

14 December 2004

PROGRAMME COORDINATING BOARD

Sixteenth meeting

Montego Bay, Jamaica, 14-15 December 2004

Provisional agenda item 2:

Women, Gender and AIDS

Summation by Kathleen Cravero, Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS

1. The official launch of the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS took place almost one year ago. The Global Coalition is grounded in a solid gender analysis of the interaction between men and women in society, while at the same time focused on achieving concrete outcomes for women and girls. The Global Coalition seeks to:
 - highlight the specific problems and needs faced by women and girls in a world with AIDS;
 - catalyze concrete country and community-level action to address women's needs and concerns.
2. A more comprehensive review of the Global Coalition was presented to the Programme Coordinating Board in June 2004. I will not repeat it here. During the last six months, we have focused on consolidating partnerships in the seven action areas of the Global Coalition and in stimulating country-level work. Examples of country work include:
 - in **Kenya**, where the percentage of women living with HIV is double the percentage of men, the establishment of a National Coalition on Women and AIDS to focus on reducing violence and protecting property rights, among other issues;
 - in **Vietnam**, special efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Vietnam Women's Union, which has over 12 million members, and a presence in every commune;
 - in **nine countries in Latin America**, organizational and programme support to networks of women living with HIV.
3. In addition to concrete action areas, the Global Coalition has adopted the slogan: "to make women count, count women". This drives home what we all know: what we care about, we measure. We have made a good start with this year's Epidemic Update, which brings together – virtually for the first time – all the available data on women

and AIDS. WHO has agreed to collect data disaggregated by sex and age in its effort to accelerate access to treatment; other partners are following suit, in all aspects of the response to AIDS.

4. We thank Canada, Sweden, United Kingdom and the Soros Foundation for their contributions to the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS and Finland and Luxembourg for pledges of support.
5. We thank all members of the PCB for their thoughtful comments and suggestions. The messages we heard from you today include:
 - The need for a comprehensive and genuine mainstreaming of gender in HIV/AIDS efforts as well as in broader development programmes, including:
 - national budget processes;
 - monitoring and evaluation;
 - gender impact assessments; and
 - positioning gender issues on the political agendas of countries as well as of regional and global institutions.
 - The need to forge strong and fundamental links between sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, which is especially important for young women and thus should be a strong and vibrant component of the Global Coalition.
 - The imperative for prevention strategies to be expanded to embrace the realities of women and girls, including:
 - positioning the reducing of violence and protecting of property rights as HIV prevention measures;
 - emphasizing education for girls as an HIV prevention measure; and
 - making the connections between a broader prevention agenda for women and girls and the need for similar efforts vis-à-vis other vulnerable groups.
 - The importance of placing issues relating to women, girls and AIDS in the broader context of the Cairo and Beijing agendas and the Millennium Development Goals, implying the need for greater involvement of women's organizations in moving these issues forward.
 - The need for better understanding of the needs of special groups of women, including sex workers, migrant workers, married adolescents and female injecting drug users, among others.
 - The need to involve men and boys – not just as an afterthought but as positive “agents of change” – and to learn from successful efforts to date.
 - The importance of involving women living with HIV in every aspect of the response, including prevention and treatment efforts at all levels. Priority activities include strengthening the capacity of networks of women living with HIV as well as supporting their involvement in the on-going initiatives of others.

The Global Coalition is a broad network, led by UNAIDS, that includes men and women, institutions, organizations and governments across the world. Progress over this past year has surpassed our expectations. Clearly, the world is beginning to wake up to the feminization of AIDS. We will continue to rely on the Programme Coordinating Board for guidance and support as we move ahead, both in further developing the Global Coalition and in responding to the special needs of women, girls and AIDS.