

“It’s Time to Live” Helps Russians Wrestle with HIV/AIDS Issues

A television talk show debuts to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS. “It’s Time to Live” aims to provide reliable information about the epidemic that is spreading across Russia.

A television talk show designed to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS in Russia debuted its first regional version on STO TV in St. Petersburg on May 15, International Candlelight Memorial Day, the day dedicated to the memory of those who have died of AIDS-related illness.

“It’s Time to Live” features local authorities, organizations fighting HIV/AIDS, doctors, teachers, journalists, and people living with HIV. Over the next six months, the talk show will be recreated in local versions at regional TV stations in 11 regions of Russia.

NEW SHOW BUILDS ON SUCCESS OF HISTORIC TV MARATHON

The project, which was initiated by Internews, UNAIDS and several other organizations, is an extension of the TV-marathon shown on Russia’s Channel One on December 1, 2004, World AIDS Day.



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“The regional TV shows are designed to create an open forum for the discussion of HIV/AIDS. The role of the presenters is to facilitate dialogue between guests in the studio and the audience.”

“It’s Time to Live” presenter Elena Hanga.

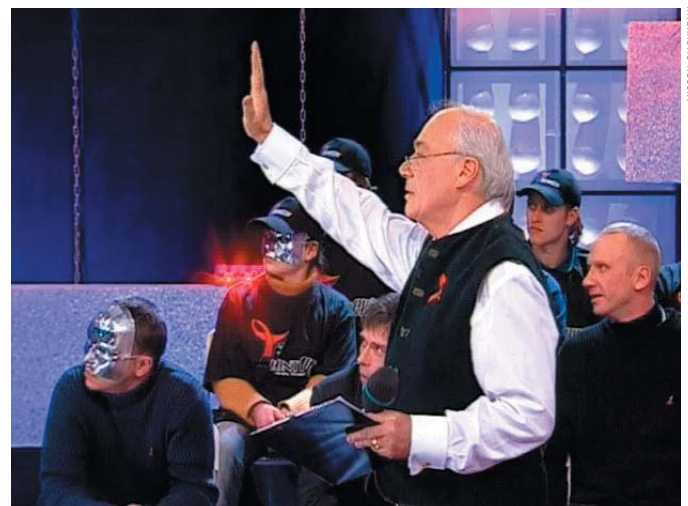
This TV-marathon, hosted by renowned Russian TV presenters Vladimir Pozner and Tutta Larsen, combined live national talk show and a music concert with top Russian pop groups and artists. The show had 25 million viewers in Russia alone (Channel One can also be seen in many neighboring countries) and TV critics called it the best program of the month.

PROMINENT JOURNALISTS TO HOST REGIONAL BROADCASTS

Vladimir Pozner hosts “It’s Time to Live,” together with Elena Hanga and other well-known journalists. “Everyone has a choice: you can act like the epidemic of HIV/AIDS is not dangerous, you can choose to take no interest in it, and do nothing about it,” said Pozner. “Or, you can choose to take an interest, and fight it. But before taking a decision, you need to understand: HIV infection is certain to take an interest in you and those close to you. I’ve made my decision.”

CALL TO ACTION THROUGH EDUCATION

“It’s Time to Live” aims to get people involved in thinking about the issues of HIV/AIDS, by providing reliable information on the epidemic’s development, and examining the specific problems experienced in the regions participating in the project, through open discussion and live



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Veteran TV presenter Vladimir Pozner is one of the hosts of “It’s Time to Live,” along with Elena Hanga and other well-known Russian journalists.

debate.

Other organizations involved in the project include UNAIDS, UNDP, the European Commission, Focus-Media, AIDS Foundation East-West (AFEW), the Centre for Social Development and Information and the Community of People Living with HIV/AIDS.

Official statistics show over 300,000 Russians living with HIV; experts estimate the true number to be 3-4 times higher. More than 80% of those infected are under 30 years old. The World Bank estimates that if unchecked, the epidemic could reduce the workforce in Russia by 11% by the year 2020.



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