The Need for a Multi-Sector Approach

The massive escalation of the HIV/AIDS epidemic will not be halted by one-dimensional interventions. The idea that public health measures alone can hold it at bay is refuted repeatedly each year as the virus continues to claim millions of new lives.

The epidemic’s advance can no longer be perceived as simply a health-sector concern. In fact, HIV/AIDS is undermining economic stability in hard-hit countries, cutting labour productivity, leaving orphans and school dropouts behind as parents and teachers die and contributing to famine in regions where the disease has killed millions of farm workers. Halting the spread of HIV/AIDS is now one of the international community’s eight overarching Millennium Development Goals. And world leaders now recognize that confronting the HIV/AIDS epidemic in affected countries will require a wide range of coordinated actions spanning all sectors of government and society.

Strength in Partnership

As a long-time, trusted partner of developing country governments and civil society groups, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is uniquely positioned to coordinate an effective response to the epidemic and build partnerships. The organization helps place HIV/AIDS at the centre of national development dialogue and builds partnerships between government, civil society and the private sector to address the underlying factors that fuel the spread of the virus.

Areas of support include the formulation of National and Regional Human Development Reports focusing on HIV/AIDS, such as the ones from Burkina Faso and South Asia. By promoting a human rights framework and gender perspective, UNDP encourages professional data collection and transparent public dissemination of statistics and cost, and plays an important role in influencing policy in response to the pandemic.

UNDP is one of nine UN agencies joined in a coalition to respond to the epidemic, UNAIDS. Each agency makes a specific, complementary contribution to the overall work of the coalition. In most developing countries, the UNDP Resident Representative serves as the coordinator for all UN programmes, helping to ensure that country-level responses to the epidemic are coherent and mutually reinforcing.

The Global Fund

UNDP works in close partnership with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, launched in 2001 under the leadership of Secretary-General Kofi Annan and chaired by the US Secretary of Health and Human Services,
Tommy G. Thompson. The Global Fund is one of the key sources of financing for the world’s response to the epidemic. Through 2004, US$ 2.9 billion has been pledged to the Global Fund, with an additional US$ 1.9 billion pledged beyond 2004.

**UNDP’s Role:**

- **Creating an Enabling Environment**

Distinct from the roles played by the other UN agencies, UNDP focuses on helping developing country governments meet the tremendous governance challenge posed by the epidemic. That involves creating the enabling environment needed to build a truly multi-sector response to HIV/AIDS. UNDP accomplishes this in three ways: leadership and capacity development; strategic planning and implementation; and advocacy and communications.

- **Leadership and Capacity Development**

UNDP helps develop national HIV/AIDS strategies to mobilize social and political leadership across all sectors of society and promote a transformation of norms, values and practices. UNDP works with governments, civil society and the private sector to effectively utilize international financial support and address the underlying causes of the epidemic.

In **Cambodia**, for example, UNDP’s Leadership Development Programme has brought together senators, government officials, civil society leaders, local community groups, Buddhist monks and journalists to identify factors that help or hinder effective implementation of the country’s HIV/AIDS National Strategic Plan. The programme helps develop the capacity of key leaders from all sectors and levels of government to generate, manage, and coordinate large-scale, multi-sectoral responses.

In **Ethiopia**, UNDP is building the capacity of communities and non-governmental organizations, including faith-based organizations, to break the silence around sensitive issues related to HIV/AIDS. Beginning in 2002, UNDP has sponsored leadership development programmes for high-level government officials, civic and religious leaders, and influential journalists. The series aims to spur dialogue and encourage a shift in programme orientation from process to results.

In **India**, UNDP’s country office is working with local mass media to publicize the causes and consequences of the HIV epidemic. Through policy dialogue and advocacy work with the national government and other stakeholders, UNDP has helped secure top-level political attention, adequate resources and multi-sector mobilization for the fight against HIV/AIDS.

In **Tanzania**, UNDP assisted the establishment of a new Tanzanian Commission for HIV/AIDS devoted to mainstreaming HIV-related priorities throughout the government. UNDP helped develop a multi-sector approach to fighting the epidemic, which in turn led to a new programme focused on HIV-related priorities for local governments and universities.

- **Strategic Planning and Implementation**

UNDP assists in the creation of national HIV/AIDS councils and comprehensive strategic plans. UNDP professionals also help governments integrate, or “mainstream,” HIV/AIDS priorities into the budgets and planning of development programmes, debt relief initiatives, poverty reduction strategies and the various sector ministries, ranging from ministries of health, trade and finance to ministries of justice and of public information.

In **Botswana**, for example, UNDP helped launch a National AIDS Coordinating Agency and supported the establishment of District Multi-Sectoral AIDS Committees. UN Volunteer (UNV) specialists have been posted in each district to help with planning and coordination. UNDP is now supporting the formulation of the National Strategic HIV/AIDS Plan 2003-2008, and is helping integrate HIV priorities into the Ninth National Development Plan and Botswana’s Poverty Reduction Strategy.

In **Burkina Faso**, UNDP provided technical advice and support for a four-year National Strategic Plan to confront the epidemic and then helped organize a forum where donors pledged $94 million to finance the plan. UNDP is now focusing on strengthening the National HIV/AIDS Commission (launched with UNDP assistance in 2001), while building managerial capacity among line ministries, district authorities and civil society organizations.

- **Advocacy and Communication Campaigns**

UNDP helps design communications strategies on issues ranging from the gender relations that can make women and girls vulnerable to infection to the reallocation of public funding for AIDS prevention. Supporting leadership roles for women and for people living with HIV/AIDS, UNDP seeks to spread the values and concepts that can
aid an effective response to the epidemic. UNDP also launches initiatives to fight stigma and discrimination and advocates for legislation to protect the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS.

In collaboration with UN agencies, UNDP gathered a dozen internationally-renowned African singers and musicians for a two-day consultation in Dakar, Senegal, on Africa 2015, an innovative communications strategy to promote awareness and help implement the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This strategy mobilizes all UN agencies, governments and civil society groups already working to achieve the MDGs on the continent. Africa 2015 initially focuses on Goal 6, to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS. Top African soccer teams have endorsed Africa 2015 at the 24th African Cup of Nations in Tunisia.

In Haiti, two individuals living with HIV/AIDS have been recruited by UNDP as UNV specialists to undertake an innovative public education campaign: they are the first “public” citizens in Haiti to speak out for the rights of people living with HIV and AIDS and their efforts are helping roll back stigma and discrimination. Meanwhile, UNDP and the Fondation Sogebank, a private Haitian organization, are co-managing a $67 million prevention and treatment programme financed by the Global Fund. The programme, which has allocated $25 million for the initiative’s first two years, includes 17 projects to be carried out by community groups and other partners.

In Ukraine, UNDP helped develop a Leadership Development Media Strategy that enrolls key personalities such as sports stars and singers, as well as people living with HIV/AIDS. The strategy has helped generate a nurturing and empowering environment which, in turn, has led to breakthroughs in the depth and breadth of response at both the national and community level. UNDP has also partnered with media producers to generate public dialogue on issues related to gender, stigma and discrimination.

In the Middle East and North Africa, UNDP has joined with 17 countries in an initiative to break the silence surrounding the epidemic. Participants from each country attended recent workshops organized by UNDP in Tunisia and Yemen. The workshops brought together UNDP policy advisers, HIV/AIDS experts, civic groups, UNAIDS officials, national HIV/AIDS programme managers and people living with HIV/AIDS. Further outreach initiatives are planned to engage opinion leaders, media and entertainment personalities and leading journalists.

### Worst Affected Countries

An estimated five million people were infected with HIV in 2002, including 3.5 million in sub-Saharan Africa alone.

In addition, countries of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States are facing the world’s fastest-growing HIV/AIDS epidemic. Estimates of the actual number of HIV infections vary from 1.2 to 3 million people. Up to 90 percent of infections have been attrib-
ated to intravenous drug use. UNDP supports a number of flagship initiatives to counteract the spread of HIV/AIDS in this region. UNDP advocates policy change and supports community projects that, once scaled up by governments, can begin to reverse the spread of the epidemic. A major feature of UNDP’s work is to enable the exchange of knowledge and lessons learned among various countries.

UNDP is launching an accelerated response to the epidemic in worst-affected countries, where health and social infrastructures have deteriorated. UNDP is also working to set up rapid-response logistical support systems that engage all stakeholders and UN agencies.

**What Lies Ahead**

Reversing the HIV/AIDS epidemic will require a massive reallocation of resources and unswerving commitment to results. In many countries, it will demand a new, more comprehensive approach that addresses the epidemic on multiple fronts, engaging the energies and resources of many institutions and actors that so far have not recognized the need for their full involvement. A trusted organization that can mobilize stakeholders and help countries develop capacity for action, UNDP is well placed to help turn past failure into success.

For more information on UNDP and the fight against HIV/AIDS, visit [www.undp.org/hiv](http://www.undp.org/hiv) or contact:

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