

PRESS RELEASE

Success in reaching '15 by 15' shows that we can end the AIDS epidemic

New UNAIDS report describes how the world achieved the global treatment target

VANCOUVER, 19 July 2015—Following up on United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's announcement on 14 July that the world had reached the target of providing antiretroviral therapy to 15 million people living with HIV, UNAIDS is releasing a new report that describes the factors that helped the world achieve the '15 by 15' target. Launched at the 8th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention in Vancouver, Canada, *15 by 15: A global target achieved* describes how diverse stakeholders and constituencies united in a common global undertaking to save lives.

Lessons learned in the successful global push to provide antiretroviral therapy to 15 million people by 2015 provide a roadmap for ending the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat. As a central component of the effort to end the epidemic, the world has embraced a new target for antiretroviral therapy. By 2020: (a) 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status, (b) 90% of all people with an HIV diagnosis will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy, and (c) 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will achieve viral suppression.

"This is the first time in the history of global health that we have reached a treatment target by the deadline," said UNAIDS Executive Director, Michel Sidibé. "If anyone doubted this in the past, it is now clearer than ever that bold, ambitious targets drive global health progress. We now need to take what we have learned in the '15 by 15' movement and do what it takes to end the AIDS epidemic once and for all."

Ingredients for success in the '15 by 15' movement

The '15 by 15' target was adopted at a United Nations High Level Meeting in 2011, as part of the *Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS*. The new UNAIDS report focuses on the years 2011-2015, describing what happened to make achievement of the goal possible. The report's key findings include the following:

- *The world exhibited strong political commitment to the '15 by 15' target.* Even as new challenges emerged, global leaders remained committed to the HIV treatment target. The commitment of political leaders has been matched and magnified by the engagement and leadership of communities affected by the epidemic.
- *Funding for HIV testing and treatment services increased.* Countries themselves significantly increased domestic allocations for HIV testing and treatment programmes, even as international partners, such as the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, provided essential assistance.
- *Knowledge of HIV status substantially increased.* In 2014, for the first time ever, more than half of all people living with HIV know their HIV status.

- *Prices for antiretroviral regimens and key diagnostic tools continued to decline.* Generic competition in the pharmaceutical industry has helped ensure that prices for life-saving drugs are affordable.
- *The efficiency and quality of HIV treatment programmes have improved.* Per-patient treatment costs in U.S.-supported programmes have fallen by 70%.
- *Innovative service delivery models have enhanced the reach and impact of treatment programmes.* Across the world, innovative service models, many of them community-driven, are showing how to expand treatment access while saving money.
- *HIV-related stigma has declined.* As HIV treatment is brought to scale, studies show that discriminatory attitudes towards people living with HIV decline.

Leveraging the '15 to 15' success to achieve the 90-90-90 target

The essential lessons from '15 by 15' are immediately valuable for global efforts to lay the foundation to end the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030. Achievement of the 90-90-90 target, along with ambitious new targets for primary HIV prevention and non-discrimination, would reduce the number of new HIV infections by 89% by 2030 and the number of AIDS-related deaths by 81%.

“We have no time to waste, as the next five years represent a brief window of opportunity,” said Mr Sidibé. “We need to put the lessons we have learned from '15 by 15' to use to ‘fast-track’ the AIDS response and achieve the 90-90-90 target.”

The new report outlines emerging challenges that the AIDS response must face as it works to achieve the 90-90-90 target. These include uncertainties regarding the financial sustainability of HIV treatment scale-up and market dynamics that potentially imperil the future affordability of the second- and third-line antiretroviral regimens that more and more people living with HIV will need.

To meet these challenges, the new report outlines strategic actions that the world needs to take. Political commitment to end the epidemic will be essential, as will concerted efforts to engage and empower communities to deliver HIV testing and treatment services. New investments will be needed, especially as spending towards ambitious new prevention, treatment and non-discrimination targets yield US\$ 17 in savings for every US\$ 1 invested. Immediate actions are needed to ensure a robust, uninterrupted supply of affordable medicines, including building local manufacturing capacity in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, structural barriers to service access, including those caused by punitive laws and policies, must be removed.

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The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030. Learn more at unaids.org and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.