

World AIDS Day 2008

“Lead – Empower – Deliver”

A Community Statement



In observance of December 1st, the 20th Anniversary of World AIDS Day, and in recognition of the tremendous opportunities and challenges we face in addressing the epidemic worldwide, we, the undersigned organizations, stand in support of the following statement.



The United States' Leadership in Global HIV/AIDS Fight

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. The first five years of PEPFAR have helped secure great progress against the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the developing world. New constituencies and advocates from across America — communities, corporations, government, entertainment, religious groups and others — have emerged to add their voices and resources to reverse this devastating epidemic. Building on this support, we are eager to see continued bipartisan U.S. leadership supporting programs to address HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care over the next five years, as was reauthorized in July in the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-293).



Key achievements of PEPFAR to date include:

- Providing life-saving antiretroviral treatment to about **1.7 million people** in sub-Saharan Africa, compared with about 50,000 on treatment before PEPFAR¹;
- Supporting care for more than **6.6 million**, including more than **2.7 million orphans and vulnerable children**, and supporting more than **33 million counseling and testing sessions**²;
- Facilitating mother-to-child HIV prevention services for nearly **12.7 million pregnant women**, which averted an estimated **194,000 infant infections**¹.



The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The U.S. is the largest supporter of the Global Fund — a partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and communities that has provided significant new resources against HIV/AIDS. Given the need embodied in the increased number of high-quality applications to the Global Fund, a robust increase in U.S. support to the Fund is crucial.



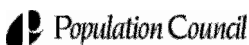
The Fight Against the Epidemic Continues

Status of the Epidemic. New and bold leadership to fight the epidemic is required as a new Congress and presidential administration takes over in the coming year. The epidemic is stabilizing, but at an alarmingly high level. UNAIDS estimates that in 2007, **33 million people** were living with HIV, **2.7 million people** were newly infected and **2 million people** died of an AIDS-related condition. New infections are occurring at rates much faster than those already infected are initiating treatment.



How to Win the Next Round in the Fight Against HIV/AIDS

Evidence-Based Prevention is the Name of the Game. Currently, for every two people enrolled in treatment, five more are newly infected with the virus. The epidemic cannot be reversed — and gains in expanding treatment cannot be sustained — without greater progress in HIV prevention. Efforts to develop effective **vaccines and microbicides** must continue. Prevention efforts should focus more on sexual partnerships that increase the risk of HIV



¹ As of March 31, 2008

² As of Sept. 30, 2007

transmission, particularly **multiple concurrent partnerships**³ and **discordant couples**⁴. **Male circumcision** services to help reduce HIV transmission risk must abide by informed consent guidelines and include counseling for post-procedural care. **Family planning** among HIV-positive women who choose to avoid or delay pregnancy must be made more accessible to prevent new infections in infants, and prevention programs should be linked with reproductive health programs to reach more women at risk of HIV transmission. Programs must better address the particular risk factors experienced by specific populations, such as **injection drug users, sex workers and men who have sex with men**.

Treatment Commitments Cannot be Neglected. Progress made in scaling-up treatment for HIV-positive people must be furthered by achieving the global commitment to **universal access to antiretrovirals**. As President Bush stated when signing PEPFAR's reauthorization, the U.S. is committed to working towards providing three million people with antiretrovirals. All stakeholders in the fight against HIV/AIDS must work together to ensure that safe and efficacious treatment is delivered at the lowest possible cost to all who need it. As tuberculosis accounts for the largest number of AIDS-related deaths, global tuberculosis programs also must be fully funded.

Empower Local Leadership and Fight Stigma. We must invest in training and **empowering local leadership** to tackle the key issues facing their home communities and countries – especially women and socially marginalized groups, such as men who have sex with men and injection drug users. Much of the developing world faces a critical **shortage of health care workers**, and Congress should follow through on its commitment to address the shortage. And we must continue to fight **stigma and discrimination** so that people with a heightened vulnerability to HIV transmission will feel empowered to advocate for themselves and adopt practices that protect their health, including **voluntary HIV counseling and testing** and **integrated tuberculosis and HIV programs**.

Build stronger partnerships. A disease that is exacerbated by so many different factors – biological, social, economic – requires an all-hands-on-deck effort to be defeated. Dialogue and cooperation between a **wide diversity of stakeholders**, including donor and recipient governments, civil society, the private sector and research institutions, will strengthen our response to HIV across the board. The U.S. government must lead to ensure that all stakeholders are heard and that resources are used efficiently.

Make Solid Investments. We must re-commit ourselves to achieving prevention, treatment and care targets established in PEPFAR, including supporting 5 million orphans and vulnerable children, and not allow the progress achieved to be eroded. In order to do so, continued financial support during tough financial times is essential. The Lantos-Hyde Leadership Act authorizes \$48 billion over the next five years for global AIDS, TB and malaria programs. As the next step to delivering U.S. commitments to fight HIV/AIDS, we encourage Congress to ensure that PEPFAR and the Global Fund are fully funded in the coming year. Not only are sustained finances critical for success against HIV, but they also represent a concrete embodiment of U.S. global leadership and humanitarianism in one of the most challenging public health crises in history. In a time of stark economic challenges, continuing to make significant investments in HIV/AIDS is vitally important to preserving hope and health among people infected and affected by this disease in U.S. partner countries, and it's a smart step to bolster U.S. diplomacy and America's leadership in the world.

³ Multiple concurrent partnership (MCP) is the practice of having multiple long-term sexual partners that overlap in time, often for months or years. Such practices, which are common in eastern and southern Africa, combined with the period of increased infectiousness immediately following HIV acquisition, spreads HIV through a population much faster than a series of monogamous relationships. They can create large sexual networks and when one person contracts HIV, everyone else in the network is immediately placed at risk.

⁴ Discordant couples are couples where one partner is HIV-positive and the other HIV-negative.



GLOBAL ACTION FOR CHILDREN



The Centre for Development and Population Activities

TW-MAE-W:
*Third World
Movement
Against
The Exploitation of
Women*



Save the Children



National Council of Jewish Women



World Learning



International Community of Women Living with HIV and AIDS

**RED
Initiatives**

