

Johannesburg, April 26-30

Operational Planning in HIV and AIDS

Background: During the last three years, ASAP has organized capacity building workshops for policy makers, technical staff and UN staff in all regions of the world. In all the workshops, participants indicated that operationalizing a national HIV/AIDS strategy was a major challenge and requested for further training in operational planning. It is in response to this request that ASAP organized a one- week regional capacity building workshop to enhance the skills of technical staff that are directly involved in and/ or supporting the national HIV/AIDS operational planning process. The workshop was a collaborative effort between the Global HIV/AIDS Program and UNAIDS.

Target Audience: 65 participants from Uganda, Botswana, Kenya, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Rwanda, Swaziland and Ethiopia.

Program Description: Countries cited major challenges and barriers to operationalizing their strategic plans. Participants were introduced to principles of results based management and its application; key element of an operational plan; performance monitoring; activity-based costing; and coordination and management of the operational plan. Countries that had developed their operational plans prior to the workshop used the opportunity to review their plans and identified gaps. They realized that their plans were not comprehensive enough and needed improvement. For those that had not developed their operational plans, it was a unique opportunity to develop a draft framework. Countries welcomed the opportunity to learn from one another and share their experiences. They found the workshop useful and learned new tools and skills that would enhance their programs at the country level. Several countries indicated that they would be applying the tools and elements discussed at the workshop in developing their operational plans. The workshop was rated highly by participants. Most countries requested ASAP to replicate the training at the national level to reach a critical mass. South Africa and Zimbabwe requested for country specific workshops this year in preparation for the development of their strategic and operational plans.

Next Steps: Countries will apply the skills acquired in developing/reviewing their operational plans to make them more evidence-informed and result-oriented. ASAP will deliver training for Zimbabwe and South Africa. The workshop background paper is attached.