

AIDS is
Everybody's
Business

UNAIDS
& Business:
Working Together



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■ Foreword

In every region of the world, today's most successful businesses recognize that they are an integral part of the societies around them. Artificial distinctions between the health of a society and the strength of its business community are dissolving, as private sector leaders recognize that the well-being and security of the communities they serve are essential to their shared futures.

At the same time, the government bodies and nongovernmental organizations that have traditionally led the AIDS response understand more clearly than ever the absolute necessity of private sector engagement in successful responses to the epidemic. AIDS is a multisectoral issue that cannot be addressed without the long-term engagement of the global business community. UNAIDS is committed to encouraging, supporting and maximizing that vital contribution to the AIDS response.

We are seeing some early returns on investments in the AIDS response that must, with the support of the private sector, be sustained, strengthened and expanded. HIV prevalence has declined among young people in a number of countries with generalized epidemics. Antiretroviral treatment has provided hope to millions of people worldwide. Funding for AIDS has significantly increased. Yet, we face significant challenges—among them the need to:

- broaden access to HIV prevention, testing, treatment and support especially through workplace programmes;
- strengthen health system and HIV prevention programme management, and ensure that AIDS funding reaches and works for people in need;
- expand crisis management models to include an increased focus on long-term responses to the epidemic;
- reach the populations most vulnerable to HIV infection with the information and tools they need to keep themselves and their loved ones healthy.

In each of these areas and in many others, the reach, expertise, skills and institutional resources of the business sector are vital to a strengthened AIDS response. UNAIDS welcomes the active involvement of the private sector in the AIDS response. We stand prepared to act as a partner in your efforts.

Peter Piot at the 2007 UNAIDS' Global Staff Meeting in Geneva, Switzerland. Credit: UNAIDS/P. Viroit

Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director



■ UNAIDS and Business: Partnering Against the Epidemic



Peer Education Programme in Toco, Trinidad.
Credit: UNAIDS/B. Press

“AIDS is the defining moral issue of our time and businesses must play a critical role in the fight against the global spread of the epidemic. The business community is uniquely positioned to use our influence, resources and leadership to challenge stigma, promote prevention and facilitate treatment.”

William H Roedy, UNAIDS Ambassador
and President of MTV Networks International

Businesses understand that HIV is a reality for their employees, customers and societies and that putting their expertise to work in the AIDS response makes good business sense. Some examples of businesses responding to AIDS are included here.

- A global media corporation integrates HIV education into the entertainment programming they deliver to millions of young people every day.
- A coalition of small and large businesses joins forces to protect employee rights and provide HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in the workplace.

- A management consulting firm lends its expertise to improve the flow of resources and vitally needed AIDS services in high-impact countries.
- A newspaper company develops AIDS education materials designed to get the attention of consumer audiences.

As they bring their unique strengths to reverse this epidemic, each business also shares a partner—the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

UNAIDS has unique experience in uniting organizations both large and small in the AIDS response. Through the UNAIDS secretariat, its country offices, and its ten cosponsors, UNAIDS engages government, civil society and the private sector in the global response to AIDS, in more than 75 countries.



Skills training for HIV orphans and adolescents in a carpentry workshop, Kenya.
Credit: UNAIDS/G.Pirozzi

An Overview of UNAIDS

Founded in 1996 to lead and coordinate action on AIDS across the UN system, UNAIDS cosponsors now include:

- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- World Bank



Dr. Brezovska counselling on the Prague AIDS helpline.
Credit: UNAIDS/Liba Taylor

The epidemic has changed since UNAIDS' inception, and so has UNAIDS. Today, AIDS is truly a global crisis that requires the commitment and involvement of every sector of society—from government, to the private sector, to nongovernmental and faith-based organizations. UNAIDS works to bring the unique contributions of every sector of society to engage in the response.

Private sector leaders increasingly recognize that the talent, resources, experience and commitment of business must play a central role in designing, implementing and promoting effective responses to AIDS. UNAIDS facilitates and supports this involvement by developing partnerships with socially responsible private sector organizations. The UNAIDS Private Sector Partnerships Unit brings knowledge and experience to the partnerships we support.

■ It Makes **Business** Sense to Respond to **AIDS**



An AIDS information session for health-care workers at the city hospital in Ho Chi Min City, Viet Nam.
Credit: UNAIDS/S. Noorani

Tens of millions of women, men and children are living with HIV today, making AIDS one of the great health and human development issues of our time. Unlike most other health crises, however, HIV largely strikes working-age people in the prime of life.

Nine out of 10 people living with HIV are adults in their most productive years. The global labour force has already lost 28 million people to AIDS¹, a number that could grow substantially without a much stronger response from all sectors of society.

In the most affected countries, HIV takes a direct toll on markets, investments, services and education through:

- decreased productivity
- increased absenteeism
- staff turnover
- loss of skills
- declining morale
- increased costs related to training, recruiting, insurance and sick leave
- supply chain disruptions.

1 ILO (2006). *HIV/AIDS and work: global estimates, impact on children and youth, and response.*



Lab technician looking at a blood test for HIV through a microscope at the Sanam clinic in Moscow.
Credit: UNAIDS/J. Spaul

According to the *Financial Times*, economists at a major mining and extraction company have estimated that the cost of *not providing* antiretroviral drugs for an HIV-infected employee, through absenteeism, early retirement, treating AIDS-related conditions, death benefits and recruiting replacements, is about US\$ 32 000 per person².

2 Russell A (2007). Answers to an Aids epidemic. *Financial Times*. Published 3 October 2007.

“*The case for business is grounded in completely enlightened self-interest. We need a healthy workforce.*”

Rajat Gupta, Senior Partner, McKinsey & Co.;
Chairman of the Board,
The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria



Miners at Lonmin Platinum mine near Rustenberg, South Africa leave their morning shift work at the mine.
Credit: UNAIDS/L.Gubb

HIV: A Workplace Issue Everywhere

HIV affects the world of work in several significant ways.

The epidemic reduces the supply of labour, especially skilled labour. In the process, AIDS increases operational costs, reduces productivity, slows economic growth, threatens the livelihoods of workers and employers and undermines human rights.

At the same time, the workplace is one of the most important and most effective settings for responding to the epidemic, even in low prevalence countries. Two out of three people living with HIV go to work each day, making the workplace an ideal setting for promoting HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. The unique capacity of the workplace to bring together individuals in the highest risk age groups provides unmatched opportunities for awareness-building, education, treatment access and promotion of non-discrimination against people living with or at risk of acquiring the virus.

Finally, employers and trade unions are leaders in their communities, whose visible involvement is crucial to the AIDS response. The visible demonstration of leadership against AIDS by businesses can influence employee and customer behavior and help to counter HIV-related stigma and discrimination. Informed workplace policies on HIV, such as those that ensure non-discriminatory practices and equitable access to legal, medical, disability and other benefits and services, developed in partnership with unions or workforce representatives, can significantly impact the progress of the epidemic at the community, national and regional levels.

Being part of an effective AIDS response generates goodwill and demonstrates a company's commitment to strong corporate citizenship and to the well-being of its employees, customers and communities. Studies indicate that employees strongly appreciate when their company and senior management are involved in social causes. Companies working in countries heavily affected by AIDS note improvements in productivity, morale and staff turnover when they take an active, visible role in the AIDS response.



A young street child learning to use a commercial sewing machine at Mith Samlanh/Friends in Phnom Penh.
Credit: UNAIDS/S. Noorani

Yet, business involvement in the AIDS response is not limited to high-prevalence countries. The northern African country of Algeria, for example, has a relatively low adult HIV prevalence of 0.1%. Yet the Algerian Business Coalition (*Forum des Chefs d'Entreprises*) has taken an active role in supporting the development of that country's national strategic plan on AIDS. Coalition members are participating in local and national efforts to share information on the epidemic, raise awareness of the importance of business in the AIDS response, and identify HIV prevention activities that Coalition members can support.

The countries that are most severely affected by HIV today were "low-prevalence" countries not long ago. Today's low prevalence, left unchecked, can rapidly become high prevalence with consequent social and economic costs. World Bank data show that, once HIV prevalence exceeds 4–5%, it escalates rapidly.



Group meeting on AIDS prevention in a factory in Amman, Jordan.
Credit: UNAIDS/G. Pirozzi

Early investments in the AIDS response have long-term benefits. For example, early HIV education and prevention investments in Senegal, have resulted in one of the lowest infection rates in sub-Saharan Africa.

“Partnership between the private sector and the United Nations is vital to the fight against AIDS. Whether in the workplace or in the wider community, through advocacy and branding, prevention, care and treatment programmes for employees, or financial, scientific and technical commitment, the role of the private sector is indispensable.”

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon



One-to-one meeting on AIDS prevention in a factory in Amman, Jordan.
Credit: UNAIDS/G. Pirozzi

WEF 2005–2006 Review of the Business Response to AIDS

A World Economic Forum (WEF) survey of nearly 11,000 business leaders in 117 countries reveals growing concern that HIV will seriously affect the global business community. Nearly half (46%) of the business leaders surveyed in the 2005–2006 report, "Business & HIV/AIDS: A Healthier Partnership?" said they expect the disease to impact their operations over the next five years, an increase of nine percentage points over the response of business leaders just one year earlier.



Youth painting in precarious working conditions in India.
Credit: UNAIDS/Y. Shimizu

While concern continues to rise, many firms are still not taking necessary steps to respond.

Fewer than 10% of businesses said they have conducted a quantitative HIV risk assessment, and less than one in five have developed policies addressing discrimination in promotion, pay or benefits based on HIV status. Outside the hardest hit countries, only 6% of the firms surveyed have written AIDS policies.

The WEF report recommends that businesses transform their increasing concern about HIV into action by carefully assessing the threat that the epidemic poses to their businesses, employees and customers, and by developing a response that starts in the workplace. The WEF report also examines the role that businesses can play in the larger community-wide response to HIV.

Among WEF's recommendations for businesses in both high and low HIV prevalence settings: address stigma by implementing nondiscrimination policies, and consider the need to support the provision of HIV prevention and treatment.

To download a full copy of the report, "Business & HIV/AIDS: A Healthier Partnership? A Global Review of the Business Response to HIV/AIDS 2005–2006," please visit <http://www.weforum.org/en/initiatives/globalhealth/index.htm>

■ The AIDS Response Needs the Business Community



Credit: UNAIDS

There are as many ways for businesses to contribute to the AIDS response as there are businesses themselves. From the largest multinational corporations to the smallest enterprises, companies can choose the type and level of participation that suit their strengths. Here are just a few of the ways in which business expertise and resources are needed to strengthen the AIDS response.

- Workplace programmes offer unique opportunities to promote HIV prevention and increase access to care and treatment. Workplace HIV programmes can help ensure broad-based participation; break through fear, stigma and discrimination; and promote greater uptake of prevention, testing and treatment.

- Private sector knowledge, resources, capacity and contacts are all needed to promote capacity-building, technology transfer and development financing for HIV. Business expertise is particularly valuable in reaching the adult population where HIV is concentrated.
- Corporate communication and marketing skills can help raise AIDS awareness and promote behavioral change. The private sector can be an important resource for strategic information, tools and good practices, and can mobilize private and public funds for the AIDS response.

“*The United Nations once dealt only with governments. ... Now we know that peace and prosperity cannot be achieved without partnerships involving governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society. In today's world we depend on each other.*”

Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

■ How Your **Business** Can Partner with **UNAIDS**



Workers sorting out the daily catch on the wharf, Thailand. Credit: UNAIDS

Every business can contribute to the AIDS response depending on its size, type of workforce, geographical range, financial strength and core capabilities. While models for partnership are practically limitless, activities often fall into one of four main categories: workplace programmes, advocacy, cash donations and in-kind donations.

Workplace programmes expand access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services directly to workers. ILO and UNAIDS can work with companies to promote HIV policies and programmes in the workplace and provide guidance on their implementation and monitoring. Developing workplace programmes in partnership with unions or workforce representatives can help ensure broad participation and effective implementation.

Advocacy: businesses can disseminate vital AIDS information through print, broadcast and billboard advertising space. Businesses can also participate in policy dialogue and development, and in lobbying for effective AIDS policies.

Cash donations: financial resources are urgently needed to support HIV prevention, treatment, care and support activities. Business is becoming a significant contributor to the AIDS response by donating financial resources for these lifesaving programmes.

In-kind contributions: Business expertise, services and materials are needed in every aspect of the AIDS response. In-kind contributions from businesses can include the donation of

advisory services, seconded personnel, printing, office facilities, equipment, supplies and access to distribution networks. Companies may offer logistical support and networks for the distribution of vital goods such as condoms.

The UNAIDS secretariat can also support public-private partnerships working to accelerate the development of preventive HIV technologies such as microbicides, improved female condoms and a vaccine, as well as advances in therapies such as simpler and more effective next-generation drugs, or pediatric formulations.



STRAIGHT TALK, a local newspaper done by the youth for the youth in Kenya.
Credit: UNAIDS/G.Pirozzi

“ *AIDS is not a moral issue; it is a sound business decision we all have to make in our workplaces... The earlier we mainstream our resources to turn the tide against it, the better it will be for tomorrow’s business.* ”

Olusina Falana, Executive Secretary
of the Nigeria Business Coalition Against AIDS



Credit: UNAIDS

Business Coalitions on HIV

According to a 2007 survey by the World Economic Forum, there are four regional business coalitions and more than 40 national business coalitions worldwide supporting the private sector to address HIV-related issues.

UNAIDS, ILO, the World Bank and others have supported the development of a number of national business coalitions on HIV in regions heavily affected by the epidemic. These coalitions facilitate the development of private sector workplace policies; initiate dialogue between the public and private sectors; and promote public-private initiatives to respond to the epidemic.

Business coalitions play various roles in the AIDS response, each of them important. For example, the Malawi Business Coalition Against HIV/AIDS (MBCA) coordinates the national private sector treatment programme. The South African Business Coalition on HIV and AIDS (SABCOHA) has produced a toolkit to help small, medium and micro enterprises (SMME) develop and implement HIV workplace programmes. The Coalition des Entreprises de Côte d'Ivoire contre le sida (CECI) is monitoring and evaluating workplace programmes and has initiated staff capacity-building and community outreach to customers, suppliers and temporary workers.

UNAIDS also partners with the Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GBC), a coalition of more than 200 member companies leading the business and AIDS response, and was the co-convenor with the Kaiser Family Foundation of the Global Media AIDS Initiative (GMAI), a coalition of 160 broadcasters using the power of the media to change attitudes and raise awareness about AIDS worldwide.

If there is no business coalition specifically working on AIDS in your country, the UNAIDS Private Sector Partnerships Unit can help you to establish an AIDS business coalition. An informative booklet developed by UNAIDS, the Global Health Initiative of the World Economic Forum and the World Bank, "Guidelines for Building Business Coalitions against HIV/AIDS" is available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRREGTOPHIVAIDS/Resources/Business_Coalitions_Guidelines-Jan-05-en.pdf

Are Partnerships Just for Large Businesses?

While a number of large multinational companies have become increasingly involved in addressing the epidemic, the majority of business operations in much of the world, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, are made up of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The need to involve small and medium-sized enterprises in the AIDS response is particularly important in the regions of the world most seriously affected by AIDS such as Africa, where SMEs employ between 55% and 75% of workers in the formal economy.

The capacity of large companies to operate effectively often depends on networks of supplier and service enterprises, the majority of which are SMEs. Larger companies can assist SMEs by extending their education, prevention and health-care programmes to their direct business partners; or by providing leadership, training, materials, advice and finance.

Involvement of the small producers that make up the informal economy is also important, as the precarious nature of informal employment, the lack of social protection and the limited access to health services make workers in this sector particularly vulnerable to the epidemic's impact.

As noted earlier, the involvement of businesses in areas which have a lower concentration of HIV can be just as vital as those in areas more heavily affected by the epidemic. The most effective time to suppress an HIV epidemic is in its early stages. Businesses can be pivotal players in promoting the information, education, prevention and anti-stigma measures that keep a small epidemic from growing larger.

UNAIDS is committed to working with businesses of all sizes and sectors to strengthen the AIDS response. The ILO has also established a number of programmes to encourage and support small entrepreneurs in the AIDS response. The ILO booklet *Helping Micro and Small Enterprises Cope with HIV/AIDS* offers guidance for small businesses that want to contribute to the AIDS response. The booklet is available at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/trav/aids/publ/sme.pdf>



Credit: UNAIDS

UNAIDS/ILO

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the UN agency with special responsibility for the world of work. As a UNAIDS cosponsor ILO takes a lead role in supporting appropriate responses to AIDS in the workplace.

The epidemic threatens livelihoods, productivity, rights at work and economic growth, while also worsening existing problems associated with inadequate social protection, gender inequality and child labour. In response, ILO works closely with UNAIDS and businesses to:

- encourage the mobilization of governments, employers and workers against HIV;
- open the workplace to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support programmes;
- frame international standards to protect the rights of workers;
- lend its substantial capacity for research, information sharing and training to the AIDS response.

ILO has created globally recognized workplace policy guidelines; advocates for the development of workplace policies and programmes on AIDS; and provides technical assistance to enhance the capacity of employers, workers and governments to plan and implement workplace policies and programmes. ILO's *Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work* establishes principles for policy development and practical guidelines for HIV prevention, care and support in the workplace. ILO is implementing the code, which has been translated into more than 30 languages, through technical cooperation, training and advisory services to governments, employers and workers in all regions. The code and its accompanying education and training manual are available at <http://www.ilo.org>.

■ What UNAIDS Brings to Business Partnerships

UNAIDS supports businesses that commit to address AIDS by sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices. The Private Sector Partnerships Unit can provide communication support for partnerships; research support on and to private sector initiatives; and liaise with other international partners such as the GBC, the Global Fund, the Global Health Initiative, the ILO and other cosponsors. UNAIDS can provide materials, assets, skills and networks of contacts, and can help businesses connect with stakeholders such as groups of people living with HIV, organizations from local communities where businesses operate and governmental bodies such as national AIDS councils.

Our job is to make private sector partnerships succeed and we invest a considerable amount of time and effort in developing clear agreement of roles and expectations; a framework to engage the support of all relevant UNAIDS country offices; and a shared communication plan to help ensure the success and visibility of the effort.

If you believe that it's time for your business or business hub to become more involved in the AIDS response, or if you simply want to know more about how your business could benefit from greater involvement, please contact us at the UNAIDS secretariat (tel: +41 22 791 4776, email: privatesector@unaids.org). On our web site, you may wish to view the contact list of country and regional UNAIDS offices or visit the Private Sector Partnerships section at www.unaids.org



UNAIDS welcomes the active involvement of the private sector in the AIDS response. This brochure outlines how HIV has become a workplace issue everywhere, how it affects the world of work and how it is one of the most important and effective settings for responding to the epidemic, even in low prevalence countries.

Being part of an effective response generates goodwill and demonstrates a company's commitment to good corporate citizenship and to the well-being of its employees, customers and communities. There are many ways for businesses to contribute to the AIDS response. From the largest multinational corporations to the smallest enterprises, companies can choose the type and level of participation that suit their strengths. While models for partnership are practically limitless, possible activities include workplace programmes, advocacy, cash and in-kind donations.

The UNAIDS Private Sector Partnerships Unit can provide communication support for partnerships; research support on and to private sector initiatives; and liaise with other international partners. It is our desire to make private sector partnerships succeed. For more information on how your business can become more involved, please contact us at privatesector@unaids.org

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