

CORPORATE STRATEGY ON HIV/AIDS



HIV/AIDS
LEADERSHIP FOR RESULTS

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Halting and reversing the course of HIV/AIDS – the 6th Millennium Development Goal – is not possible if we continue business as usual. It requires an intensified, multi-sectoral approach that promotes leadership at all levels of society and helps break the silence once and for all by permanently altering the norms, values and attitudes fueling the epidemic.

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Mark Malloch Brown
UNDP Administrator



V. THE RESPONSE OF THE RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM

The HIV/AIDS crisis requires a coherent response by the UN System and the co-ordination of multi-agency, multi-donor programmes in support of overall national strategic HIV/AIDS plans as determined by the host government and through multi-stakeholder dialogue. UNDP, as coordinator of the UN System activities at country level, can effectively perform this role through the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS, the Resident Coordinator system, and the overall UN Development Assistance Framework, thus ensuring a coherent and mutually reinforcing response by the UNAIDS cosponsors, bilateral donors, and private foundations. The UNDG Guidance Note on HIV/AIDS emphasizes the critical role of the Resident Coordinator System for action in the following areas:

- ☒ Strengthen National Strategic Plans. Facilitate discussions with host governments and civil society partners to review National Strategic Plans and individual sectoral plans with particular attention to how those plans can be strengthened to achieve the time-bound, measurable national goals and targets of the UNGASS Declaration of Commitment;
- ☒ Address linkages between HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Development Goals. Identify how national development and poverty eradication strategies can be accelerated and strengthened to address the impact of HIV and AIDS on household income, livelihoods, access to education and health services, and food security, among other issues;
- ☒ Develop HIV/AIDS advocacy and communication strategies in support of national efforts with the help of other partners;

- ☒ Address capacity constraints. With government and other partners, assess capacity of national and sub-national institutions to lead a large-scale, multi-sectoral response to the AIDS epidemic, identify key gaps and priorities for assistance from the UN system and other sources;
- ☒ Strengthen monitoring systems. Support national efforts to establish or strengthen monitoring systems, including translation of global goals into national targets, to track progress towards the time-bound goals and targets agreed at UNGASS;
- ☒ Intensify support for resource mobilization. Step up efforts to mobilize domestic and international resources for country strategies addressing HIV/AIDS. UN Country Teams should advocate with governments to increase national resources devoted to the HIV/AIDS response.

The UNDG Guidance Note also suggests other areas for immediate action, including (1) increasing awareness of global commitments in the UNGASS Declaration; (2) reorienting Resident Coordinator System (RCS) Annual Workplans and expected results, and tracking progress and results in the RCS Annual Reports; (3) strengthening the United Nations Integrated Workplan on HIV/AIDS and CCA/UNDAF process, ensuring consistency with the Declaration of Commitment; and (4) collecting best practices and lessons learnt on country-level actions on HIV/AIDS, especially in operations, inter-agency collaboration, and programme issues.

VI. CONCLUSION

To effect changes that will sustainably and successfully reverse the epidemic, certain ingredients will be required: courageous leadership, high-level political commitment, and unprecedented levels of collaboration among all actors and stakeholders. The UNGASS Declaration of Commitment has challenged us to optimise our existing strategic initiatives through a critical shift in perspective on the dynamics that sustain the epidemic, intensifying our response to achieve specific goals.

Reversing the epidemic requires an unswerving commitment to results, a measurable change in individual and institutional attitudes and practices concerning HIV/AIDS, and greater attention to human rights and gender concerns reflected in government as well as civil society responses to directly address issues such as stigma, discrimination, gender inequality and inequitable access to prevention, care and treatment. We in UNDP, as individuals and as a community, have the opportunity to take a stand and make a difference. As an agency that can mobilize stakeholders and help countries develop capacity for action, UNDP is well placed to be a catalyst for positive change in countries affected by HIV/AIDS.

I. THE CHALLENGE

Twenty years on, the HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to spread without respite. Almost 40 million people are living with HIV and AIDS, half of them women. The impact of HIV/AIDS is unique because it kills adults in the most productive period of their lives, depriving families, communities, and nations of their most productive people. Adding to an already heavy disease burden in poor countries, the epidemic is deepening poverty, reversing human development, worsening gender inequalities, eroding the capacity of governments to provide essential services, reducing labour productivity, and hampering pro-poor growth. The epidemic is quickly becoming the biggest obstacle to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

HIV/AIDS is a complex epidemic that necessitates a complex understanding and intensified response to ignite hope and produce results. Increasingly the impact of HIV/AIDS extends beyond the healthcare costs and loss of life traditionally associated with it. With the rapid expansion of the epidemic, action on a much larger scale is needed, not only to assist the hardest-hit nations, but also to curtail the explosive spread in parts of the world where it is now emerging. To achieve this, only an extraordinary multi-sector commitment and response can be considered, embedded in the values and principles of human rights and gender equality. The devastating effect of HIV/AIDS on development goals requires innovative and effective responses championed by dynamic and committed leadership at all levels of society.

HIV/AIDS strikes at the heart of development. The epidemic is a reflection of societal dysfunctions at the levels of the individual, families, communities, systems and structures. In order to effectively address the epidemic, it is necessary to consider, and work towards results in multiple realms – individual attitudes and behaviours that fuel the epidemic; societal values, norms and practices that result in denial and discrimination; and societal systems and structures that result in an inadequate environment for an effective response.

Given that AIDS most often kills adults in the 15-49 age group, it is uniquely devastating in terms of increasing poverty and reversing human development achievements:

SURVIVAL: Life expectancy is likely to fall to 35 years or less in the worst affected countries. The deepening poverty caused by the epidemic weakens the general

health status of entire populations, with sharp increases in child mortality rates. Lack of access to drugs threatens survival for the vast majority of those living with HIV/AIDS. Responses to the epidemic must address issues of human rights and equity in access to treatment.

EDUCATION: As teachers die and orphans drop out of school, gains in literacy and enrolment ratios are quickly being eroded. Primary school enrolment among orphans is nearly half that of children with at least one parent alive. The education sector must address the absence of teachers, and children not attending school – particularly girls.

INCOME: HIV/AIDS pushes people deeper into income poverty, as many households lose their principal breadwinner to AIDS and spend most of their remaining income on health care and funeral costs. Responses must address the needs of poor people, who are especially devastated by the impacts of the epidemic.

GENDER EQUALITY: HIV/AIDS has a particularly severe impact on women, who tend to be more vulnerable to HIV infection for both biological and social reasons. Women and girls are also likely to bear the burden of caring for those who are ill or vulnerable. An effective response requires addressing this unequal burden and negative consequences on women and girls.

INDIVIDUALS: The spread of the epidemic begins with individual behaviour and attitudes. Effective actions must address and consider behaviours and values that feed the spread of the epidemic. A new paradigm of leadership at all levels is essential to achieve breakthroughs in responding

to HIV/AIDS – leadership that is innovative, courageous and committed, challenging norms and advocating for human rights and gender justice.

PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS: Stigma and marginalisation are often harsh realities in the daily lives of people living with HIV/AIDS and their families – along with reduced income and lack of access to healthcare. Harmful individual attitudes, and the lack of understanding and intolerance that feed denial and fuel the spread of the epidemic must be challenged.

GOVERNANCE: HIV/AIDS can hinder the functioning of government, and affect the delivery of essential services. Governance relates to participation, rule of law, transparency, equity, effectiveness and efficiency. Institutional systems and structures must be strengthened to ensure that they have the capacity to plan, manage, and implement effective responses to the epidemic – and are informed by individuals whose behaviour fosters equality, empowerment and good governance.

SOCIAL COHESION: HIV/AIDS poses a threat to the very fabric of society and is increasingly recognised as a risk factor for social and political instability. The response must address societal values, norms and practices that aid the spread of the epidemic and hinder effective actions. Taking into account social contracts that guide relations, the response must also break the silence surrounding the epidemic, and address issues of denial, stigma, discrimination, and gender power relations.

WORST AFFECTED COUNTRIES: In high prevalence countries, HIV/AIDS has a disastrous impact on the capacity of governments, particularly on the delivery of basic social services. The epidemic reduces public revenues, and budgets are often diverted towards coping with the impact. Similarly, survival of civil society institutions is under threat, with a corresponding impact on democracy. Strategies must address loss of skilled workers and reduced capacity.

HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Development Goals

The sixth Millennium Development Goal (MDG) aims at halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015. Without reaching this goal, MDG targets relating to poverty, hunger, education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, environmental sustainability and global development partnerships – could be jeopardised.

The magnitude and impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic demands a groundbreaking vision for development actions. To successfully reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS requires a critical shift in perspective, to generate innovative responses for enhanced development effectiveness.

II. UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION AS A COSPONSOR OF UNAIDS

The Declaration of Commitment, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) in June 2001, is an unprecedented achievement. It recognises in clear and forthright terms the driving forces of the epidemic and stresses the need to address HIV/AIDS by strengthening respect for human rights, and in particular the rights of women and children. The Declaration articulates strategies and measurable goals to reverse the epidemic, includes targets in several key areas, calls for resources commensurate with the challenge, and specifies follow-up at national, regional, and global levels.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as a cosponsor of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), has a specific and well-defined contribution to the overall response of the United Nations system and in helping countries implement the UNGASS Declaration of Commitment. Distinct from the roles of other UNAIDS cosponsors, UNDP focuses on actions aimed at creating an enabling policy, legislative and resource environment essential for effective development planning, and for a truly multi-sectoral response to the epidemic. Further, UNDP's actions aim at building an enabling

- ☒ Advocacy for legal reforms and formulation of anti-discrimination legislation for people living with HIV/AIDS and gender equality;
- ☒ Communication strategies to address stigma and discrimination to protect the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS and promote gender equality;
- ☒ Supporting arts and media to promote a deeper understanding of the issues fuelling the epidemic, replace stereotypes, and celebrate the lives of women and people living with HIV/AIDS;
- ☒ Building and nurturing networks of individuals committed to advancing transformational development practice that addresses the underlying causes of the epidemic;

- ☒ Advocating for increasing the visibility of HIV/AIDS in the MDG campaign.

These actions achieve the following core results:

- ☒ Develop an enabling environment to achieve UNGASS goals and MDGs that addresses human rights, gender equality, and issues of vulnerability and silence that fuel the epidemic.
- ☒ Advocacy and Communications strategies created that develop a deeper understanding of the epidemic and its underlying causes, and address issues of vulnerability, stigma and discrimination.
- ☒ The Rights of People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) and vulnerable groups are protected and promoted.

IV. GLOBAL AND REGIONAL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

This strategy is linked to the Global Co-operation Framework (GCF), which supports the ability of UNDP to respond to the HIV/AIDS crisis by allowing the integration of UNDP global development thinking and advocacy with country-level practices. Along with the Regional Co-operation Frameworks (RCFs), the GCF is a key instrument to align UNDP's response to the epidemic at global, regional and national levels and enable UNDP to provide services to countries in the areas of advocacy and analysis, knowledge-networking and sharing of best practices, and policy support services.

A number of global and regional activities are required to support the services provided by UNDP at the country level.

Current activities in different regions include:

- ☒ Regional advocacy strategies and partnerships to promote leadership at all levels;
- ☒ Guidelines and tools for HIV/AIDS policy development, strategic planning and response management;
- ☒ Intra- and inter-regional South-South cooperation in all areas of interventions covered by this strategy;
- ☒ Knowledge networking and dissemination of best practice experiences;
- ☒ Technical backstopping and programming services coordinated at the global and regional levels;
- ☒ Participatory methods and tools for raising awareness and promoting social transformation, including changing gender relations and enhancing women's control of their lives;
- ☒ Addressing cross-border issues (migration, transport, refugee movements, etc).

UNDP contributes towards creating an enabling environment to achieve UNGASS goals, by developing and popularising cutting edge transformative methodologies for enhanced development effectiveness. This includes halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, alleviating negative impacts on individuals, families, communities and systems, and unleashing the highest human potential for hope, transformation and results. UNDP also works to create an enabling policy, legislative and resource environment for successful implementation of national and local strategic HIV/AIDS plans and effective use of donor funding.

A core group of human rights principles inform and guide all work in response to HIV/AIDS. These principles include human dignity; equality and equity; non-discrimination; participation and inclusion; responsibility and accountability; and non-violence. These principles help to focus attention on areas of concern and issues key to the sustainable success of HIV/AIDS programmes and initiatives.

UNDP services are tailored to the specific circumstances and status of the epidemic, according to four categories of countries: **(1)** High impact countries (28 countries with over 4% HIV adult prevalence), where the priority is

providing urgent assistance in mitigating the disastrous impact on governance structures, poverty reduction efforts, and provision of essential services, **(2)** countries with lower prevalence rates but with alarming rates of increase, **(3)** countries where the epidemic is spreading at a slower rate, but where great vigilance and preparedness is still essential, and **(4)** countries in conflict that require special interventions given the strong interface between civil strife and HIV/AIDS.

In each case the focus is on the services requested by programme countries and in keeping with UNDP's overall mandate as UNAIDS cosponsor. All activities supported by UNDP at country-level are coordinated through the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS, the Resident Coordinator System and the UN Development Assistance Framework.

UNDP's Strategy on HIV/AIDS focuses on three types of services that are complementary and intertwined: (1) Leadership and Capacity Development; (2) Development Planning, Implementation and HIV/AIDS Responses; and (3) Advocacy and Communication. These services reinforce one another and are implemented as a set of strategies, for maximum effectiveness and synergy.

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SERVICE 1: LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Promoting leadership at all levels, and developing the capacity of governments, civil society, development partners, communities and individuals to effectively respond to the epidemic

UNDP provides support for national HIV/AIDS strategies that mobilize social and political leadership and action across all sectors. These strategies involve the promotion of a deep transformation of norms, values and practices, guided by the principles of participation, gender equality and human rights. UNDP also assists governments, community organizations, civil society and the private sector to develop capacity to address the underlying causes of the epidemic, and strengthens the capacity of communities for action, social mobilization and change.

Activities under this service line include:

- ☒ Developing national leadership for the unprecedented challenge of halting the epidemic – a response that is inclusive and proactive, fully involving all governmental sectors, civil society, the private sector, and people living with HIV/AIDS. It requires risk-taking in promoting innovative approaches to prevention, care, gender equality and human rights;
- ☒ Promoting leadership development and institutional development of organisations and networks, including networks of people living with HIV/AIDS;
- ☒ Developing capacity to address the deeper causes that fuel the epidemic and achieve results in addressing HIV/AIDS through innovative methodologies;

- ☒ Setting up leadership coalitions for transformative development, with government, civil society, people living with HIV/AIDS, women's groups, youth groups, the private sector, academic institutions, trade unions, consumer organizations, religious groups, etc.;
- ☒ Developing capacity of individuals and communities to understand how their interconnectedness and individual attitudes and practices influence the spread of the epidemic, and linking communities to the national response;
- ☒ Developing and implementing workplace programmes on HIV/AIDS that promote awareness and reduce vulnerability of UNDP staff and their dependants;
- ☒ Monitoring national progress of the MDG target related to HIV/AIDS.

These actions achieve the following core results:

- ☒ Multi-stakeholder leadership capacity developed at individual, institutional and societal levels that generates breakthrough responses for reversing the course of the epidemic.
- ☒ Individual and community responses to the epidemic developed addressing attitudes and practices that influence the spread of the epidemic.

SERVICE 2: DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND HIV/AIDS RESPONSES

Strengthening development planning and systems to comprehensively address HIV/AIDS at national, district and community levels

UNDP promotes national development planning processes as multi-sectoral and multi-level engagements by governments, the United Nations and other partners. This involves the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS into national development planning instruments, including national development plans and budgets and decentralised planning processes; poverty reduction strategies; HIPC and other debt processes; UN Development Assistance Frameworks; country programmes; and sectoral studies. Using these methodologies, priority is given to the worst affected countries. Strategies also address the loss of human resources and weakened institutional capacity resulting from the epidemic.

Activities under this service line include:

- ☒ Providing support to governments to integrate HIV/AIDS into the core of development policy formulation and development planning instruments, including National Development Plans and budgets, Poverty Reduction Strategies, Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks and HIPC processes;
- ☒ Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into sector Ministries, including planning, finance, information, and judiciary and law to scale-up multi-sectoral responses, and assist public and private sectors to mainstream HIV/AIDS into their operations;

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- ☒ Reorienting the CCA/UNDAF and Country Cooperation Frameworks to respond to the HIV/AIDS crisis, ensuring that approaches that take stock of societal norms, practices and values and recognise the importance of individual attitudes, behaviours and actions – form a new basis for national assessment and development assistance frameworks;
- ☒ Policy recommendations responding to the impact of HIV/AIDS on sectors such as education, health, manufacturing, agriculture, and environment;
- ☒ Support for national strategic planning and wide-scale implementation of HIV/AIDS responses through the use of visionary and innovative frameworks and instruments, consistent with national policies, priorities and local experiences, and strengthening the capacity of National AIDS Councils to respond effectively;
- ☒ Supporting sub-national and district level responses to HIV/AIDS by providing provinces, regions and districts with the relevant leadership development skills, frameworks and tools to harmonise and implement development and HIV/AIDS initiatives, and support to sub-national responses to intensify and open-up national opportunities for scale-up of prevention, care and support activities;
- ☒ Supporting communities to develop their own strategies to operationalise national priorities, and linking communities to national policy formulation and planning processes;
- ☒ Integrating HIV/AIDS into global and regional development initiatives;
- ☒ Developing the capacity of governments and civil society to implement HIV/AIDS related aspects of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for a rights-based, gender sensitive approach to HIV/AIDS;
- ☒ Developing strategies that address HIV/AIDS in emergency settings, and loss of human resources due to HIV/AIDS.

These actions achieve the following core results:

- ☒ Broad-based, multi-sectoral and multi-level responses generated, integrating HIV/AIDS into national development plans and mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into key sectors and Ministries.
- ☒ Individual, institutional and societal capacities developed to effectively respond to the epidemic in crisis countries, high prevalence countries, small island states and countries with other special circumstances.
- ☒ Community responses generated and linked to key national planning processes that address the various dimensions of the epidemic – including care, support and treatment.

SERVICE 3: ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION

Generating a society-wide response that is gender-sensitive and respectful of the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS through advocacy and communication

UNDP uses advocacy and communication to promote a deeper understanding of the epidemic, reduce its impact and reverse its spread. Advocacy messages are intended to support society-wide mobilization in response to HIV/AIDS, position HIV/AIDS as a human development issue, address gender relations that render women and girls vulnerable to infection, and protect the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS. Areas of support include: communication strategies to address stigma, discrimination and gender relations; policy dialogue on prevention and impact mitigation; advocacy for legal reforms; and formulation of anti-discrimination legislation for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Activities under this service line include:

- ☒ Preparation of National and Regional Human Development Reports focusing on HIV/AIDS – powerful, country-owned, advocacy tools for providing input into government policy-making processes;
- ☒ Promoting multi-stakeholder national policy dialogue to achieve UNGASS objectives and create an enabling environment, addressing issues related to prevention, treatment and care, socio-economic impact mitigation, mobile and migrant populations, and reduction of vulnerability and vulnerable groups;
- ☒ Round Table meetings and high level seminars on HIV/AIDS, bringing together government, donors and UN agencies to mobilize resources for the implementation of national strategic AIDS plans;

environment for achieving UNGASS goals and MDGs. Taking into account the crucial interface between human development and HIV/AIDS, ensuring that UNDP is fully mobilized at country level to meet its obligations as a UNAIDS cosponsor is now of utmost urgency. Concurrently, the full authority and power of the state need to be brought to bear on the HIV/AIDS crisis, recognizing that it poses a major governance challenge for developing countries.

UNDP works in partnership with other cosponsors on the ground, coordinating and collaborating in joint activities for measurable results. UNDP's strategies generate synergies with the work of other agencies, and – by creating an enabling environment and developing capacity – support them in achieving their goals. UNDP, as a long-time trusted partner of developing country governments, is in a unique position to make a difference by:

- ☒ Promoting leadership at all levels, and developing the capacity of governments, civil society, development partners, communities and individuals to effectively respond to the epidemic;
- ☒ Strengthening development planning and systems to comprehensively address HIV/AIDS at national, district and community levels;
- ☒ Generating a society-wide response that is gender-sensitive and respectful of the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS through advocacy and communication.

As an active supporter of South-South cooperation, UNDP also plays a unique role in sharing best practices from around the world through its knowledge networks that include a presence in 166 countries, as well as specialised regional and global advisers.

III. COUNTRY-LEVEL SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL HIV/AIDS STRATEGIES

UNDP actions, as defined in this document, contribute towards the broader objectives set out in the UNGASS Declaration of Commitment, as well as the United Nations System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS for 2001-2005, namely:

- ☒ Prevention of new infections – HIV prevalence in persons aged 15-24 should be reduced by 25% by 2005 in the most affected countries, and globally by 2010;
- ☒ Provision of improved care, support and treatment for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS;
- ☒ Reduction of vulnerability, especially among groups that have high or increasing rates of infection or who are at greatest risk of infection;
- ☒ Mitigation of the social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS;
- ☒ Research and Development.

The work of UNDP specifically contributes to the achievement of the national commitments of UNGASS, including:

- ☒ **STRATEGIC PLANNING:** UNDP supports development of multi-sectoral strategies to combat HIV/AIDS; integration of HIV/AIDS into development plans; and establishment of national HIV/AIDS bodies.
- ☒ **PREVENTION:** UNDP implements policies and strategies to promote information, education and communication on HIV/AIDS, with special attention given to vulnerable groups and migrants.
- ☒ **HUMAN RIGHTS:** UNDP advocates for laws and regulations that protect against discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS and vulnerable groups; and promotes equal access to prevention and care for men and women.
- ☒ **CARE AND SUPPORT:** UNDP advocates for comprehensive HIV/AIDS care and support.

Specific achievements are measured through the Strategic Results Framework (SRF) and the Results-Oriented Annual Report (ROAR) process that monitors all of UNDP's work.

UNDP is a cosponsor of UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, which brings together the efforts, expertise and resources of nine UN agencies for worldwide action against HIV/AIDS.





United Nations Development Programme
HIV/AIDS Group, Bureau for Development Policy
304 East 45th Street, 10th Floor
New York, NY 10017
P: 212 906 3688 F: 212 906 5023

www.undp.org