

JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Support to NEPAD (Period of July 2009 to June 2010)

UNAIDS has continuously supported the priorities of the African Union and NEPAD, within the UN system at regional and country levels, and in many other international fora. UNAIDS advocacy work focuses on mobilizing and sustaining leadership towards universal access to HIV services and MDG targets in West and Central Africa as well as East and Southern Africa, in line with the NEPAD priority sectors of social development.

Advocacy in support of Africa's development

During the reporting period, UNAIDS leadership met with more than 20 African heads of states and government. It has also held consultations with the CEO of NEPAD, and engaged in key events or joint visits to a number of African countries, with the Heads of UNFPA, UNDP, and Global Fund as well as other key stakeholders. All these avenues were used to advocate on issues such as the virtual elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, support to pregnant women's access to HIV prevention and treatment, innovative financing mechanisms to secure predictable and sustainable financing for health, expanding and sustaining access to safe and affordable treatment, including support for AU Pharmaceutical Plan for Africa, promoting action on punitive laws and human rights, calling for a "prevention revolution", and taking the AIDS response out of isolation.

In response to the concerns expressed by many African countries regarding resource flows, the executive directors of UNAIDS and of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, undertook joint missions that have helped unblock funding in Chad, Mauritania and Uganda.

Collaboration between AU, UN system and international institutions to deliver development outcomes

Working under the auspices of the AU/UN Social and Human Development Cluster, UNAIDS, together with WHO, UNECA and UNICEF, provided technical and financial support to the African Union Commission to bring together representatives of Member States, regional economic communities (RECs), regional health organizations and the continental networks of civil society for the third interagency meeting on coordination and harmonization of HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria strategies. Organized within the framework of the evolving UN-AU Ten-Year Capacity Development Programme, these annual consultations contribute significantly to strengthening interaction between the AU, NEPAD, the Pan-African Parliament and other stakeholders to deliver on Africa's commitments on HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria, while improving UN alignment with AU priorities.

The above mentioned 3rd interagency meeting on coordination and harmonization of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria strategies (Addis on 28-30 October 2009) was organized by UNAIDS in collaboration with the AU, UNECA and some of the co-sponsors with the theme “Progress Towards the Achievement of Abuja Call for Universal Access to HIV/TB and Malaria Services by 2010: the Final Push for Action”. One of the recommendations from this meeting was a strong plea for universal access following the review of the implementation of the 2006 Abuja Call. Furthermore, UNAIDS supported the production of the AU Report, “5-Year Review of the Abuja Call for Accelerated Action towards Universal Access to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria services by 2010”, and helped its dissemination.

The same report was adopted by ministers of health in May 2010, in conjunction with the World Health Assembly. Once endorsed by heads of state and governments at the AU Summit in July 2010, the report is expected to be a framework for further continental efforts in the fight against the three diseases. It will also contribute to Africa’s Common Position to the United Nations Summit on the Millennium Development Goals in September 2010.

In promoting an integrated approach to the health MDGs, UNAIDS supported the AU’s initiatives such as the Convention on Sexual and Reproductive Rights, the Maputo Plan of Action and the Campaign for the Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality. UNAIDS advocacy and technical work on prevention of mother-to-child transmission in the region is a very appropriate entry point for linking HIV to reproductive health. It is strengthened by other efforts, such as the UNAIDS agenda for women and girls.

Another area of collaboration with the African Union and NEPAD is access to safe, quality and affordable medicines. In this connection, UNAIDS leadership participated in a meeting on designing strategies for pharmaceutical innovation and drug access in Africa that was organized in February 2010 by NEPAD, the African Union and the Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED) with support of the Dutch and South Africa governments. UNAIDS promotes the local production of generic medicines, making full use of the flexibilities as outlined in the Doha Declaration on TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, and other WTO decisions.

UNAIDS is working closely with WHO and other partners such as the Gates Foundation, UNITAID, the Chirac Foundation and other key stakeholders to support AU and NEPAD advocacy efforts in this field.

Ensuring accessibility of HIV/AIDS treatment for vulnerable groups

UNAIDS has been an active member of the International Health Partnership + initiative in a number of African countries, aimed at coordination and alignment to national processes. The Joint Programme’s thrust is to ensure that HIV priorities are well represented within IHP+ processes and action, multi-stakeholder involvement and multi-sectoral approaches are followed, and the global HIV response contributes to and further strengthens alignment and harmonization at country level. Together with co-sponsors, the Secretariat has represented HIV priorities within

health sector teams, for instance in Ethiopia, Mozambique and Nigeria. It has also supported the first wave of National Strategic Applications for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, for which the IHP+ assessment framework has been used. UNAIDS is also part of Harmonization for Health in Africa (HHA) efforts in costing and financing for health.

In line with the AU's call for broadening partnership in the response to HIV, UNAIDS and UNDP are supporting judicial leadership on human rights and HIV in Africa. As part of the efforts to engage the judiciary in the HIV response, a meeting of eminent African judges and lawyers was held in Johannesburg in December 2009, to discuss HIV and the law in the 21st century. The meeting was attended by some 30 judges from the highest national and regional courts from 15 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. One of the key recommendations from the meeting was to create opportunities for members of the judiciary to exchange with key stakeholders of the HIV response, including people living with HIV, women affected by HIV, and members of key populations at higher risk.

In this respect, the Africa Union's Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted a resolution¹ on the Establishment of a Committee on the Protection of the Rights of People Living with HIV and those most at risk, vulnerable and affected by HIV. This committee will have the mandate to give special attention to persons belonging to vulnerable groups, including women, children, sex workers, migrants, homosexual men, intravenous drug users and prisoners.

Through the Social and Human Development Cluster, and with AU support, UNAIDS endorsed the Africa-wide campaign to End Violence against Women and Girls, to mobilize commitment to ending violence against women and girls, and empower women and their communities in halting gender-based violence and demanding accountability.

¹ *ACHPR/Res163(XLVII)2010*