

Press statement

UNAIDS welcomes public-private partnership to use mobile phones in AIDS response

Geneva, 13 February 2007 – The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) welcomes a new US\$ 10 million public-private partnership between leading players in the mobile phone industry and the US government who have joined forces to tackle AIDS and other health crisis in ten African countries.

The partnership entitled ‘Phones for Health’ will allow health workers in the field to use a standard mobile phone equipped with a downloadable application to submit critical health information directly into central computer systems. Once entered, the data is mapped and analysed and made immediately available to health authorities at multiple levels via the web.

“Through this partnership, health professionals will be able to access real time information about treatment stocks, training manuals, guidelines and other key information to help them deliver the best possible care and support to people living with and affected by HIV,” said Dr Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “Any kind of improvements that can be made to strengthen health systems should be welcomed and it is encouraging to see that modern technological companies are using their knowledge and expertise to advance the response to AIDS,” he added.

The ‘Phones for Health’ partners—the US President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the GSM Association Development Fund, Accenture Development Partners, Motorola, MTN and Voxiva—are initially focused on 10 African countries, building on an already successful deployment in Rwanda. The partnership is also likely to be extended further in Africa and Asia to address tuberculosis, malaria and other infectious diseases.

For more information on ‘Phones for Health’ visit: <http://www.pepfar.gov/press/80384.htm>

Contact

Sophie Barton-Knott | UNAIDS Geneva | +41 22 791 1697 | bartonknotts@unaids.org