

## ***Achieving Exceptional HIV/AIDS Responses For Development***

### **THE PROPOSITION**

Developing countries need to develop strategic, multi-sectoral and multi-level responses to HIV/AIDS, employing transformative methodologies that address the root causes fuelling the epidemic. In both high and low HIV prevalence countries, there is an urgency to tackle HIV/AIDS as a complex development and governance priority integrated into national planning and implementation processes. The approach calls for governments and other stakeholders to undertake exceptional action that comprehensively addresses individual attitudes and behavior, societal norms and values as well as the institutional inertia often encountered in equal measure in governments and their development partners. This exceptional action also requires mainstreaming HIV/AIDS across sectors, a strong PLWHA (people living with HIV/AIDS) centered approach, registering the voices and concerns of people and enabling the empowerment of women. Implementation of such responses should result in improved mobilization and utilization and timely flow of funds to decentralized units and communities.

### **THE CONTEXT**

With 38 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, the epidemic is considered one of the greatest threats to the wellbeing of future generations. Although still viewed by some as a health issue, a growing number of countries recognize the epidemic as an economic, social and development challenge of highest priority. This however has translated into much analysis and impact assessment, which though necessary, has not resulted in exceptional action. Implementing strategic responses to the epidemic relies on ensuring effective governance; management of national and international resources; and a cohesive and effective partnership between the state, private sector and the civil society. Within the context of a deepening epidemic, scaled-up responses must actively be mainstreamed into national development priorities—including national MDGs, poverty reduction strategies and decentralized planning processes—whilst leveraging additional financing from Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks, the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, etc. National responses need to emphasize implementation and results. A key challenge is creating the enabling planning and governance environment, where UN Country Teams and all partners can work effectively to produce results pertaining to HIV/AIDS and related development issues. UNDP is uniquely placed to operationalize a set of synergistic approaches using multiple entry points—individuals, systems and society. The approaches integrate strategies that link HIV/AIDS responses to development priorities and broader governance concerns.

### **THE EVIDENCE**

UNDP and its global partners have supported multi-sectoral national strategic planning for HIV/AIDS in recent years. In many countries, such as Malawi, the process helped highlight the need to respond to HIV/AIDS in non-health sectors and to increase high-level political awareness of the epidemic and its impact (UNDP 2004: From Spark to Flame, a response to HIV and AIDS in Malawi). UNDP's leadership-driven support in the area of HIV/AIDS is being introduced in a number of countries. For example, in Botswana the national HIV/AIDS strategic framework was designed within the scope of Botswana's Vision 2016 and is being implemented using transformational methods (National AIDS Council, National AIDS Coordinating Agency, 2003: *National HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework 2003-2009*). In Nepal, integrative methods have been shared with senior level decision makers from government and civil society. The approach contributes more directly to MDG 6—combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases—by moving from primarily making the case for HIV/AIDS as a development issue, to developing unique actionable responses. These multi-sectoral responses create space for gender sensitivity, new leadership competencies and innovation, and facilitate the flow of resources to communities.

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