



PROGRAMME COORDINATING BOARD

Sixteenth meeting
Montego Bay, Jamaica, 14-15 December 2004

Provisional agenda item 5.3:

Update on the World AIDS Campaign

Executive Summary

The World AIDS Campaign is changing. After years dedicated to raising awareness on issues related to HIV and AIDS, such as this year's focus on women and girls and the need to fight stigma and discrimination, the Campaign is becoming a global, civil society movement aimed at mobilizing support for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) *Declaration of Commitment*. It will work alongside the Millennium Development Campaign and other initiatives aimed at reducing poverty to promote sustainable responses to AIDS all over the world.

It is commonly acknowledged that stopping the spread of HIV requires a coordinated global response on a scale equal to that of the disease itself. As the global blueprint for a comprehensive response to the epidemic, the *Declaration* outlines how best to reach this goal. In June 2001, the global community came together in an unprecedented gathering to endorse the targets it outlines: the World AIDS Campaign aims to highlight the significance this gathering held for the HIV and AIDS community and to ensure those targets are met.

Action required at this meeting

The Programme Coordinating Board is requested to take note of the attached overview highlighting the refocused and enhanced World AIDS Campaign.

Introduction

The UNGASS on HIV/AIDS *Declaration of Commitment* is a milestone in tackling HIV and AIDS. Yet its significance is too often overlooked and even forgotten or ignored in many parts of the world. If we are to meet the Millennium Development Goal to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015, we must first meet the targets of the *Declaration*. However, the global community continues to fall behind in fulfilling these commitments—the scope and scale of the epidemic is outpacing the response.

Given the significant role of this important *Declaration* in framing a response to HIV and AIDS, from 2005 onwards the World AIDS Campaign will be refocused in order to advocate for its fulfillment and to provide a vehicle for the active engagement of civil society in the *Declaration's* implementation.

The World AIDS Campaign was initiated in 1997 to bring attention to specific issues related to HIV and AIDS globally and throughout the year. In close consultation with civil society, UNAIDS has guided the Campaign's direction and implementation since then and a strong partnership between the two groups has emerged. In 2002, a new set of consultations began, culminating in March 2003 with a meeting between the UNAIDS Secretariat and a range of civil society groups in Gex, France. This landmark meeting concluded that civil society should take on a far greater role in the Campaign's direction, which in turn would yield a much more strategic and influential campaign. Civil society in the broadest sense—from labour to business to media—has vast untapped power and resources and can be hugely effective in ensuring commitments to the targets of the *Declaration* are met. Additionally, civil society groups are in the best position to know the needs of their societies and the cultures within which they work. Finally, in many countries, indigenous populations are often excluded from policy setting. If a response to AIDS is to be comprehensive and ultimately successful, it must incorporate the voices and actions of those most in need.

As a result of intensive discussion between UNAIDS and civil society, it was decided that governance and management of the World AIDS Campaign would from 2005 be taken over by civil society groups themselves, with UNAIDS as a privileged partner but no longer leading the process unilaterally.

The Campaign's focus

Until this year, the UNAIDS-led World AIDS Campaign focused on raising awareness around HIV and AIDS, especially in the build-up towards World AIDS Day. That goal has now been broadened to encompass advocacy that more directly influences policy debates and resource mobilization for the response. Henceforth, from 2005, the World AIDS Campaign will aim to initiate, strengthen, and synergize national, regional and international efforts to mobilize civil society and increase understanding of the AIDS pandemic; sustain public support for the response; and mobilize the resources required to respond to the pandemic through the achievement of the goals outlined in the *Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS*.

The Campaign has four objectives.

1. Increase involvement and commitment to tackling HIV and AIDS through accelerated advocacy by civil society.
2. Increase participation and influence in the HIV and AIDS response through broader and stronger collaboration within civil society by including and engaging other

stakeholders (such as labour, faith-based organizations, business, academics, media etc).

3. Ensure more political commitments are translated into action—in particular agreements to provide additional resources (financial, human and technical).
4. Increase public awareness about HIV and AIDS.

The Campaign's transition to civil society

The 'transition' from a UNAIDS-led to a civil-society-led World AIDS Campaign has been taking place gradually throughout 2004. During this period, UNAIDS has continued to support the Campaign financially and technically while the Campaign's governance has shifted to a group of civil society representatives. This shift is now nearly complete and encompasses:

- establishment of a civil-society-led Global Steering Committee, on which UNAIDS sits as a non-voting member. The Global Fund, International Council of AIDS Service Organizations, and Global Network of People living with HIV/AIDS and International Community of Women with HIV/AIDS sit on the board as non-voting observers but participate fully in meetings;
- the establishment of an international coordinating office in the Netherlands;
- the appointment of an interim Executive Director; and,
- development of strategic aims and objectives, underpinned by activities which build and support the capacity of civil society to be more active in the response.

Henceforth, UNAIDS and the World AIDS Campaign will work together as partners through a Memorandum of Understanding. UNAIDS will continue providing financial support until the Campaign becomes financially self-sustaining and will remain its primary technical partner throughout the life of the Campaign. UNAIDS Country Coordinators and UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS will continue receiving Campaign materials and will be asked to support and at times facilitate broad civil society engagement in the Campaign, allowing for greater harmonization of AIDS campaigning at the national level.

Ultimately, the World AIDS Campaign will become a global network of nationally-based campaigns. It is committed to working with and through existing groups and/or networks in order to build on their experiences and to prioritize the development and support of these campaigns to partner with the World AIDS Campaign. A specific area of focus for the Campaign is to build linkages between northern and the southern campaigns so that each can share in the needs, cultures and realities of the other.

Expected outcomes

The World AIDS Campaign will build and support strong national campaigns that focus on issues contained in the *Declaration of Commitment*. These national campaigns will be broader than the traditional World AIDS Campaigns and will include a variety of important actors in the response, including AIDS, women's and development nongovernmental organizations, faith-based organizations, trades unions, businesses, governments and many others. The World AIDS Campaign to date has been seen as an unbiased 'broker' that can bring many different groups together to work on a common agenda, both at the national and global levels.

Under the slogan *Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise*, the World AIDS Campaign will provide the global thread that unites these national campaign efforts under a single umbrella.