

Through NZAID, all New Zealanders are making a difference in the lives of some of the poorest people in the Pacific, Asia, Latin America and Africa.

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Responding to HIV and AIDS - an NZAID priority

MEETING THE HIV AND AIDS CHALLENGE

NZAID snapshot

- NZAID is the Government's international aid and development agency
- In 2008/09 NZAID will spend \$471.3 million on overseas development assistance

The devastating impact of HIV and AIDS

- It is estimated that more than 33 million people are living with HIV
- 6,000 people continue to die of AIDS everyday
- While the annual rate of new infections has decreased over the last decade, in 2007 2.5 million people were newly infected
- HIV and AIDS have a huge impact on women. Three women are infected for every man in sub-Saharan Africa
- Women also bear the burden of care of other affected people
- Each day 1,800 children are infected with HIV, most of them newborn babies, and children account for one in every six new infections
- By the end of 2005, 15 million children had been orphaned by AIDS
- 40 percent of adults newly infected with HIV are aged 15-24. Young girls are particularly susceptible in sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 76 percent of those infected

HIV is a humanitarian crisis and one of the greatest threats to the economic and social development, stability and security of developing

countries. It reduces labour productivity, threatens food security, reverses progress in education, increases the pressure on health services, all of which undermine economic growth and increase poverty.

Global problem - global response

While significant progress has been made against the spread of HIV and AIDS, in many countries the challenge remains.

The global response must be transformed from a crisis-management approach to more strategic and better coordinated response if we are to meet the HIV and AIDS challenge and prevent it from pushing people further into poverty.

This requires commitment and active leadership from both affected countries and donors to make sure that strategies addressing the drivers of the epidemic are integrated into mainstream national planning.

Those groups who suffer from poverty, gender inequality, and social vulnerability are at the most risk. They are often the least likely to have access to prevention, treatment, care, and support.

It is important that HIV and AIDS are fought in a way that empowers affected communities so that they are part of the solution and are committed to making the changes necessary for a sustainable future.

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...towards a safe and just world



nzaid

New Zealand's International
Aid & Development Agency

MEETING THE HIV AND AIDS CHALLENGE

International commitment

The international community is committed to halting and reversing the spread of HIV and AIDS by 2015, a target set by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

This is being achieved by the 'Three Ones' principles, which were endorsed in 2004 by UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations Agency on HIV and AIDS). The "Three Ones" are a set of principles for the coordination of national AIDS responses in order to achieve the most effective and efficient use of resources, and to ensure rapid action and results-based management. They also ensure that affected countries lead the response themselves.

The Three Ones principles are:

- one agreed HIV and AIDS action framework that provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners
- one national AIDS coordinating authority, with a broad-based multi-sectoral mandate
- one agreed country-level monitoring and evaluation system.

Adopting a broad strategic approach means not only treating the disease and addressing the issues that arise as a result of people living with HIV, but also changing wider attitudes and behaviours that increase people's exposure to the disease.

One of the key factors in reducing the spread of HIV and AIDS is to ensure that people are educated and have access to sexual and reproductive health care and information.

This includes, for example, educating people about preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV, improving adolescent reproductive health services, and addressing issues of stigma and discrimination. In the broader sense, increased promotion, protection and respect for human rights, especially gender equality, will also help by reducing the risk of exposure to HIV through

behaviours and situations that do not respect human rights.

What is New Zealand doing?

New Zealand has recently completed a term on the Programme Coordinating Board for UNAIDS. This provided NZAID with the opportunity to ensure that its key messages are included in all programming and policy decisions.

NZAID is committed to fostering the empowerment of women and gender equality. In the context of HIV and AIDS, gender is a central factor in determining an individual's vulnerability to HIV infection, his or her ability to access care, support or treatment, and ability to cope when infected or affected by HIV.

NZAID seeks to reduce gender inequality by promoting a supportive environment (including social norms, attitudes and behaviours) through comprehensive policies and strategies that can be implemented from a national to community level.

In many societies lack of access to education and information leaves many women and girls unable to negotiate safer sex or access sexual health services. Similarly some ideas of masculinity reinforce beliefs that men may seek multiple partners, take risks and that violence against women is acceptable. Where homosexuality is stigmatised, men may be less likely to access sexual health information and services.

NZAID's response to HIV and AIDS in the Pacific

HIV and AIDS pose a significant threat to economic development and poverty reduction in the Pacific region. According to UNAIDS statistics (2008), most of the region's epidemics are small, except in Papua New Guinea, where the annual number of HIV diagnoses more than doubled between 2002 and 2006.



Queues outside a Family Planning Clinic in Lae, Papua New Guinea

Addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability to infection is a critical part of New Zealand's response in the Pacific as it is these factors that fuel the spread of the disease.

NZAID has committed close to \$11.02 million over 2008/09 to support HIV and AIDS initiatives in the Pacific that address:

- a high level of sexually transmitted infections
- gender inequality
- lack of access to sexual and reproductive health information and services
- leadership and political awareness
- unpredictable reproductive health commodity supply
- mother-to-child transmission
- adolescent reproductive health
- youth life skills
- stigma and discrimination facing people living with HIV and AIDS.

NZAID is committed to working with communities and within regional and national systems in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Working together across the region is a vital part of this.

NZAID supports the Pacific Regional Strategy on HIV and AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections Implementation Plan, which aims to strengthen Pacific governments, NGOs and communities, giving them the ability to develop a response to HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases in their own region that covers all aspects of society.

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NZAID has committed \$7.75 million over three years towards the implementation of this strategy.

Working together in Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea is the hardest hit Pacific country, where an epidemic of similar proportions to that seen in Sub-Saharan Africa has been predicted.

Poverty, gender inequality, stigma and discrimination, in the absence of widespread prevention are facilitating the progression to a serious epidemic.

The effects of HIV and AIDS have the potential to intensify poverty, reduce labour availability, and increase foreign debt in a country where extreme poverty is already the norm.



Campaigning drives, such as this billboard, are very important in raising awareness and reducing the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS

NZAID has aligned its response with Papua New Guinea's National Strategic Plan for HIV and AIDS and the country's Gender Policy.

NZAID supports this comprehensive multi-sector response through providing financial support to the Health Sector Improvement Programme (NZ\$5 million per annum at current exchange rates); the UNFP Reproductive Health Project (NZ\$4 million over 3.5 years); and the Asia Development Bank's Social Marketing of Condoms Project (approximately NZ\$2 million annually). NZAID also provides targeted contributions to community-based organisations working in HIV prevention and support for people living with HIV and AIDS.

Other NZAID development activities in Papua New Guinea also consider strategies to reduce the spread and impact of the epidemic.