

Priti Krishtel, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director

Priti Krishtel is an 18-year veteran of the global access to medicines movement. A graduate of NYU Law, Krishtel worked as a lawyer in the U.S. and Switzerland before joining the Lawyers Collective in India in 2003, just as momentum for a universal treatment program for HIV was gaining steam. In partnership with other activists, Krishtel successfully advocated for expansion of the program, which provided patients with free antiretroviral therapy. That formative, grassroots work was instrumental to Krishtel, who would work alongside fellow activists to lead the access to medicines movement to a pivotal moment in treatment access history: the passage of a health-friendly patent law.

Alongside some of the most powerful activists from around the world, Krishtel helped mobilize a massive grassroots movement that educated policymakers, media, women's, children's and LGBTQ rights groups, and communities living in poverty. They protested in the streets, held press conferences, and lobbied members of parliament. In response to this groundswell of activism, India became the first country to enact a health-friendly patent law, clearing the way for the patent oppositions that would make I-MAK, which she co-founded the following year, a global force in the treatment access movement.

Krishtel has since taken her fight from the streets of India to over 50 countries worldwide. As co-executive director of I-MAK, she continues to work alongside patients and advocates in Argentina, Brazil, Thailand, Ukraine, and elsewhere to ensure that civil society contributions are recognized as a catalytic force to increase treatment access. Krishtel has never strayed from her roots as a committed campaigner for justice, a community organizer, and a relentless advocate for patients. Krishtel is a frequent speaker at national and international events, and her leadership has been recognized by Echoing Green, PopTech!, Asia Society, The King Baudouin Foundation, and others. She is the recipient of numerous awards recognizing her achievements as a legal trailblazer in the public interest, and has been featured in TED Women, Entrepreneur, CNN, The New York Times, Bloomberg, CNBC, The Wall Street Journal, The Hill, and Reuters.