



UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL SESSION ON HIV/AIDS

25 - 27 June 2001 New York

Fact Sheet

The International Partnership against Aids in Africa

The United Nations Secretary-General's priorities for the global response to HIV/AIDS build on the efforts of the past two decades to overcome the epidemic. Among them is the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa (IPAA)—a coalition that works under the leadership of African governments and harnesses the resources of the United Nations, donors, and the private and community sectors.

- Recognizing the need for a more united front to combat the epidemic, African Heads of State in 1999 asked the Organization of African Unity Secretary-General to work with UNAIDS in implementing a special partnership against HIV/AIDS. In December 1999, the UN Secretary-General boosted the initiative by adding his support to what would become the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa.
- The Partnership is based on the premise that, in isolation, none of its constituencies—neither governments nor civil society and the various national and international organizations working against AIDS—can turn the epidemic around. A coalition or partnership approach can magnify the contribution of all partners, while giving a clear leadership role to African governments.
- The Partnership's mission is ambitious and bold. Over the next decade, it aims to contribute to global efforts to curtail the spread of HIV in Africa, sharply reduce its impact and halt the setbacks in human, social and economic development. The venture builds on the strengths of each partner in the following ways:
 - By providing national leadership, African governments are spearheading broad-based national responses;
 - United Nations organizations are coordinating the global response and providing programme and financial support to country-level efforts;
 - donor governments are backing action at all levels, mainly by supporting the development of the Partnership and providing financial assistance;
 - the private sector is contributing expertise and resources;
 - the community sector is working to boost the roles of local civil society groupings in the Partnership and strengthen regional and country networks.

A significant start

- The Partnership has made significant headway. It is involved in mobilizing political leadership, developing and implementing national strategic plans, and empowering communities. It also marshals resources, helps set up funding and debt relief programmes, and ensures access to care and partnership mechanisms.
- Political and other leaders are allocating more funds, setting up national AIDS councils, drafting new national AIDS strategies or honing existing ones, and heeding the importance of community involvement and district-level action.
- Financial, technical and management support is being extended to strengthen national AIDS councils in countries such as Botswana, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

- New plans are being introduced to overcome the AIDS crisis. When the Partnership was formed in late 1999, 14 national strategic plans had been completed. Fifteen months later, nearly 30 had been completed and another 14 were being drafted.
- More human and financial resources are being deployed. Partners are working together to stage successful resource mobilization roundtables. The Malawi process, for example, saw donors pledge 90% of the US\$121 million that had been requested to help fund that country's HIV/AIDS programme. Other countries are now applying those lessons.
- Several governments have announced significant increases in the funds they allocate to HIV/AIDS programmes. Some are using debt relief savings to pay for AIDS-related activities and, as a result, eight low-income countries have added a total of US\$30 million to their AIDS programmes. The Nigerian Government, for example, will be putting US\$40 million toward its HIV/AIDS Emergency Action Plan.
- UN agencies are providing more resources to the Partnership's activities. In addition to the Cosponsors of UNAIDS (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNDCP, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank), other agencies such as FAO, ILO, UNHCR and WFP are strengthening their contributions.
- The Partnership's scope is continent-wide, but its most important role is at country level, where it supports national plans to fight AIDS and boost existing initiatives. With the various participants sharing their experiences and success stories, the Partnership can help transform isolated actions into coherent plans of action.
- Far-reaching work is occurring at local levels—the decisive sphere of struggle against the epidemic. Through district response initiatives, the Partnership is helping bolster communities' struggles against the epidemic. Key actors are being encouraged to form local partnerships with service providers and facilitators. Countries are receiving technical and financial support to extend their district responses to the national level.
- The private sector is strengthening its role in the Partnership. Several foundations have made substantial contributions to the HIV/AIDS programmes. And more private firms than ever are responding by establishing workplace programmes that target their employees and help their families and communities.

Challenges ahead

By laying the groundwork for broader and better-coordinated actions against the epidemic, the Partnership has become central to the global effort to turn the tide against AIDS in Africa. But major challenges lie ahead.

- Political commitment must be extended further. More political, religious, business and traditional leaders must be encouraged to take more decisive and daring action.
- Many of the countries worst afflicted by the epidemic lack the infrastructure and the financial and human means to take swift, extensive action against AIDS. Collaboration between government leaders and captains of industry could unlock more human and financial resources at country level. But greater international support (including debt relief) is also required.
- Smoother administrative systems are needed to ensure that funds, skills and other resources reach communities. Meanwhile, setting up strong coordinating bodies, such as national AIDS councils, is a priority in countries that still lack them.
- Nationally and globally, huge efforts are needed to provide adequate access to care for Africans living with HIV/AIDS. This requires more than the provision of antiretroviral drugs. Health systems must be strengthened, health workers and caregivers trained, and voluntary counselling and testing services improved.
- Prevention programmes must be stepped up to ensure that they reach young people and women, in particular, and to avoid a new generation becoming infected.
- The root causes of the epidemic—social, economic and cultural inequalities and injustices—must be tackled with more resolve.

The impetus to roll back the epidemic has been created and the Partnership is determined to sustain the momentum.