



3 July 2026 event: #RethinkRebuildRise: #PutPeopleFirst to deliver on #endAIDS and #endTB targets in next 54 months

EWNA Talking Points

It is a privilege to join this discussion and to speak on behalf of the Eurasian Women's Network on AIDS which is the only network in our region run by women living and affected by HIV.

I am here to bring the message once again how important is to reaffirm commitment to community leadership, human rights, gender equality, and meaningful involvement of people living with HIV. At the same time, many of us who participated in the negotiations for the recent Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, know that important commitments on sexual and reproductive rights, decriminalization, and structural barriers were weakened.

For our region, this matters a lot

Across Eastern Europe and Central Asia, women living with HIV continue to face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Women who use drugs, women engaged in sex work, migrant women, women from rural communities, LBT women and women affected by violence often experience stigma not only because of HIV, but because of who they are. These inequalities are made worse when civic space is shrinking, independent civil society is under pressure, and community organizations struggle to survive.

The Declaration recognizes women living with HIV as being disproportionately affected. But what we need is not the recognition of a matter but transformative approaches that can only be achieved through sustainable community leadership. We cannot expect communities to lead while constantly fighting for survival.

The Declaration sets ambitious targets for community-led services but for that we need sustainable financing, safe and supportive implementation environment, while across many countries, including in my region, as mentioned, civic space is shrinking. Community organizations face funding cuts, increasing restrictions, and reduced opportunities to participate in decision-making.

This contradiction must end, community centeredness is not an addition is an essential part of TB and HIV response.

Women living with HIV, women who use drugs, survivors of violence, and other marginalized women often avoid services because of fear of stigma, discrimination, breaches of confidentiality, or criminalization. Community organizations help women navigate services safely, document their experiences, identify barriers, and build trusted referral pathways. Community-led monitoring is much more than data collection. It produces evidence that improves policies, programmes, practice, identifies systemic gaps, and creates accountability even when formal accountability mechanisms are weak.



We know these approaches work. The evidence is clear.

What is missing is not only innovation—it is sustained political commitment and investment in community led response in practice. Community-led responses are not simply complementary to public health systems—they are often the only trusted entry point to care.

If we truly want to keep the promise of ending AIDS by 2030, community leadership must be political and financial priority.

Community-led networks and organizations need long-term, flexible, and direct support. Investing in community leadership is one of the most effective investments governments and donors can make. Communities build trust, reach those left behind, monitor the quality of services, defend human rights, and ensure that HIV responses remain person-centred, equitable, and accountable.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to further collaborative action and sustained engagement in advancing our shared objectives.