UNAIDS GIVES US$100,000 TO FUND INNOVATIVE AIDS PROJECTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Geneva, 23 September 2003 – The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has announced a US$100,000 grant and a new alliance with the World Bank’s Development Marketplace and its Global HIV/AIDS Programme (GHAP) to fund innovative ways to fight HIV/AIDS around the world. The UNAIDS grant will be added to a pool of prize money, which the Development Marketplace awards each year to NGOs and community groups with the most creative ideas for improving development at the grassroots level. The Development Marketplace is a World Bank programme that promotes innovative development ideas through early stage seed funding.

The UNAIDS grant will help fund innovative projects focusing on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. As a match to the UNAIDS contribution, the World Bank’s own GHAP will contribute US$100,000 to this year’s global competition and an additional US$200,000 will come from other Bank sources, resulting in a total of US$400,000.

This is the first time that an organization outside the World Bank Group has committed funds to the Development Marketplace global competition, greatly increasing the amount of funds available to social entrepreneurs worldwide to combat HIV/AIDS. Fifteen country-level Development Marketplace events have in the past attracted over US$1 million in support from outside agencies, and UNAIDS’ commitment continues this trend.

“The Development Marketplace is an ideal vehicle for supporting grassroots-led initiatives in HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment,” said Dr Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director. “As the epidemic continues to spread at an alarming rate, it is vital to support new, innovative projects that can make a difference in minimizing the AIDS burden.”

The Development Marketplace, through its past global and country-level innovation competitions, has already assembled a portfolio of successful innovative projects to combat HIV/AIDS in South Asia, Eastern Europe, and Africa. For example, past competitions have funded projects that combine HIV/AIDS awareness with literacy training in Nepal, and projects that work with mining companies in Southern Africa to provide home-based care to HIV-positive workers who have been retrenched from the mines.

“I am delighted to be a contributor to the upcoming 2003 Global Competition,” said Dr Debrework Zewdie, World Bank Programme Director of GHAP. “After funding winning projects in the Ethiopia/Sudan country-level Development Marketplace, and seeing first hand the impact that these competitions can have on the ground, I’m
John Wilton, World Bank Vice President for Strategy, Finance, and Risk Management, who oversees the Development Marketplace said, “This new funding will allow Development Marketplace to provide seed funding to another four to six really innovative projects worldwide that have promising things to teach us and the development community, and we expect to have several pilots running simultaneously. We have 13 outstanding HIV/AIDS-oriented projects coming to make their case for funding to the final jury in Washington in December.” He added that: “The UNAIDS funding will let us sponsor more awards than we otherwise would have, and try out new ideas in providing care for a sick and vulnerable part of the population in the developing world.”

The 2003 Development Marketplace Global Competition will be held on 3 and 4 December 2003 at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, DC. 186 finalists from 65 countries, selected from over 2,700 applications, will present their business plans to a final jury. A selection of 35 to 40 projects will receive grant funding of up to US$250,000 to pilot their social innovation projects over the course of a year.

The global competition and accompanying Knowledge Exchange will offer participants an opportunity to network with their social entrepreneur counterparts and other funding sources. In all, the Development Marketplace will award over US$4 million of funding across a range of sectors, in keeping with the theme of “Making Services Work for Poor People”, which is tied to the World Bank 2004 World Development Report, released on 21 September in Dubai and 23 September in Nairobi.

About UNAIDS

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations family that brings together the efforts and resources of eight United Nations system organizations (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank). As the main advocate for global action on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS leads, strengthens and supports an expanded response aimed at preventing the transmission of HIV, providing care and support, reducing the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS, and alleviating the impact of the epidemic.

For more information on UNAIDS, visit www.unaids.org

About Development Marketplace (DM)

The Development Marketplace is a World Bank programme that promotes innovative development ideas through early stage seed funding. It links a wide range of social entrepreneurs with ideas for fighting poverty to partners with resources able to help implement their vision. The DM’s goal is to create a marketplace of ideas, talent, and resources that address the challenges of economic growth and poverty alleviation. Since 1998, Development Marketplace has funded over 330 innovative projects in 54 countries, with investments of over $16 million. Recognizing these accomplishments, the November 2002 issue of Harvard Business Review described Development Marketplace as “Best Practice” in innovation. For more information please go to www.developmentmarketplace.org
About the Global HIV/AIDS Programme (GHAP)

The Global HIV/AIDS Programme was created in 2002 to support the World Bank’s efforts to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic from a cross-sectoral perspective. The programme offers global learning and knowledge sharing on approaches and best practices to addressing HIV/AIDS. One of the key functions of the Global HIV/AIDS Programme is to lead the monitoring and evaluation efforts of UNAIDS partners at country level. The Global HIV/AIDS Programme supports the World Bank in its efforts to mainstream HIV/AIDS into all sectors.

For more information please go to [www.worldbank.org/aids](http://www.worldbank.org/aids)

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