries should be able to provide different forms of evidence in the monitoring phase (including visual, logs, and evidence provided by external actors with their consent). A monitoring system that includes substantiators could be considered when outcome harvesting is used, to replace traditional evidence that is difficult to obtain otherwise for advocacy programmes.
- To continue the collaboration and engagement between key populations, adolescent girls and young women, the government and other stakeholders.

For the Dutch MoFA and other donors

- To ensure that the lessons emerging from this evaluation inform the work carried out by the new Strategic Partnerships under the new Dutch MoFA-funded Power of Voices and SRHR Partnership Fund initiatives when shaping and nurturing their advocacy planning. This is with a view to supporting the sustainability of the PITCH programme's achievements and sharing lessons learned, which is of relevance both for the Love Alliance programme as well as other new and emerging programmes with a focus on HIV and the human rights of key populations. This is with a view to supporting the sustainability of the PITCH programme's achievements and sharing lessons learned, which is of relevance both for the Love Alliance programme as well as other new and emerging programmes with a focus on HIV and the human rights of key populations.
- To ensure that the lessons emerging from this evaluation inform the development of comparable strategic funding arrangements by other major institutional donors in the coming years.
- To use the experiences and lessons emerging from PITCH to inform, shape and demonstrate the government of the Netherlands's commitment to the global HIV response and to nurturing the development of Dutch expertise and knowledge in advocacy. This commitment should be demonstrated both in financial and political terms and is of relevance both at Ministry level and the government's overseas diplomatic and trade presence.

For Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS on the management of future, comparable programmes

- Establish a clear process for reviewing and adapting programme theories of change, to ensure that they are up-to-date and provide space for contextualisation.
- Periodically revisit programme M&E and reporting systems to make them simpler and more aligned.
- Ensure allocation of resources (including financial) for gender from the very start to allow early gender analysis and integration by partners in their theories of change and work strategies, and to provide timely technical assistance to partners, including by involving local gender experts.
- Encourage and facilitate partners to consider the impact of gender inequalities on the health of key populations and adolescent girls and young women, as well as the structural factors underlying these gender inequalities, and address this through the development of national theories of change and advocacy strategies.
- Ensure early and adequate communication and coordination between national, regional and global policy partners to optimise and effectively link the work they do at the respective advocacy levels. Training and other forms of capacity strengthening is an absolute prerequisite for country partners to identify potential linkages and to meaningfully engage in regional and global processes.
- To allocate resources for information sharing and knowledge sharing for partners at national, regional and international level to facilitate collaboration between them.
- To allocate resources to support innovation in advocacy and sustain results through a mechanism such as co-creation with PITCH implementing partners.



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