

## Message

### **UNAIDS expresses sadness over the death of staff member Sam Were**

**Geneva, 19 September 2008** – It is with profound sadness that UNAIDS mourns the death of staff member Mr Sam Were who recently passed away in Kampala, Uganda. Sam lived openly with HIV and served as a role model by declaring his HIV-positive status at a time when few people living with HIV were willing to disclose.

In addition to his duties as a senior driver in support of the UNAIDS country team in Uganda, Sam was one of the first members of UN Plus, joining the UN system wide group of HIV positive staff in 2005 and participating in the first UN Plus meeting in 2006.

Having worked with UNAIDS from its inception, Sam had a deep appreciation and understanding of his rights as an HIV-positive person and contributed to the response to HIV by educating others and challenging stigma and discrimination.

Commenting on Sam death's, UNAIDS Executive Director Dr Peter Piot said, "His advocacy both within the organization and outside inspired many. In his death, UNAIDS has lost a trusted and dedicated colleague. He will be sadly missed".

Sam is survived by his wife and family of eight.