

UNAIDS/PCB(26)/10.11
13 May 2010

26th Meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board
Geneva, Switzerland
22-24 June 2010

Gender-sensitivity of AIDS responses

**Progress Report on Implementation of the UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls
(operational plan for the UNAIDS Action Framework: addressing women, girls,
gender equality and HIV)**

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Gender inequality and unequal power relations between and among women and men continue to have a significant influence on the HIV epidemic.¹ Though there have been noteworthy commitments to promoting and protecting the human rights of women and girls in all settings over the years, HIV highlights the gap between rhetoric and reality. Consequently, it is imperative that HIV policies, programming, and budgetary allocations expressly address the needs of women and girls and make the necessary short- and long-term investment to address gender inequality in the context of HIV.
2. At its 22nd and 23rd session, the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board explicitly called on Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS, comprising the 10 Cosponsoring agencies and the UNAIDS Secretariat (hereinafter referred to as *UNAIDS* or *the Joint UN Programme*) to “develop specific tools to assist countries in planning, programming and implementing interventions in the context of HIV that address (1) women, girls and gender inequality, and (2) men who have sex with men, transgender, bisexual and lesbian populations.” The PCB furthermore requested UNAIDS to emphasize country-level action, and to establish an interagency strategy to address HIV and women and girls.
3. At its 24th session in June 2009, the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) took note with appreciation of the update on progress by UNAIDS and UNIFEM in assisting countries to accelerate action on women, girls and gender equality within the context of AIDS, including the establishment of the interagency strategy to address HIV and women and girls, the *UNAIDS Action Framework: addressing women, girls, gender equality and HIV*; the PCB also recognized the need to urgently move to implement the UNAIDS Action Framework as a tool for accelerated UN action and requested UNAIDS to operationalize the document by October 2009 with UNIFEM as a key partner. The PCB further requested a report on the progress of implementation at the 26th session, “taking into consideration the initial stages of implementation.”
4. At its 25th session, the Programme Coordinating Board strongly endorsed “the process of the Global Task Force on Women and Girls, Gender Equality and HIV; welcomed the Operational Plan; supported the continued leadership of the Executive Director; and, requested UNAIDS to begin the immediate implementation of the Operational Plan including through the UN joint country teams, in close collaboration with government and country partners, especially women’s organizations and networks of people living with HIV, and report regularly on progress to the Programme Coordinating Board to enhance monitoring and evaluation of results, including through a comprehensive report to the 27th meeting of the Board.”
5. At the 33rd Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations (CCO) meeting in April 2010, the UNAIDS Executive Heads endorsed the broadening of the priority area on ‘stopping violence against women and girls’ to include the broader gender equality agenda, including the ‘UNAIDS Action Framework: addressing women, girls, gender equality and HIV’ and the ‘UNAIDS Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV’. The revised priority area states that ‘We can meet the HIV needs of women and girls and can stop sexual and gender-based violence: by building on the synergies

¹ UNAIDS Action Framework: Addressing Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV, p. 2

between the gender and AIDS response for positive change to the lives of women and girls and by utilizing opportunities to comprehensively respond to sexual and gender-based violence.'

B. Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV (Operational Plan for the UNAIDS Action Framework: addressing women, girls, gender equality and HIV)

6. The 'Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV' (UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls) is the operational plan for the *UNAIDS Action Framework: addressing*

women, girls, gender equality and HIV. It was launched at a high-level panel during the 54th UN Commission on the Status of Women (March 2010). The launch involved many prominent leaders from the United Nations system, Member States and civil society.² The *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls* is now being rolled out at the regional and country level. For example, it was launched in India by UNAIDS Secretariat and UNDP. A regional launch took place at a meeting in Central and West Africa. Similar launches are taking place worldwide, with high level representation signaling the Joint Programme's commitment to delivering on the principles and results expressed in the *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls*.

Liberia: Challenged by growing HIV infection rates, in particular among young women, while recovering from a long period of conflict, the Government of Liberia decided in late 2009, under the leadership of Minister of Gender and Development HE Vabah Gayflor to operationalize the UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls. With support of the UN Joint Team, the government organized consultations with partners, including women's groups and networks of women living with HIV, to identify the main issues and challenges faced by women and girls. Based on the gaps in the national response, the following priority areas were agreed upon:

- *Strengthening comprehensive and coordinated data collection and analysis to better understand the impact of the HIV epidemic on women and girls, and their specific needs, to inform policy and programming accordingly*
 - *Accelerating access to integrated and comprehensive HIV, Tuberculosis and reproductive health services*
 - *Contributing to broader efforts to stop violence against women and girls*
- These actions are being taken forward by the UN through the UN Joint Programme of Support on AIDS to ensure coordination of support and accountability for results. As the first country to move on the operationalisation of the UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls, some initial lessons learned and challenges have already been documented:*
- *Presence of a champion in the government, civil society or UN is crucial;*
 - *Availability of catalytic funds helps to kick-off the process;*
 - *The Agenda for women and girls provides a platform to bring together the disparate work on women and girls and HIV in a better coordinated manner;*
 - *Addressing the HIV-specific needs of women and girls reinforces an effective AIDS response*
 - *Aligning around key issues and results supports focused targeting of resources by the UN joint team and other partners*

²Launch participants included Dr. Asha Rose Migiro, UN Deputy Secretary-General; Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator; H.E. Ms. Vabah Gayflor, Minister of Gender and Development, Government of Liberia; H.E. Ms. Melanne Verveer, United States Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues; and Ms. Annie Lennox, Artist and Political and Social Activist. Michel Sidibé, UNAIDS Executive Director, moderated the panel.

Community Brief for Civil Society Action on Women and Girls:

Civil Society Partners together with UNAIDS developed a Community Brief which is a briefing note for action by communities for the Agenda for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV.

The Community Brief aims to introduce the Agenda to communities and civil society organizations, in particular networks of women living with HIV, women's rights activists and advocates and organizations of men and boys working for gender equality, emphasizing how these communities can be engaged in areas of data collection, analysis of strategic information, monitoring of national, regional and global commitments related to women, girls, gender equality and HIV. It highlights the key civil society actions to support the implementation of the Agenda through advocacy and partnership within civil society networks, as well as with governments, the UN and donors. Civil society in Peru and Brazil intend to use the Community Brief to develop CSO driven initiatives around women, girls, gender equality and HIV.

7. The *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls* focuses on key results in three areas: 1) knowing, understanding and responding to the particular and various effects of the HIV epidemic on women and girls, 2) translating political commitments into scaled-up action to address the rights and needs of women and girls in the context of HIV, and 3) ensuring an enabling environment for the fulfillment of the human rights of women and girls and their empowerment, in the context of HIV.
8. The *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls* translates these three areas into recommendations, identifies clear actions to achieve these results, and allocates specific responsibilities for UNAIDS and UNIFEM to undertake within a specific timeframe (January 2010-December 2014). It also anticipates the creation of a yet-to-be established UN agency for women's empowerment and gender equality.
9. The *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls* emphasizes the need for accelerated and strategic action, especially at the country level, to address the rights and needs of women and girls in all settings. It highlights opportunities to work with national partners, including governments, networks of women living with HIV, and diverse women's groups, while engaging men and boys in halting and reversing HIV and achieving gender equality. Furthermore it expresses the commitment of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and UNIFEM to collaborate with global partners committed to moving forward the

CHINA: In May 2010, at the invitation of the Government of the People's Republic of China, a joint Global Fund and UNAIDS mission was undertaken to explore how best China could operationalize the UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls.

The mission aimed to reach agreement on the priority actions to be taken in the area of women and girls, for inclusion in the China National Strategic Plan (2011-15) and the work plan for the Global Fund Rolling Continuation Channel, and to define technical support by the UN Joint Team accordingly.

The consultations involved a broad range of stakeholders, including national authorities, research and academic institutions, organisations of women and PLWHA, UN and development cooperation partners.

The priority areas of action identified are as follows:

- *Strengthening of gender disaggregated data, analysis and reporting to guide planning and implementation, to better understand and address the HIV epidemic;*
- *Strengthening of gender responsiveness within prevention, with a specific focus on sexual transmission;*
- *Implementation of "know your rights" campaign for women and girls; Strengthening of participation of women's organisations in the design, governance and implementation of AIDS strategies at national and provincial levels; and*
- *Capacity strengthening of staff responsible for managing and implementing the Global Fund Rolling Continuation Channel to undertake gender sensitive HIV analysis and programming.*

The UN Joint Team on AIDS will use the UN Joint Programme of Support to ensure coordination of support and accountability for results.

agenda on women, girls and gender equality in the context of HIV, and in particular, to work with the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund) to leverage resources and enhance efficiency in resource use.

10. The present report outlines initial actions undertaken by UNAIDS and UNIFEM to implement the *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls* (covering 2009 and the beginning of 2010) as requested at the 24th PCB session. The report provides sample outcomes and indicative examples of efforts underway in the three areas outlined in the *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls*. Annex 1 provides a list of indicative actions by UNAIDS and UNIFEM, organized by *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls* issue area. As noted above, at the request of the PCB, a comprehensive report will be prepared for the 27th PCB session.

Uganda: Recognizing the disproportional impact of the HIV epidemic on women and girls, Uganda has decided to ensure a gender-responsive national AIDS response. A national consultation process has been put in place to identify key priority action areas for women and girls, to be integrated in the National Strategic Framework on AIDS and the forthcoming Health Sector Strategic Plan. The UN Joint Team on AIDS, in close collaboration with the Joint Team on Gender, aims to comprehensively address the specific HIV needs of women and girls within the Joint UN Programme of Support on AIDS, as part of the UN Development Assistance Framework, as guided by the UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls. As a first step, the Uganda AIDS Commission, in collaboration with the UN, organized a National Stakeholder Dialogue that included a broad range of stakeholders, including cultural and religious leaders, national authorities, civil society and women's groups, research institutions, UN, and development cooperation partners. Women and girls were central to the discussions and the following action points were identified:

- *Improve understanding and analysis of why women and girls are increasingly infected by HIV.*
- *Ensure integrated HIV, TB, Sexual and Reproductive Health, and Mother and Child Health services, through a minimum package of services for women and girls.*
- *Strengthen policy, programming and advocacy to address gender based violence, through community based approaches working with males and females.*
- *Capacity strengthening of the Ministry of Gender and relevant stakeholders, including women's groups, for improved coordination among different constituencies.*

UN Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS and UNIFEM Actions on Results under the UNAIDS Agenda for Accelerated Country Action on Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV

Issue: Knowing, understanding and responding to the particular and various effects of the HIV epidemic on women and girls

<i>Recommendation 1: Generate better evidence and increased understanding of the specific needs of women and girls in the context of HIV</i>	<i>UNAIDS/UNIFEM actions to deliver results:</i>
<p>Result 1: Quantitative and qualitative evidence on the specific needs, risks of and impact on women and girls to better inform the implementation of policies and programmes.</p>	<p><u>Sample Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National governments supported to engage in gender-specific and disaggregated data collection; • Opportunities provided for women’s groups to actively engage in national processes to gather qualitative and quantitative data, including for UNGASS and MDGs reporting; • National capacity to engage in gender budget analysis and assessment strengthened; • Information about epidemic trends, successful programmes and good practices that address the needs and rights of women and girls in the context of HIV compiled and disseminated.
<p><u>Indicative examples:</u></p> <p>In India, UNAIDS Programme Acceleration Funds (PAF) are being used to assess HIV-related risks and vulnerabilities of migrant construction workers in Maharashtra who are frequently clients of sex workers. The study also found that some women construction workers complement their salary by selling sex. Based on the findings a local trade union is being supported to address the needs of these workers and their spouses.</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM convened a working group of experts and practitioners, including UNAIDS, UNIFEM and the GFATM, whose work focuses on understanding and intervening on the linkages between violence against women and HIV. The meeting: a) reviewed the current level of evidence supporting different strategies that link violence against women and HIV and assess their relevance for program development; b) developed policy and programmatic recommendations for national and international HIV/AIDS programmes, and c) developed an agenda for future programme development, evaluation and research, including identifying steps for testing and scaling up 'evidence-based' interventions. A report is being finalized, summarizing the evidence and key issues discussed at the meeting. The production of policy briefs will follow. Based on the principles identified and case studies presented at the meeting, a programming guide for addressing the intersection of violence against women and HIV will be designed, following the logical steps in programme planning and design in order to help programme planners, and those supporting programmes in this area to develop an evidence-based approach to programme development.</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM worked with the International Program on Health and Human Rights at the Harvard School of Public Health, to compile and assess evidence about the intersection of HIV and gender-based violence. The report (currently in its final draft) examines peer reviewed literature on the topic in the period 2000-2009, identifies gaps, and sets priorities for research accordingly. The report further proposes key messages for donors, policy-makers, programme planners and researchers, and presents a framework for the development of an AIDS response that incorporates action on gender-based</p>	

Recommendation 1: Generate better evidence and increased understanding of the specific needs of women and girls in the context of HIV	UNAIDS/UNIFEM actions to deliver results:
<p>violence.</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM have contributed significantly to our understanding of the AIDS epidemic as it impacts the lives of women and girls by compiling and analyzing evidence in reports such as <i>Universal Access 2009</i>, <i>Women and Health: Today's Evidence Tomorrow's Agenda</i> and the <i>Children and AIDS 4th Stocktaking</i> report.</p>	
<p>Result 2: Harmonized gender equality indicators to better capture the socio-cultural, economic and epidemiological factors contributing to women's and girls' risk and vulnerability to HIV.</p>	<p><u>Sample Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative to build consensus around key gender equality indicators underway; • Efforts to refine UNGASS indicators to better address gender inequality in the context of HIV in process; • Complementarity between efforts to strengthen gender equality indicators and human rights indicators set as core element of development of gender equality indicators.
<p>Indicative examples:</p> <p>UNIFEM, UNAIDS and MEASURE Evaluation have launched a process with key partners (GFATM, PEPFAR, GTZ, VSO, and others) to guide and participate in the development of 'harmonized' indicators on gender equality and HIV/AIDS. A Technical Consultation is planned for 28-30 June 2010 where key experts will review and identify specific indicators for input into the UNAIDS MERG process.</p> <p>Members of UNAIDS and UNIFEM are working with the AIDS Accountability Scorecard on Women (AIDS Accountability Project). The Scorecard is the first-ever independent assessment of how well governments respond to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women in the context of the AIDS epidemic. It evaluates the latest data that UN Member States have provided to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) as part of their unanimous adoption of the United Nations 2001 <i>Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS</i>.</p>	
<p>Result 3: Evidence-informed policies, programmes and resource allocations that respond to the needs of women and girls.</p>	<p><u>Sample Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of governments and civil society to integrate gender into AIDS responses strengthened; • Information about emerging issues gathered to build the evidence base and integrate into policies and programmes • Opportunities enhanced for sharing information, knowledge, expertise and research about evidence and successful programming to address the needs and rights of women and girls in the context of HIV

Recommendation 1: Generate better evidence and increased understanding of the specific needs of women and girls in the context of HIV	UNAIDS/UNIFEM actions to deliver results:
<p>Indicative examples:</p> <p>The UNAIDS and UNIFEM interagency project, Universal Access for Women and Girls Now! (UA Now!) has initiated assessments or baseline studies on gaps and barriers to universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in ten countries (Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia). Implementing partners (non-governmental organizations or government agencies) are using the outcomes of the assessment to construct and implement action plans to address gaps and barriers. Finally, the implementation is geared toward integration into ongoing national planning and implementation activities. Multiple stakeholders, including government agencies, organizations of women living with HIV are involved throughout the process. The project mobilizes UN Joint Teams on AIDS in programme countries to accelerate action. Since January 2010, several UA Now! implementing partners have carried out assessments or baseline studies, and two implementing partners (in Kenya and India) are implementing qualitative studies on barriers to universal access for women and girls</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM provided technical and financial support to an initiative on HIV and populations in humanitarian crisis situations, including for assessments and capacity building activities to identify high risk behaviours in Kenya, Thailand and Liberia, and for interventions on HIV and sex work to countries in Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, East Africa and Asia.</p>	

Issue: translating political commitments into scaled-up action to address the rights and needs of women and girls in the context of HIV

Recommendation 2: Scaled-up action and resources for policies and programmes, with the support of all relevant partners, at global, national and community level	UNAIDS/UNIFEM actions
<p>Result 1: Stronger accountability from governments for more effective AIDS responses</p>	<p><u>Sample Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support provided to countries to review and/or develop new national strategic plans to assess the extent to which the national AIDS response is addressing the needs and rights of women and girls; • Governments supported to incorporate and implement global and regional commitments into their national AIDS response

Recommendation 2: Scaled-up action and resources for policies and programmes, with the support of all relevant partners, at global, national and community level	UNAIDS/UNIFEM actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge base of governments and civil society strengthened in regard to international commitments that relate to HIV (such as the 2001 UNGASS Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS) and how HIV relates to international conventions and declarations (such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women/CEDAW or the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals)
<p>Indicative examples:</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM are supporting 12 national networks and organizations of women living with HIV to conduct national assessments of progress made in the implementation of MDG 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women) and MDG 6 (Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) and prepare reports based on this assessment. A global synthesis report will be prepared and launched at the UN MDG Review Summit to be held in September 2010.</p> <p>In Guinea Bissau, UNAIDS and UNIFEM are collaborating with the Ministry of Justice and several civil society organizations, including the University Colinas de Boe and TOSTAN (a community-based NGO). PAF funds are being used to build the capacity of community, faith-based, and youth organizations and networks to promote human rights and stop gender-based violence. The project includes conducting a gender assessment of existing national strategies, laws and policies and providing support to drafting laws outlawing gender-based violence and female genital mutilation.</p>	
<p>Result 2: All forms of violence against women and girls are recognized as violations of human rights and are addressed, in the context of HIV</p>	<p><u>Sample Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity built of different groups of women and girls, for example sex workers, to address violence • Evidence base strengthened on the intersection of violence against women and girls and HIV, including identification and dissemination of good practices • Evidence-informed programmatic guidance developed to assist in addressing violence against women and girls in the context of HIV, for example, with post-rape care protocols
<p>Indicative examples:</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM developed a strategic plan (“business case”) for Outcome Framework priority area – <i>end violence against women and girls</i>. The priority area has now been broadened to include the broader gender equality agenda, including the ‘<i>UNAIDS Action Framework on Women, Girls, gender Equality and HIV</i>’ and the ‘<i>UNAIDS Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV</i>. UNAIDS and UNIFEM are committed to moving forward on the bold actions and many of the activities contained in the business case and operational plan, such as conducting research on “positive policing” as a way to address the intersection of gender-based violence and HIV; working with countries to conduct violence “readiness assessments” and plans in order to more effectively integrate violence against women and girls into national AIDS responses; and addressing</p>	

Recommendation 2: Scaled-up action and resources for policies and programmes, with the support of all relevant partners, at global, national and community level	UNAIDS/UNIFEM actions
<p>violence against girls in collaboration with the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), private sector partners (Nduna Foundation, Grupo ABC) and committed individuals³ in a partnership to address sexual violence against girls.</p> <p>The Joint Programme's UA Now! project in Rwanda contributes to meeting the priorities set in Rwanda's <i>Economic and Poverty Reduction Strategy</i>. The Forum for Activists against AIDS Scourge (FAAS) is working to increase protection from gender-based violence and awareness of laws protecting property rights for women and girls, and to restore justice for survivors of violence through providing paralegal services, and training of judges, advocates, prosecutors and the police to ensure that the claims of women and girls living with HIV are properly addressed.</p>	
<p>Result 3: Women and girls have universal access to HIV, TB and SRH services, including harm reduction, nutrition and services addressing and responding to violence against women</p>	<p><u>Sample Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support provided to key ministries to implement sectoral operational plans addressing gender • Greater access to services for women and girls expanded, especially for women and girls who are marginalized, living in rural locations, or otherwise hampered in gaining access to prevention, treatment, care and support services; • Context-specific technical guidance developed and disseminated, addressing the linkages between SRH and HIV; • HIV/AIDS, reproductive health and gender programmes for women, girls and boys strengthened for refugees in urban settings, including addressing sex work
<p><u>Indicative examples:</u></p> <p>UA Now! in Namibia, through the Legal Assistance Center (LAC), empowers women and girls to access HIV prevention and treatment services without fear of gender-based violence, stigma, or discrimination. In March 2010, LAC trained 125 women and girls in rural parts of Namibia. Future capacity building will cover the rest of Namibia's thirteen political regions. LAC also addresses customary laws that render women vulnerable to HIV infection through advocacy with traditional leaders. LAC organized two workshops in February 2010 with multiple stakeholders on barriers to universal access for women and girls in Namibia.</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM are responding to the disproportionate adverse consequences of unmet needs for family planning and STI services on women and girls, with several tools to assist countries to respond to these unmet needs. This includes "<i>A Strategic Approach to Strengthening Control of Reproductive Tract and Sexually Transmitted Infections: Use of the Programme Guidance Tool</i>", an action-oriented guide to assist decision-makers to identify goals, directions, and priority interventions to address the problem of RTIs/STIs in their particular regional, national, or local context; and an "<i>Investment Case for Eliminating Congenital Syphilis: Promoting Better Maternal and Child Health and Stronger Health Systems</i>" geared toward improving integrated antenatal services and universal screening of syphilis in pregnancy with the aim of global elimination of congenital syphilis. It is a technical document for donors outlining how congenital syphilis could be eliminated as a public health problem through the strengthening of existing systems in countries with the highest burden of disease.</p>	

³ (Gary Cohen, VP Beckton Dickinson, U.S. Fund for UNICEF Board Member, CDC Foundation Board Member)

Recommendation 2: Scaled-up action and resources for policies and programmes, with the support of all relevant partners, at global, national and community level	UNAIDS/UNIFEM actions
<p>Result 4: Strengthened HIV prevention efforts for women and girls through promotion, protection and fulfillment of women’s and girls’ human rights and greater gender equality</p>	<p><u>Sample Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries supported to translate gender-sensitive prevention policies into effective and evidence-informed programmes for women, young women, adolescents and girls • Research conducted and results disseminated on emerging prevention issues, including responses to “spousal transmission,” wider provision of female condoms, post-rape care, and combination prevention methods. • Increased attention paid to women in marginalized groups or in concentrated epidemics, such as female drug users or female partners of male drug users
<p>Indicative examples: UNAIDS and UNIFEM are working with partners to address issues of HIV transmission through heterosexual sex within marriage and long-term partnerships (i.e. “spousal or intimate partner transmission”), and commencing joint work to analyse intimate partner transmission in the context of sex work in Asia. In Asia, UNAIDS led a regional policy initiative with representatives of AIDS commissions, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and stakeholders involved in previous meetings. Ninety delegates from 15 Asian countries reviewed the evidence base regarding HIV transmission in intimate partner relationships and responded unanimously that this issue had to find a place in national HIV policies and programmes. A report, entitled “HIV transmission in intimate partner relationships in Asia” (July 2009) was the result. Countries are now being supported to integrate specific programming addressing intimate partner transmission into their national AIDS responses.</p> <p>The UNAIDS and UNIFEM PAF project In Pakistan, is developing training materials to strengthen the capacity of NGOs providing services to most at risk populations, including spouses of injecting drug users, spouses of migrant workers and female sex workers. In Sri Lanka, UNAIDS is working with the Employers Federation of Ceylon to prevent HIV infection in young women (ages 18-25 years) working in the apparel industry. The project trains and sensitizes management and young female workers from a large apparel sector company that employs nearly 35,000 young women mainly from rural areas.</p> <p>A rights-based HIV and gender programme for refugees and migrants has been launched in South Africa in collaboration with IOM.</p>	

Issue: an enabling environment for the fulfillment of women’s and girls’ human rights and their empowerment, in the context of HIV

<p>Recommendation 3: Champion leadership for an enabling environment that promotes and protects the women’s and girls’ human rights and empowerment, through increased advocacy, capacity, and adequate resources.</p>	<p>UNAIDS/UNIFEM actions</p>
<p>Result 1: Women and girls are empowered to drive transformation of social norms and unequal power relations, in the context of HIV.</p>	<p><u>Sample Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s coalitions and networks of women living with HIV supported to engage in national, regional and global dialogues; • Community level efforts fostered to challenge social norms and unequal power relations in the context of HIV • Increased attention focused on women in marginalized groups and/or in concentrated epidemic contexts
<p><u>Indicative examples:</u></p> <p>The UA Now! project in Malawi, engages the Coalition of Women Living with HIV and AIDS (COWLHA) to improve women’s access to HIV treatment and reproductive health services through its work to address gender-based violence, stigma and discrimination. Using the Stepping Stones methodology, the project engages participatory learning approaches to build women’s knowledge, risk awareness and communication skills. In January and February 2010, COWLHA organized stakeholder meetings in each of the eight UA Now! focus districts. The project was applauded by various stakeholders, and generated interest among the police at the victim support units and among district monitoring and evaluation officers.</p> <p>In Cambodia, UNAIDS and UNIFEM are collaborating with the Women’s Network for Unity to build the capacity of sex worker networks to improve community engagement for universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. In Malaysia, efforts to assess vulnerability to, and risks associated with sex work among women and girls and men and boys within the refugee community are underway in Kuala Lumpur, focusing on registered refugees from Myanmar.</p>	

<p>Result 2: Strong, bold and diverse leadership for women, girls, gender equality, for greater participation in decision-making.</p>	<p>Sample Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships with eminent political and religious leaders established to take action for women, girls, and gender equality in the context of HIV; • Leadership development programmes for women living with HIV initiated; • Efforts expanded to support participation of women, young women and girls living with HIV to engage in national AIDS planning, policy making, programme implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
<p><u>Indicative examples</u></p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM are working with the European Commission to support efforts in Rwanda, Kenya, Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, and Cambodia focused on building the capacity of networks and organizations of women and girls living with HIV to promote their leadership and strengthen their ability to be meaningfully involved in all decision-making that affects their lives. The programme also targets policy makers, programme staff in government, and international donors to ensure that gender equality priorities are realized and commitments to include women and girls living with HIV are developed. The approach is focused on building institutional and individual capacities, developing common goals and priorities on gender equality, operationalizing and delivering on commitments to these priorities and developing political advocacy strategies and skills for HIV+ women</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM work with traditional leaders on gender and HIV. In the Arab States, this included convening thirty women and men religious leaders and women’s rights champions with previous experience on HIV to put together a strategy on mobilizing and training communities on gender and HIV related issues at the end of 2009. A draft pilot training manual was distributed to the participants prior to the consultation and was then discussed and validated during the consultation. The manual addresses both men and women. It addresses culture, provides scientific evidence, and progressive religious arguments, using a simple, user friendly, culturally sensitive and accessible approach. The gender training toolkit is now being finalized and will soon be disseminated. In Tajikistan, religious leaders are now involved in local campaigns and action aimed at preventing violence against women living with HIV and are raising awareness of voluntary testing among the rural population, particularly among labour migrants and their families.</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM have launched a Leadership Development Programme (LDP), based on previous LDP methodology. Initiated in 2003, LDP has been successfully supported in more than 30 countries to develop leadership capacity across a range of contexts and settings in response to the challenges posed by the AIDS epidemic. A modified LDP project has now been launched. It focuses on developing capacity and leadership of HIV-positive women and girls and directly addresses their needs and rights as defined by them. The revised leadership development programme is a sequential process that spans three to four months, from the initial enrolment to analysis of breakthrough initiatives. In addition to the programme participants who are currently being identified and solicited, participants will include the Joint UN Team on AIDS. The project is being rolled out in 9 countries. Four additional LDP projects will engage participants from several countries within the Arab States and Europe and Central Asia. While the majority of participants will be women living with HIV (60%), the project will also include allies and programme implementers.</p>	

<p>Result 3: Increased financial resources for women, girls and gender equality in the context of HIV.</p>	<p>Sample Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria’s Gender Equality Strategy supported; • Advisory support provided to countries to fully integrate the needs and rights of women and girls in the context of HIV, TB and malaria into GFATM proposals; • Donors encouraged to increase resources for women, girls and gender equality in the context of HIV as part of the roll-out of the <i>UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls</i>; • Countries provided with financial and technical support to engage in gender budgeting and assessment.
<p>Indicative examples:</p> <p>UNAIDS and UNIFEM provided support to the Global Fund for Rounds 9 and 10 including through Technical Review Panel (TRP) briefings, updates of technical guidance and review of proposal forms. UNAIDS also coordinated and participated in the TRP briefings including on gender, and has contributed to the review of Round 10 proposal form modifications proposed by the Fund. Support also included convening training workshops on gender and HIV for countries submitting Global Fund Round 9 proposals.</p> <p>The UN Trust Fund to end violence against women has been supporting a cutting-edge learning initiative, bringing together a group of seven organizations⁴ to determine effective practices to address the intersection between violence against women (VAW) and HIV. The initiative places particular emphasis on building the capacity of civil society organizations in monitoring and evaluation, and to generate evidence that can promote replication and scaling up. To this end, the grantees have received ongoing specialized technical assistance from the UN Trust Fund, including two capacity development workshops. Baseline research has reinforced emerging global research that VAW and HIV overlap and intersect in complex ways; and ongoing monitoring and documentation is highlighting effective approaches to address the intersection. Emerging results are emphasizing the need for strategies to reflect the complex and nuanced factors underlying the intersection between VAW and HIV through adopting multi-strategy, multi-sectoral approaches, tailored to the local context through in-depth formative research and ongoing monitoring. A final convening of the grantees to review results from their evaluations will take place in 2010, and common emerging themes on the intersection will be used to feed into policy and planning within national HIV responses.</p>	
<p>Result 4: Gender responsive UNAIDS</p>	<p>Sample outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls</i> launched and rolled out globally, regionally and in countries; • UNAIDS family and UNIFEM staff supported to incorporate gender equality into their work, including working with women, girls, men and boys; • Regional technical hubs supported to provide enhanced resources and expertise on women, girls and gender equality, including for engaging men and boys for gender equality.

⁴ Women’s Affairs Department, Botswana; Colectiva Mujer y Salud, Dominican Republic; Breakthrough, India; Equal Access, Nepal; Civil Resource Development and Documentation Center (CIRDDOC) , Nigeria; Raks Thai Foundation, Thailand; Institute for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago.

Indicative activities:

In Asia and the Pacific, UNAIDS and UNIFEM initiatives are building capacity across the UN system on women, girls and HIV. This includes strengthening the technical capacity of a group of experts across the UN system, civil society, and among national partners. A community of practice was established to provide virtual technical support to countries through the use of gender and HIV focal points. This is now being followed with the launch of national-level needs assessments on women, girls and HIV in select countries, using gender budgeting as a key component.

The Interagency Working Group on Women, Girls, Gender Equality, and HIV, in consultation with the multi-stakeholder Expert Group on Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV implemented an initiative to strengthen regional support mechanisms to better help countries integrate gender into national AIDS strategies. The nine civil society organizations and United Nations agency recipients span five regions.⁵ Projects include WHO knowledge hubs, UNAIDS Technical Support Facilities, regional networks and civil society support initiatives. Some of the regional projects focus broadly on integrating gender into national AIDS responses – brokering and providing technical assistance to National AIDS authorities and other key actors.. Several projects focus on issues specific to their region, such as female drug users and partners of drug users, or religious leaders.

UNAIDS and UNIFEM are supporting systematic implementation of transformative initiatives for men and boys . This includes convening representatives from country offices to discuss on-going initiatives and/or ways to strengthen this area of work, such as the Global Consultation in Dakar, Senegal on Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and HIV in October 2009. Several countries are being supported to strengthen programming in the area of male involvement within the context of ICPD, including Niger, Botswana, Costa Rica, Brazil, Jamaica, Uganda, Ukraine, Senegal, South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Lebanon, Bangladesh, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Turkey, and Djibouti. A UNAIDS and UNIFEM partnership with the MenEngage Alliance is supporting UN Joint Teams on AIDS in select countries to work with organizations of men and boys for gender equality to develop and operationalize strategies addressing social norms around gender and sexual relationships by 2010, and subsequently to roll-out these strategies in least four countries per region per year. In the Caribbean, UNAIDS has built capacity on gender, masculinities, and HIV for staff in Ministries of Health and UN staff.

⁵ Participating organizations and agencies include AIDS Alliance India, AIDS Alliance West Africa, Fundacion para Estudio e Investigacion de la Mujer (FEIM), Health and Development Africa/amREF, Population Action International/Friends of Africa, Eurasian Harm Reduction Network, UNIFEM Regional Initiative in Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP HIV/AIDS Regional Programme in the Arab States (HARPAS), and UNDP's Regional HIV and Development Programme for Asia-Pacific, UNIFEM, South Asia and UNIFEM East and South East Asia Office.

C. Conclusions and next steps

11. The development of the '*UNAIDS Action Framework: addressing women, girls, gender equality and HIV*' and the roll out of the '*UNAIDS Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women and Girls, Gender Equality and HIV*' offers an opportunity to significantly increase the scale and scope of HIV responses for women and girls. In the context of the MDGs, meeting the needs of women and girls to achieve gender equality is an important goal in and of itself. Addressing gender inequality as a structural driver of HIV will undoubtedly have multiple and long term human rights, health and development benefits.
12. The *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls* has been initiated with a focus on scaling up support to countries for expanding knowledge about the gender dimensions of the HIV epidemic and responding with evidence-informed policies and programming that deliver for women and girls in all settings – ranging from addressing gender-based violence and stigma and discrimination to increased access to HIV services; promoting property and inheritance rights for women to ensuring equal access to economic assets; from engaging men and boys in gender equality and HIV efforts to reinforcing policies and programmes that strengthen the linkages between sexual and reproductive health and HIV.
13. As noted by UNDP Administrator at the launch of the *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls*, the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS and UNIFEM are committed to and have begun implementing this action plan. With regional and country launches of the *UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls* now underway, the results-focused framework and plan will contribute to accelerating action in countries and communities. While this update provides information on initial steps, a more comprehensive progress report will be provided at the 27th Programme Coordinating Board session.

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