



dance4life international strategy paper

OUR BACKGROUND

In 2003, two Dutch marketeers, Dennis Karpes and Ilco van der Linde, were struck by the **force** of the HIV pandemic and shared a **passion** to use their commercial expertise to turn the problem around. They created a new way of approaching youth in schools and an iconic brand to go with it. By involving young people and engaging millions of people around the world their **vision** became **reality**.

dance4life is operating in almost 30 countries on all continents. We are contributing to halting the pandemic within the set targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's). Since our inception in 2004, together with our implementing partners and thanks to the support of many, we have reached almost 900,000 young people worldwide, of which almost 400,000 were further educated and empowered to become agents4change.



OUR URGENCY : HIV AND AIDS ARE STILL SPREADING

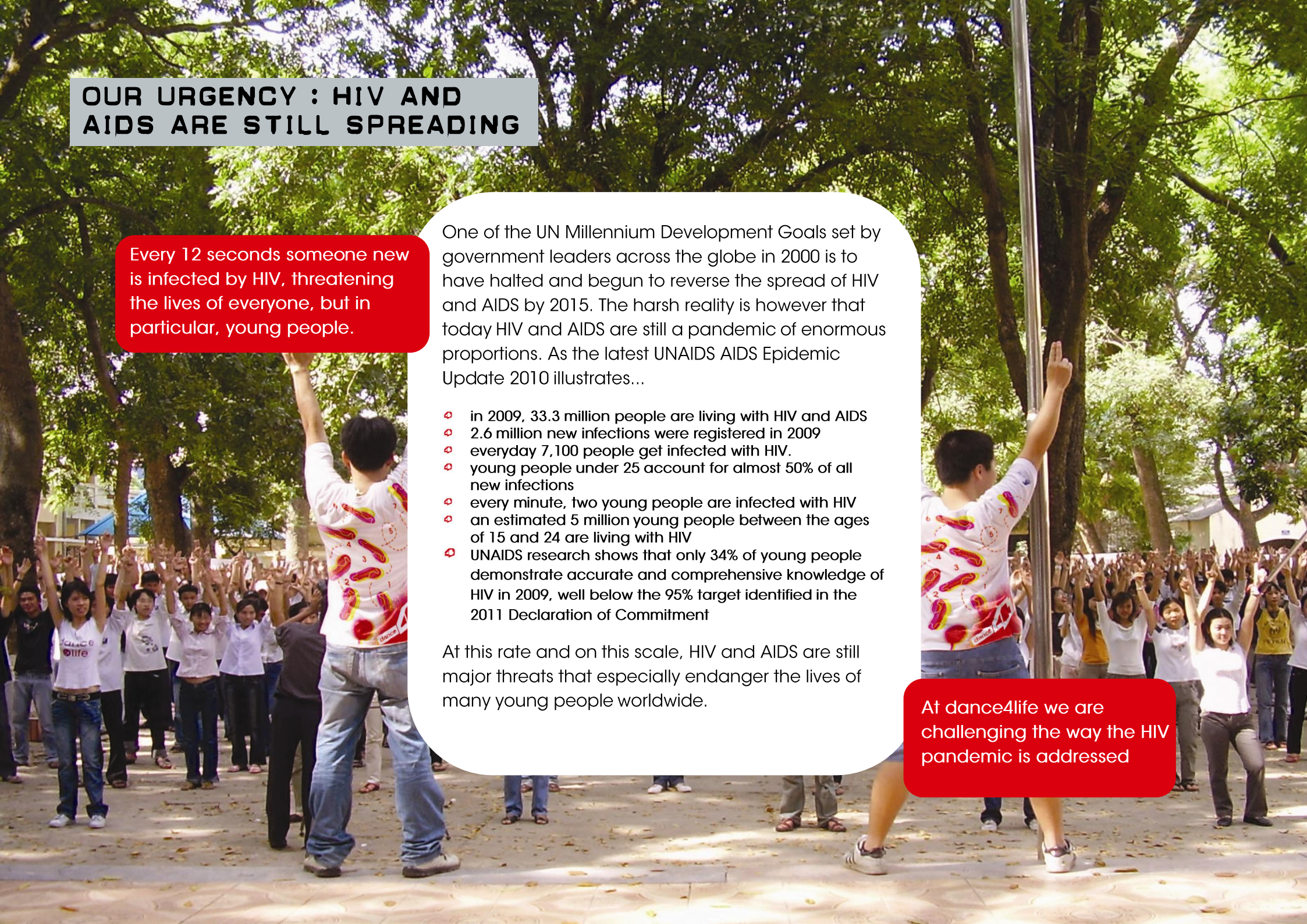
Every 12 seconds someone new is infected by HIV, threatening the lives of everyone, but in particular, young people.

One of the UN Millennium Development Goals set by government leaders across the globe in 2000 is to have halted and begun to reverse the spread of HIV and AIDS by 2015. The harsh reality is however that today HIV and AIDS are still a pandemic of enormous proportions. As the latest UNAIDS AIDS Epidemic Update 2010 illustrates...

- ❖ in 2009, 33.3 million people are living with HIV and AIDS
- ❖ 2.6 million new infections were registered in 2009
- ❖ everyday 7,100 people get infected with HIV.
- ❖ young people under 25 account for almost 50% of all new infections
- ❖ every minute, two young people are infected with HIV
- ❖ an estimated 5 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are living with HIV
- ❖ UNAIDS research shows that only 34% of young people demonstrate accurate and comprehensive knowledge of HIV in 2009, well below the 95% target identified in the 2011 Declaration of Commitment

At this rate and on this scale, HIV and AIDS are still major threats that especially endanger the lives of many young people worldwide.

At dance4life we are challenging the way the HIV pandemic is addressed





WHAT WE BELIEVE IN: OUR VISION

Young people can halt the further spread of HIV

UNAIDS' and UNFPA's latest figures illustrate that half of the new HIV infections every day are among the under 25's. As the single largest group infected and affected by the virus, a huge part of the potential solution lies with young people. That's exactly why dance4life involves them.

Through our programmes we therefore strengthen their voice, involve them and empower them to push back the spread of HIV and AIDS. The dance4life schools programme is effectively linking HIV prevention with sexual and reproductive health and rights for young people.

We believe that by involving youth, it's possible to change not only their behaviour but also to mobilise them to create **social change**¹ in their communities so that others change their behaviour and perceptions as well. We strive to empower youth to unleash their leadership potential, including young people living with HIV.

¹ UNAIDS stated (2008 report) that HIV prevention programmes will be effective on the long run only when they incorporate elements focused on creating social change. Social movements are necessary to pressure governmental bodies and other stakeholders to change their HIV and AIDS policies (UNAIDS strategy 2011-2015).



**WHAT WE WANT TO
ACHIEVE:**
OUR MISSION

powering a movement that creates social change at global and community level

by taking action to:

- improve young people's sexual reproductive health and rights, and in particular: improving access to sexuality education and improving access to youth friendly services
- challenge stigma and discrimination and break down taboos that surround sexuality, especially focusing on HIV and AIDS.

The dance4life movement is a group of individuals inspired and unified by dance4life. They are contributing to the vision of young people halting the spread of HIV. So, anyone, anywhere, can be part of this movement - the "ticket in" is a shared contribution to dance4life's vision, however large or small.

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

OUR APPROACH

We use the emotional power of **dance**¹ to inspire, educate and mobilise at least 1 million young people (**agents4change**) to lead the global dance4life movement.

The tools we have for this are:

1. Our brand
2. Our 4-step schools programme

We would like young people everywhere to be inspired to join dance4life, to participate in our schools programme and to take action to halt the spread of HIV and AIDS and improve young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights. Youth who have gone through our schools programme and are active in their communities are called agents4change. dance4life offers agents4change ways to stay involved after having finished the schools programme. Their actions raise awareness, trigger other young people to become active in pushing back HIV and AIDS, strengthen the sexual and reproductive health and rights of themselves and others around them and ultimately draw them into a forceful youth movement with a positive voice. Our goal of 1 million agents4change leading the movement is a powerful symbol of this commitment.

¹ Dance functions as an emotional trigger necessary to talk to the youth and grow the movement



OUR PERSONALITY AND
VALUES:

WHO WE TRULY ARE

If dance4life is a person, what are the core values that make up his/her personality?

Energetic
Inviting

Experiential

Inspirational

Progressive
Rhythmic

A warm spirit, full of life

Always open and welcoming to others

An adventurer, never afraid of a challenge

A great storyteller, caring and experienced, a leader

Forward thinking, a solution finder

Moves to their own beat, enjoys the pulse of life

OUR WAY OF WORKING: OUR TOOLKIT

To truly involve young people in a solution, we have to attract them first. A strong and iconic dance4life brand, which is both appealing and promotes a sense of belonging to something fun and positive, is vital to their recruitment. Our mass media campaigns, ambassadors, presence on social networking sites and other materials ensure the dance4life brand is always attractive, relevant and inspiring to young people. As one of the most respected and recognised youth charities in the world, we successfully bond with young people through our unique '4 Step' schools project. In every country, this schools program is contextualised by our local partner.

First dance4life **INSPIRES** young people aged 13 to 19 to become involved. Our local tour teams travel to participating schools to **INSPIRE** young people through music, drums and dance. We promote an open discussion about HIV, which breaks down the stigma and taboos regarding sexuality and HIV. Young people living with HIV are part of the tour team and their stories form the heart of the performance

Once inspired to become part of dance4life, we **EDUCATE** young people about sexual and reproductive health and rights, HIV and AIDS. Skill building workshops are organised to increase their knowledge and self-esteem. They also learn the skills needed for better communication, negotiation, decision-making, leadership and entrepreneurship. All of which empowers them to make positive decisions about their futures.

Equipped with these empowering skills, almost half of the young people we meet are motivated by dance4life to take **ACTION**. They change the way their family and friends view HIV and AIDS and make a positive change in their community. We call these young people **AGENTS4CHANGE**, as they are making a difference to the world

To **CELEBRATE** the achievements of the agents4change, a powerful global dance event is organised every two years on the Saturday before World AIDS Day. Only those young people who took action are invited to attend. United by one cause and connected live via satellite, they dance together to inspire and gain support from the rest of the world, and to remind the world leaders of the promises they made with the Millennium Development Goals.

dance4life is a registered foundation under Dutch law headquartered in Amsterdam. Our small international team is structured around four key areas: programme coordination, communications & branding, monitoring & evaluation and fundraising.