

# HIV/AIDS

The battle against HIV/AIDS is far more important than any one institution or project. Our success will not be measured by resolutions passed, appointments made, or even funds raised. It will be measured in the lives of succeeding generations.

Kofi A. Annan,  
UN Secretary-General

A grandmother in Uganda cares for her grandchildren who have lost both parents to AIDS.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is erasing a generation of progress in human development. In the countries hardest hit, life expectancy is expected to drop by as much as 25 years and economies are contracting by 20 percent or more. AIDS is creating and deepening poverty, erasing economic growth, and wiping out social progress.

In developing countries, HIV/AIDS is placing staggering pressures on governments and the social services they deliver. And when governments are unable to respond, the epidemic gains speed. Where education, health care and administration are not up to the challenge, infection rates rise, and hope for the sick, for women and families, and for entire societies ebbs away. Weak institutions, poor health services and economic failure translate directly into failed prevention efforts and compromised medical care.

AIDS puts at risk the gains of development, the hope of improved governance—and ultimately the prospect of development itself.

UNDP works with developing countries to integrate HIV/AIDS priorities into their national development plans and budget processes. In **Burkina Faso** and **Cameroon**, HIV/AIDS interventions now form part of the national poverty reduction strategies, and as a result, portions of debt relief savings are being allocated to HIV/AIDS prevention and care. UNDP is also helping to promote a human rights framework and gender perspective in response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In **Angola**, the **Gambia**, **Honduras** and **Rwanda**, UNDP is supporting associations and networks of people living with HIV/AIDS. It is helping states bear the extraordinary strain on their social service networks.

To help meet all those goals, UNDP is a co-sponsor of **UNAIDS**, an innovative joint venture that brings together seven UN system organizations to ensure a coordinated and intensive response to the epidemic. With the resources, field staff, and expertise of those organizations, UNAIDS offers coordinated leadership, advocacy and support in the fight against AIDS. Coordination at the country-level is through the UN country team and the Resident Coordinator who is usually the UNDP Resident Representative.

UNDP contributes to this partnership by helping developing countries meet the governance challenge posed by HIV/AIDS, and helping them mitigate the impact of the disease on efforts to reduce poverty. Nearly 40 countries are using UNDP support to establish and implement HIV/AIDS action plans. With UNDP advice and technical support, **Botswana** has put in place a plan to provide all its HIV-positive citizens access to life-extending anti-retroviral drugs—the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to do so. At the same time, UNDP has been able to help Botswana meet the challenges AIDS poses to



governance and development, and actually improve its economic position over the past year.

In **Malawi**, UNDP helped bring together government and civil society to design a strategic response to the disease and mobilized \$110 million to help bring the plan to life.

In **India**, one of the countries with the largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS, UNDP is building partnerships with local governments and citizens' groups to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS and improve support for those with the disease.

UNDP provided expertise and partnership as **Brazil** cut its HIV/AIDS death rate in half and stabilized infection rates in six years. It helped create a national AIDS prevention campaign with nationwide monitoring of infection rates and a network of counseling and testing centres.

UNDP also supports programme countries as they integrate HIV/AIDS priorities into overall development planning, and helps build capacity to deal with the damage AIDS does to poverty reduction efforts.

Only a global movement combining political will, scientific research, and practical know-how can stop the spread of HIV/AIDS. UNDP is doing all that it can to spur governments, spark partnerships, and support the mobilization that will make victory possible. ■



In Thailand, social workers reach out to people living with HIV/AIDS.

## UN DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN: EMPOWERING EQUALITY

Where women are healthy and empowered members of their communities, economic development, social welfare, and quality of governance will all profit. Where women's voices are heard and heeded, conflicts are more likely to be overcome, and societal rifts more likely to heal.

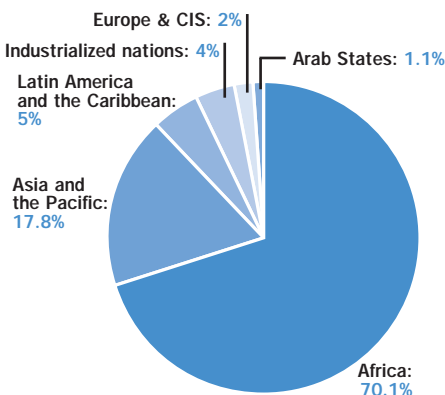
UNDP administers the United Nations' Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), putting women's development at the centre of all of UNDP efforts around the world.

UNIFEM has taken a global lead in combating violence against women, promoting girls' education, highlighting the special challenges HIV/AIDS poses for women, and supporting women's groups as they endeavour to gain a full place in efforts to end conflict and promote peace. This past year, UNIFEM pursued its development agenda by launching a biennial review: *Progress of the World's Women 2000*. UNIFEM, at the request of former South African president Nelson Mandela, briefed Burundi's 19 negotiating parties on gender issues relating to that country's peace process in 2000.

Women's equality—and broadened opportunities for women and men—are a fundamental part of development, and central to UNDP's global mission. Together, UNDP and UNIFEM help governments craft the policies and institutions that open the way for women's equality and empowerment in all walks of life—in health care and education, in entrepreneurship and politics, and in working against conflict and for reconciliation. For more information: [www.undp.org/unifem/](http://www.undp.org/unifem/)

### HIV/AIDS CASES BY REGION

Total: 36.1 million



Source: UNAIDS Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic, end 2000