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The HIV/AIDS Crisis: How Are Businesses Responding?

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This paper is one of four background papers prepared for the Plenary Session on HIV/AIDS, AGOA Forum, Washington, DC, October 30, 2001. The Africa Bureau of the U.S. Agency for International Development sponsored the preparation of the background papers. These papers will be revised and participant comments will be incorporated into the final versions, which will be distributed after the meeting.

“The challenge is to move from rhetoric to action, and action at an unprecedented intensity and scale. For this there is a need for us to be focused, to be strategic, and to mobilise all of our resources and alliances, and to sustain the effort until the war is won.”

— Nelson Mandela

What Can Business Do to Respond to the Crisis of HIV/AIDS?

This paper addresses how African businesses are responding to the HIV/AIDS crisis. It is imperative that businesses take immediate action to lessen the economic and social consequences of HIV/AIDS. If they take action, businesses can ensure that economic initiatives, such as the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) will succeed in stimulating economic growth in Africa. While both the public and private sector should have HIV/AIDS policies and programs, this paper addresses only the private business sector response to the epidemic. However, many of the actions, best practices, and conclusions discussed in this paper are also applicable to public sector policies and programs.

The most important step for a business in responding to HIV/AIDS is to get started on an HIV/AIDS program. If a business has started addressing HIV/AIDS, it must progress to the next step of evaluating the effectiveness of current activities.

A critical component to the success of any HIV/AIDS program is the involvement of top leadership. Other key components include development of workplace policies to eliminate stigma and discrimination, and education about the policies to both supervisors and employees. Other key components include providing workplace HIV/AIDS education, addressing care and treatment issues, and outreach to families of employees, suppliers and contractors, and communities.

Key Messages to Business

- Get started on an HIV/AIDS program
- If you have started, evaluate the effectiveness of its current activities
- Involve top business and labor leaders within a business
- Monitor existing programs for effectiveness

As a framework for action for businesses responding to the crisis of HIV/AIDS, this paper has been organized around specific kinds of activities that businesses can implement within their organizations, in the surrounding community, and in concert with governments in the country or countries in which they operate.

This paper presents six pillars of action in which the following practices are highlighted:

- ✓ **Workplace initiatives**
Implementing comprehensive and effective workplace HIV/AIDS programs that are collaboratively designed and implemented and that ensure employee rights and confidentiality are provided for within an HIV/AIDS workplace policy.
- ✓ **Community initiatives**
Ensuring that communities from which staff are employed and/or that are suppliers or contractors to the workplace are assisted and reinforce the overall community response to HIV/AIDS, including community-based interventions.
- ✓ **Advocacy initiatives**
Collaborating with other businesses, such as through coalitions or business service organizations, to advocate for increased response from national authorities and the international community. Small and large businesses can work together to ensure that legislation, tariffs, and taxes are conducive to and supportive of other HIV/AIDS efforts.
- ✓ **Capacity development**
Enabling businesses to provide employees, managers, and others with the capacities and competencies necessary to effectively undertake an HIV/AIDS program and the methods to successfully sustain it.
- ✓ **Enabling environment**
Providing capacities in order that business efforts are part of the coordinated efforts on a country level, both in creating and sustaining efforts to address HIV/AIDS.
- ✓ **Private-public sector partnerships**
Facilitating dialogue and action among business, labor, governments, and the nonprofit sector at country, state, and community levels to strengthen the national response to HIV/AIDS.

Workplace Initiatives

Workplace Policies

One of the first steps in implementing a comprehensive and effective workplace HIV/AIDS program is the design and incorporation of a workplace policy. Ideally, a policy is developed collaboratively with all those involved. Key elements of a model policy include addressing elimination of stigma, employee rights including nondiscrimination and confidentiality, periodic workplace programs, management responses to the epidemic, and other issues such as medical care and treatment.

Key Elements of a Policy

- Elimination of stigma and discrimination
- Confidentiality for affected workers
- Management response to the epidemic
- Periodic workplace programs
- Benefits, including care and treatment issues
- Inclusion of suppliers and contractors

A decade of experience in HIV/AIDS education in southern Africa has demonstrated that educational programs alone are of limited effectiveness without effective policies. In fact, educational programs can sometimes be counterproductive. Proper support services must be in place, specifically workplace-based, antidiscriminatory employment policies, for the fear of HIV can lead many people into denial and discourage them from making behavioral changes and seeking help.

The workplace offers a unique opportunity to confront societal discrimination and stigma. By teaching that there is no need to fear people living with HIV and providing a guarantee of job security, a powerful message is sent. It is more than just an educational message; workplace-based, antidiscrimination policies provide visible guarantees that people can live and work with HIV, often for many years, without fear of loss of income or isolation. Only when antidiscrimination measures are in place will people seek to learn their status, take to heart educational messages about how HIV can and cannot be transmitted, and ultimately seek to modify high-risk behavior.

Many workplaces have substantial HIV policies. Some examples of companies or labor organizations with workplace policies that specifically address confidentiality and stigma include Anglo-American, Levi-Strauss, MTV International, Debswana Diamond Company LTD, Eskom, Ford Motor Company of South Africa, Daimler Chrysler of South Africa, and the International Labor Organization (ILO) (1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

Examples of model policies are included at the end of this document. A number of model policies have been developed, which can be used as a guide for a business in developing their own workplace policy. The AIDS Management Standard Initiative is a standardized guideline that can objectively evaluate a company's commitment to an AIDS policy in the workplace (6). The guidelines are similar to the International Standard Organization #14000, which is used by the European Community (EU) to ensure a safe work environment.

Examples of Workplace Policies

Elimination of Pre-employment Testing. Large companies such as Eskom, a South African utility company, have eliminated a requirement for a pre-employment HIV test. They recognize that the test has limited value, since someone may become positive after taking the test. Other companies such as the Regent Bangkok Hotel in Thailand have a policy that does not use pre- or post-testing for HIV for recruitment, transfer, or promotion. They do offer voluntary counseling and testing and confidentiality for all employees (7, 8).

ILO Code of Practice Addresses Stigma and Discrimination. The ILO Code of Practice is a comprehensive document that addresses HIV/AIDS in the world of work internationally. The fundamental principle of the code is to safeguard conditions of decent work, avoid stigma, and promote non-discrimination and the dignity of workers and persons living with HIV/AIDS. The ILO code promotes partnerships of governments, unions, and employers to address HIV/AIDS workplace issues. Through collective bargaining mechanisms, these partnerships are expected to address provision of HIV/AIDS education and prevention programs, expanded health-related benefits, and mechanisms to redress grievances arising from discriminatory practices, denial of benefits, and other HIV/AIDS-related issues (5).

Multicountry Collaboration for Model Code of Practice. The Southern African Development Community (SADC), in consultation with its tripartite structures of business, labor, and government, has also developed a code of practice for the 14 member countries in sub-Saharan Africa. SADC member states are Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Examples of Workplace Policies

Updating a Policy on HIV/AIDS to Encourage VCT. The Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa, Ltd., a mining and national resources company, has a new strategy and policies that encourage early diagnosis and knowledge of HIV status in all sexually active persons through voluntary counseling and testing (VCT). The strategy supports behavior change counseling and linking VCT to a program of care for infected persons. With regard to care, the policies address large-scale efforts to treat sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and improving care for all HIV infected individuals. The program encourages people to disclose that they are living with HIV and provide them with visible support.

Business Coalition Develops Model Policy. The Confederation of Indian Industry held a business leaders forum and collectively developed an HIV/AIDS model policy for industry, which was released on World AIDS Day. The model policy called for the provision of prevention and care, nondiscriminatory policies, elimination of stigma, and availability of condoms.

Comprehensive Workplace Programs

Policy is a key step in the development of comprehensive and effective workplace HIV/AIDS programs; however, it is not the only step. Such programs can include HIV/AIDS education and awareness programs; voluntary counseling and testing; provision of benefits, including medical care; youth development and training; and community initiatives.

Key Components of a Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Workplace Program

- Develop a policy to reduce stigma, discrimination, and work disruption
- Involve all stakeholders in education about the policy
- Provide workplace education and address care and treatment for supervisors/ labor leaders/employees
 - with suppliers and contractors
 - to the community at large
 - with the community of persons affected and infected
- Collaborate with community and government to address HIV/AIDS explore opportunities for corporate volunteerism and philanthropy
- Monitor and evaluate programs

Examples of Comprehensive Workplace Programs

Agribusiness Providing Workplace Education and Care. Illovo Sugar is a sugar production and processing industry, with more than 19,000 employees in Kenya, South Africa, and Tanzania. To prevent loss in productivity, the company has developed workplace education programs, provided treatment for STIs, and used peer counselors in prevention and education. It has also offered voluntary counseling and testing, introduced use of prophylactic antibiotics for opportunistic infections and screening for tuberculosis, and promoted a healthy lifestyle.

Providing Care as Part of Workplace Program. Heineken is providing all employees, along with their partners and children, access to preventive and therapeutic medical care. Recently, its board of directors decided to extend medical care to include demonstrated effective HIV/AIDS therapies, specifically antiretroviral therapy to infected employees and family members. Initially, these services will be provided to employees in Rwanda and Burundi, but will extend to other countries in which Heineken operates.

Comprehensive Workplace Program, including Stakeholder Involvement

Debswana Diamond Company (PTY), Ltd., in Botswana has instituted a comprehensive HIV/AIDS program, which includes the communities surrounding its mines. They have developed a comprehensive policy for employees and suppliers, as well as providing medical care and antiretroviral therapy for all affected employees and their spouses. Their initial policy developed in 1995 included nondiscrimination provisions and no preemployment HIV testing, and stressed the importance of education and prevention efforts for HIV/AIDS. The policy outlines the role of all employees and supports structures such as home-based caregivers, counselors, peer educators, and health care workers.

In 2000, the company prepared a new strategic plan, identifying HIV/AIDS as an area of strategic importance requiring a special, ongoing focus. The new HIV/AIDS strategy includes a vision and mission statement to address HIV/AIDS in the following areas that require further attention: epidemic containment, living with AIDS, cost containment, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation, and communication.

The policy defines stakeholder engagement as a requirement for suppliers that provide goods and services to Debswana. Stakeholders must have their own workplace HIV/AIDS policy and programs as well as be supportive of Debswana's community HIV/AIDS initiatives. Suppliers are audited on a periodic basis to assure that they have an HIV/AIDS workplace policy and program. Debswana has also developed a youth training initiative through a scholarship program for youth that are receiving training in colleges.

Beginning in March 2001, the board of directors approved the provision of antiretroviral treatment for employees living with HIV/AIDS. Debswana provides subsidies for antiretroviral therapy, which includes prophylactic treatment and appropriate monitoring and laboratory testing. Debswana pays 90 percent of the cost for an infected employee and one legally married spouse who is HIV positive. A nurse monitors employees using antiretroviral therapy, through a toll-free line. She contacts all registered patients to discuss the importance of adherence to therapy and provides reminders to patients for blood tests and follow-up with doctors and other staff.

Debswana has engaged diverse stakeholders, including the Botswana Mining Workers Union, various government ministries and departments through the multisectoral AIDS committee structures, various pharmaceutical companies, and nongovernmental organizations. In the mining communities, Debswana collaborates with schools, local governmental agencies, community-based groups, and traditional and faith healers to provide HIV/AIDS education through peer education and participation in government and community efforts.

Community Initiatives

Communities supply the labor from which business operates, as well as business suppliers or contractors. Business can work to reinforce the overall community response to HIV/AIDS, including community-based interventions. Business can easily use their existing networks, including communication networks, to outreach to suppliers. They can also ensure that critical public health education messages are delivered to young people (9).

Business also has an opportunity to assist in providing support for community-based HIV/AIDS initiatives through corporate giving. In this way, locally supported projects can be started and sustained. Community capacity in addressing HIV/AIDS can also be provided by management advice and assistance to local community-based groups, as well as through organized corporate philanthropy. The goal is to support the formation of local foundations and organizations that can provide sustainable efforts for a long-term response to HIV/AIDS within specific communities in concert with local NGOs.

Examples of Community Initiatives

A Collaborative Community-based Intervention: The Lesedi Project. Treatment of STIs has been shown to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV in some studies. Initially begun in one community in Virginia, South Africa, the Lesedi Project was designed to provide diagnosis and treatment of STIs at no cost to miners and their female sexual contacts. Following the initial intervention, the project was expanded to other areas, and with a broader array of participating partners. Developing a longer term strategy for sustainability, the partners included Harmony Gold Mining Company, Ltd., Goldfields Ltd., Joel Mine, the local branch of the National Union of Mineworkers and the local, state, and national health departments. Each partner had an important role. The Department of Health provided staffing and assistance in securing funding from EU countries for the initial period. The unions facilitated communication, and thereby cooperation in the project. The company continued to support the project, especially when cost savings were recognized (10, 11).

Examples of Community Initiatives

Partnering Between Businesses in Communities. Rotary clubs have partnered within their communities and with other Rotary clubs around the world to address HIV/AIDS. In Bangladesh, the Rotary Club of Dhaka, Metropolitan Dhaka, and others in District 3280 worked with UNAIDS to organize a workshop and compile a resource guide to educate the media about HIV/AIDS. Another example is in South Africa, where the Rotary Club of Sandown, through matching grants from developed countries, established a community care center for HIV-positive/AIDS mothers and children and is managed for Hope Worldwide. This club developed an HIV education CD-ROM that will be used in the schools of South Africa. A third example is the Rotary Club of Delhi, South End, India, and a counterpart club from West San Fernando Valley, California, that combined club and district funds with a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant to purchase a van and video equipment to support a television HIV/AIDS awareness campaign. The van was used to tape interviews of people impacted by HIV/AIDS and provide print information. The interviews were broadcast on cable television and also locally broadcast in low-income housing areas (12).

Delivering Health Education Messages to Young People. As part of the Chevron Workplace AIDS Education Program (CWAPP), Chevron engages in a wide range of community education activities, using targeted approaches and innovative methods, such as cartoons, drama, music videos, and story. They have emphasized outreach to youth through the Chevron Adolescent Reproductive Health Program, with a variety of workshops, events, a yearly festival, and other activities.

Support for Youth Development and Training and Microcredit. Increasing economic opportunities for youth and women offers options other than sex work. The Planned Parent Association of Ghana (PPAG) offers youth development and training for youth. In Accra, the INNOVATE Project offers training in computer software and batik/tie-dye training. They also offer a youth resource service including a reference library, computer center/internet café, and recreational area. In Agape, teen mothers are provided with literacy and handicraft supplies. They are supported with enterprise development training and helped to access micro credit for small handicraft businesses through the Akuapem Rural Bank.

Examples of Community Initiatives

Corporate Grants for HIV/AIDS. Levi Strauss and Company and the Levi Strauss Foundation has been a corporate leader in making charitable gifts for community prevention and care projects. These resources fund projects that provide health care, education and HIV prevention services for poor and underserved people. Through their “community involvement teams (CITs)” or community volunteerism programs, company volunteers conduct HIV/AIDS awareness programs for employees as well as support communitywide efforts in HIV/AIDS.

(For a list of grants, see the company’s website at <http://www.levistrauss.com/responsibility/foundation/grants/index.htm>).

Partnerships with Grantmakers and Local Government. Ford Motor Company of South Africa (FMCSA) has gone into communities, which specifically include their employees and dependents, with two new pilot projects in partnership with local government, a U.S. government agency, and NGOs to influence behavioral change and assist with the care and support of those infected and affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The first has been designed with the city, the Regional Department of Education, the University of Port Elizabeth, and a number of community-based organizations. Together, they have launched an HIV/AIDS pilot study involving senior primary school children (aged 11–13 years) in 40 schools in the Port Elizabeth area. Beginning in April 2001, the program was called the “Life Skills Programme Focusing on HIV/AIDS Education for Primary Schools Youth.” A second pilot project focuses on the care and support of people living with HIV and AIDS orphans or orphans-to-be in Mamelodi in partnership with local community organizations.

Providing Pharmaceuticals to Communities. Boehringer Ingelheim, a pharmaceutical company, announced that it would offer Neviripine to prevent mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) of HIV/AIDS free of charge for a period of five years in developing countries. Initial projects for distribution and systems to deliver care with Doctors without Borders have begun in South Africa and Uganda.

Peer Educators Provide Broad-based Community Education. Eskom, a large South African utility company, has participated in broad-based HIV/AIDS awareness in communities in South Africa and Nigeria in government-sponsored programs. Peer educators from Eskom have provided education in communities, including events with school-aged children, leaders in government, business, in schools, in television and radio, and in newspapers.

Advocacy Initiatives

Collaboration among business can enhance existing efforts and prevent duplication of effort. Businesses, especially small businesses, can share and learn about effective policies, programs, and advocacy through coalitions or business service groups. Examples of such groups are the Global Business Council (GBC), the Ugandan Business Council on AIDS, the Zambian Business Coalition on AIDS, and the Thai Business Council on AIDS. These coalitions are particularly important in sharing information about the implementation of HIV/AIDS comprehensive workplace programs, engaging new businesses, and advocating as a group to governments on issues related to HIV/AIDS.

These coalitions, as well as focused meetings of business and labor, can provide an effective forum in which to formulate effective responses to the epidemic and advocate collectively for additional efforts from national authorities, legislative bodies, and the international community. Working collaboratively, small and large businesses can ensure that legislation, tariffs, and taxes are conducive to and supportive of HIV/AIDS efforts. These groups can also engage other stakeholders in advocating for additional government funding. For example, businesses could advocate for care and treatment issues for tuberculosis and STIs.

In addition to funding for specific activities by government, coalitions and other tripartite groups can advocate for debt cancellation because of the impact of HIV/AIDS. Businesses can advocate for governments to provide specific assistance for debt cancellation, poverty reduction strategies, and readjustment of development goals due to the impact of HIV/AIDS.

In addition, coalitions or large businesses can advocate for legislative and regulatory changes, especially in relation to restrictive trade practices. For example, if high rates of HIV/AIDS infection are attributed to high-risk behaviors among truckers delayed at border crossings, businesses can advocate for more border security personnel or increased hours of border operation.

Examples of Advocacy Initiatives

Global Coalition Formed for Advocacy. The Global Business Council was founded in 1997 to promote the business response to HIV/AIDS and to offer leadership and advocacy to increase action by business on HIV/AIDS, as well as the need to inform and engage leadership from other sectors. The council's advocacy efforts help keep HIV/AIDS at the top of the national and international agenda, including media publicity. Sharing of policy and programming efforts are encouraged (2).

Coalition Established and Addresses Legislative Issues. Legislative issues around HIV/AIDS are being addressed through the National Economic Development and Labor Council (NEDLAC). This council, which has representatives of labor, government, business, and civil society, seeks consensus to reach agreements through negotiation and discussion. NEDLAC has developed a special code of practice for South Africa. The council is a collaborative partnership that reviews potential legislative issues that go through Parliament.

Dropping Excise Tax. Advocacy efforts between legislators, government ministries, and businesses assisted in removing an excise tax in Senegal that quadrupled the price of condoms, thereby assisting in the successful implementation of a national condom promotion campaign.

Advocating for Changes to Specific Legislation on Testing. The Chamber of Mines in South Africa is advocating for an amendment to the Employment Equity Act of South Africa, which prohibits all HIV testing in the workplace. Voluntary counseling and testing are an important adjunct to treatment options.

Capacity Development

Every business has capabilities in addressing the crisis of HIV/AIDS. Businesses can scan the environment within their organization, as well as within the communities from which they draw their labor, to assess potential contributions and capacities for addressing HIV/AIDS.

It is important that businesses provide employees, managers, and others with the capacities and competencies to effectively undertake an HIV/AIDS program and the methods to successfully sustain it. Enhancing capacity is a concept by which business can address HIV/AIDS within their own capabilities and within their sphere of influence. Innovative approaches, strategic thinking, and sound business planning are part of this capacity (13).

Evaluation is an important skill for managers and peer educators. Evaluation is also important for measuring how effective programs address HIV/AIDS issues. Monitoring and evaluation of programs is essential in providing feedback to continuously improve programming efforts. One of the most challenging aspects of HIV/AIDS programming efforts is the provision of care and services. Evaluation can be used to assess impact of providing care and treatment.

Examples of Capacity Development Initiatives

Business Leaders Are Important in Addressing HIV/AIDS. In June 2001, at the United Nations Global AIDS Special Session (UNGASS), leaders from government, business, and NGOs gathered to address HIV/AIDS. Bill Roedy, President of MTV Networks International and Chair of the Global Business Council on HIV/AIDS, challenged businesses to respond to this crisis. He noted that even though there had been a broad range of good quality responses, businesses had not matched “the magnitude of the epidemic nor its business capability.” He stated, “We are very well suited to the fight,” and outlined the following capabilities that business has in addressing HIV/AIDS: leadership, influence (global and local), marketing expertise, distribution, sales, communication skills, supply chains, organization and infrastructure, and, most importantly, people (14, 15, 16)

Enhancing Capacity for Accessing Care and Treatment. Labor/management partnerships are expanding the capacity of the worksite as an interim delivery mechanism for providing care where treatment does not currently exist. The National Union of Mineworkers recently signed an agreement with the Chamber of Mines of South Africa to provide access to AIDS treatment and care. (See <http://www.bullion.org.za/bulza/agreements/aids.htm>.) Daimler-Chrysler and the Ford Motor Company recently reached agreement with unions securing the protection against discrimination and treatment for HIV/AIDS for their employees and their families. Transport unions have taken the issue to centralized bargaining structures in which the Bargaining Council has initiated a major AIDS prevention program that includes the employment of peer counselors at major truck depots.

Participating with and Providing Management Advice to Community Programs. The Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa, Ltd., has been addressing the epidemic through community and government-sponsored HIV awareness campaigns and specific community interventions. Suppliers and contractors are encouraged to contribute management advice to community projects and facilitate access to donor funding.

Measuring Increased Condom Use. FMCSA has measured HIV/AIDS awareness and knowledge among every employee and contract worker who has received mandatory HIV/AIDS education. Managers report that employees no longer hesitate to engage in open discussion on HIV/AIDS, with more and more employees seeking advice or clarity. The use of condoms supplied by the company has increased 20-fold. Onsite dispensing of free condoms was increased, and usage increased from 700 per month to more than 17,000 per month.

E nabling E nvironment

The environment – including political commitment, community values, support systems, policies, and resources – necessarily influences the impact of HIV/AIDS interventions. A supportive environment is integral to the success of HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programs, as well as individual efforts to change risky behaviors. Meeting the unique challenges of HIV/AIDS requires creating and sustaining country-level coordinated, multisectoral partnerships and strategies to address the epidemic.

Individual business entities, both large and small, also have an opportunity to support countrywide efforts on the local level and within communities. Media efforts can provide supportive environment for HIV/AIDS messages. Company participation in community awareness and education strengthens a broad-based response.

Businesses can assist with efforts to ensure the economic security of youth by preventing the economic attraction of sex work. The hotel and hospitality industry has been proactive in addressing this issue. For example, a youth career development program in Thailand provides training in a range of hotel services, such as food and beverages, housekeeping, and kitchen and laundry work (17).

The media is especially important in creating an environment that supports prevention, care, research, and behavior-change messages. The media has the ability to reach a broad audience in a very short time and can reinforce messages from educational programs or stimulate the need for more information.

Examples of Initiatives that Create Enabling Environments

Youth Prevention Initiative with Microcredit. The United Nations Foundation has launched a youth and HIV/AIDS prevention initiative in southern Africa, with local NGOs and donor agencies. In Zimbabwe, adolescent girls are provided with peer education and access to microcredit information. The project has also provided enhanced community support for orphans.

Participation in Broad-based Awareness with NGOs, Schools, and the Media. Chevron has participated in broad-based awareness activities with NGOs and international donor agencies, in the funding of educational materials for primary and secondary schools, as well as the training of female journalists in AIDS education and media access to information.

Education and Training and Microloans for Women. The Independent Business Enrichment Center in South Africa provides training and services to women and youth. Through the German donor, GTZ, the center provides a full range of programs, from micro-loans for economic sustainability for women as well as methods of addressing violence toward women, which was identified as a constraint to business growth (18).

Social Marketing of HIV/AIDS Messages to Youth. Africa Alive! is a broad-based social marketing effort addressing youth about HIV/AIDS. It supports popular, creative channels of communication, such as music contests in which contestants compete to have their songs with HIV/AIDS prevention messages aired, radio and TV dramas, and radio and TV talk shows and comic books.

Using TV to Encourage Youth to Talk with Elders. Supported by the United Nations Population Fund, a television program, "I Need to Know," encourages young people to ask questions of elders on topics that are difficult to discuss. The program airs on 20 television stations in Nigeria.

Airing Videos and PSAs. MTV Networks International has produced award-winning, original documentaries and public service announcements (PSAs) about HIV/AIDS, making them available for airing by all international broadcasters, rights-free, at no cost. For example, "Staying Alive," a program showcasing young people affected by HIV/AIDS, reached more than 900 million homes due to its rights-free distribution (2).

Private–Public Sector Partnerships

This section features strong public–private collaboration for stronger country programs. Highlighted are programs that facilitate dialogue between business, labor, governments, and the nonprofit sector at country, state, and community levels.

Public–private sector efforts can ensure that public funds are directed toward prevention and care, as well as providing for assistance for HIV/AIDS awareness and education. For example, countries such as Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Mali, Morocco, and Senegal are subsidizing access to antiretroviral drugs. Burundi and Rwanda contribute to a special fund for purchasing drugs at subsidized prices.

HIV/AIDS is causing readjustments in poverty reduction, development, and HIPC (heavily indebted poor country) initiatives (19, 20, 21). In particular, programs that target orphans and vulnerable children are especially important to enhance labor and security issues (22, 23).

These partnerships can work together for increased health assistance, including basic medical care and nutrition information, especially for the most needy populations. They can encourage collaboration on standard testing for candidate vaccines and microbicides with coordinated effort from government scientists, international bodies, and UNAIDS. For example, Anglo-American has also identified the long-term need to participate in vaccine trials, and is participating in vaccine readiness studies in collaboration with Aurum Health Research and the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative.

They can also encourage legislation, such as tax incentives for provision of medical care that ensures strong economic growth for industries and sectors affected by HIV/AIDS. Companies can contribute to National AIDS Councils, as Financial Holdings Limited donated \$10 million to the National Aids Council through the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce for AIDS awareness programs.

Examples of Private-Public Sector Partnerships ⁽²⁴⁾

Multisectoral Efforts in Poverty Reduction. Poverty reduction strategies in high HIV-prevalence areas are addressed in the Malawi national AIDS plan as part of crosscutting concerns, called “Supersectoral Analysis,” in which actions specific to different sectors are identified, such as the public sector, private business sector, or ministries. Families and orphan issues are included in the plan. Government officials launched a resource mobilization roundtable in March 2000 that brought together representatives of health and development organizations, business, donor agencies, and government to expand the response from multiple sectors to address HIV/AIDS. The roundtable resulted in pledges of over \$100 million from donors and private sector resources to support countrywide HIV/AIDS efforts (20).

Examples of Private-Public Sector Partnerships

Including HIV in HIPC Initiatives. Tanzania has integrated HIV into its development strategies including the HIPC Initiative and the Social Development Fund.

Partnerships Between Public and Private Sector. The International Partnership against AIDS in Africa is a coalition working with the leadership of African governments to mobilize available resources through international and national donors and private sector sources. UN organizations provide support to country-level efforts by mobilizing resources for coordinated efforts from the private sector as well as integrating community responses from affected persons.

U.S.–Africa Labor Advocacy. In early 2000, John Sweeney, President of AFL–CIO and the U.S. Secretary of Labor, convened the U.S.–Africa Trade Summit on AIDS, hosted by the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, to bring American and African trade unions together to address the HIV/AIDS crisis. This summit crystallized efforts to tackle the issue of HIV/AIDS for trade unionists in Africa. Following the meeting, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) promoted a special workplan calling for roles and responsibilities of partners of trade unions in addressing HIV/AIDS. This workplan is known as the “Gaborone Declaration on HIV/AIDS in the Workplace: Plan of Action.” ICFTU has successfully advocated for increased spending for international HIV/AIDS activities with labor.

Nonprofit Links U.S. and Africa Businesses. Established in 1992, the Corporate Council on Africa is a nonprofit organization of corporations that seeks to strengthen economic ties between African and American corporations (see <http://www.africacncl.org>). It provides a forum on policies, information linkages, and business summits, and has produced a comprehensive report on HIV/AIDS, with specific recommendations for government and business in addressing HIV/AIDS.

Removing Patent Protection as a Barrier to Treatment. Bristol Myers Squibb is ensuring that patents and pricing for antiretroviral drugs do not prevent inexpensive therapy in Africa. The company has allowed one patent to be available at no cost to treat HIV in South Africa under an agreement with the co-owner of their patent, Yale University. In addition, the company has adjusted pricing for two antiretroviral drugs at \$1 a day, a price below cost. It has also pledged a five-year, \$100 million partnership with Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland to fund sustainable solutions in addressing HIV among women and children and community interventions. Early in 2001, additional funds of \$15 million were pledged to four countries in western Africa—Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, and Senegal—for enhancing programmatic efforts with country representatives.

What Do HIV/AIDS Programs Cost?

In today's competitive marketplace, businesses are becoming increasingly aware of all the factors that affect the bottom line. As with other health issues, HIV/AIDS has both economic and social consequences. For a business, HIV/AIDS can affect the labor supply, profitability, and other impacts, such as decline in worker morale, absenteeism, labor-management relations, and even consumer demand for products. Each business can measure the economic impact. A simple model for measuring impact on a business is available through Metropolitan Life Insurance of South Africa at <http://www.redribbon.co.za>. ("Try our online AIDS test", "AIDS in the workplace").

Several studies and literature reviews suggest that a company's investment in prevention and medical care may provide savings to that company (10, 11, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29). While spending for health in most African countries is about US\$10 per capita (30), it has been estimated that the direct medical costs of care for AIDS, excluding antiretroviral therapy, is about US\$30 per capita (20). Costs associated with providing antiretroviral therapy and medical care to administer and monitor therapies would be much higher. However, costs of providing care for tuberculosis (TB), treating STIs, providing therapy for opportunistic infections, and distributing condoms are far lower and may be highly effective in reducing the impact of HIV/AIDS. A World Bank analysis of the costs of HIV/AIDS interventions showed that providing prevention services produced cost savings for companies (36).

The term "best practice" for business is not well defined. Most approaches highlight programs with comprehensive and integrated HIV/AIDS programs in the workplace and include a component to maximize the productivity of affected workers and include community outreach. Some companies are choosing to provide care and treatment as a way to minimize impact of HIV/AIDS. Several leading authorities, including a recent Harvard consensus statement and a commission on macroeconomics of the World Health Organization, have supported the use of antiretroviral therapies (31, 32).

An economic model for best practices has not yet been developed since some studies are underway or just completed. Development of key economic indicators and measurement tools for business to assess their approach to HIV/AIDS against such indicators by type of business is needed (25). Compilations of best practices have been published for specific countries as well as global examples (26, 33, 34).

The practices that are highlighted in this document were chosen based on their proven success, practicality, and feasibility of replication by other businesses. They are consistent with values of corporate social responsibility, concern for the health and safety of employees, and cost of providing programs, where available. Leaders of the best-managed companies are addressing HIV/AIDS based on current and future corporate values (35).

Research on the Costs and Benefits of HIV/AIDS Programs

Reducing Turnover by Providing Medical Care. A study of the economic impact of HIV/AIDS was conducted in three firms in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire from 1995–1996. Employee turnover was found to be a significant factor adding to the cost of HIV/AIDS suggesting that company investment in medical care at the worksite or through medical insurance may mitigate the turnover rate and its associated costs (27).

Benefits of Treatment of TB and Opportunistic Infections Exceed Costs. Published data were analyzed from companies providing specific treatment for TB and opportunistic infections combined with counseling. The benefits to companies of investment in treatment and care are likely to exceed the costs, based on the present cost to a company of new infections (32).

Benefits of Providing STI Treatment. The Lesedi Project in South Africa measured the value of investment in prevention, as well as treatment. The cost of STI management intervention is \$230 per STI infection averted or \$3 per employee/year. For each year of the intervention, it is estimated that new HIV infections (HIV incidence) was reduced by nearly 50 percent. These activities contributed to a 46 percent decline in STIs in women and miners. Probability models estimate that HIV infections were averted by providing STI treatments within the community—about 40 HIV infections among the women and 195 HIV infections among miners. The intervention produced an estimated direct cost savings of US\$539,630. The company stated that this figure appeared low (10, 11).

Measuring the Business Cost of Providing Prevention and Care for HIV/AIDS. An ongoing research study conducted in seven firms in southern Africa is providing information about how HIV/AIDS is affecting the costs and benefits of providing HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. The AIDS Economics Team of the Center for International Health at Boston University is conducting the study. Findings are as follows:

- **AIDS Costs:** In a preliminary analysis of three sectors that vary by size and industry, costs due to AIDS are estimated at 3–11 percent of annual salaries in 1999, 2–8 percent in 2000, and 5–18 percent by 2006.
- **Cost per infection:** As expected, costs per new HIV infection among males 35–40 were the highest. Actual costs varied by retirement, medical expenses, and disability and death benefit premiums. For two of the businesses, treatment was most cost-effective for supervisors and less so for technicians.
- **Cost-benefits of treatment:** For each new HIV infection a firm's prevention efforts successfully avoid, the company saves the costs associated with that infection (less the cost of prevention efforts). Treatment costs will vary widely between firms, depending on who is offered care within the labor force and the type of care offered. Providing treatment and care to keep employees in the workforce might be less expensive than the costs of HIV/AIDS, even for low-cost companies (29).

Opportunities for Future Responses and Conclusions

There are many opportunities for business to address the future response to HIV/AIDS. These include

- Continuing to address discrimination, stigmatization, and denial (DSD) related to HIV/AIDS. A recent UNAIDS report analyzes methods to reduce DSD from Uganda and India (37);
- Expanding and strengthening workplace policies and programs, specifically in the areas of treatment for TB, STIs, and opportunistic infections;
- Working with different sectors to address HIV/AIDS by strengthening the capacity of that sector, including working with legislators on specific programming (38, 39, 40);
- Focusing on education and microenterprise for youth to ensure the availability of skilled labor; and
- Enhancing strong community-level programs to keep the infection rate low and produce healthy and educated young men and women.

The dilemma of how to address the impact of HIV/AIDS will not be solved by businesses, governments, or individuals working in isolation. It will be solved by the collective action of many people from many sectors of the economy with differing perspectives engaged in collaborative, interdisciplinary discovery and focused action. It is with this view that this document was written. The purpose of the document is to forward the end goal of inspiring continuing coordinated action—both individual and collective—from all sectors of the economy to address the economic, social, and health impact of HIV/AIDS.

Editor's note: The name or mention of specific companies or products is not to be interpreted as a specific endorsement or recommendation of products or services by USAID over other similar products or services.

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Appendix: Sample Policies

AIDS IN WORKPLACE SAMPLE HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY STATEMENT

YOUR COMPANY NAME will treat HIV/AIDS the same as other life-threatening illnesses and handicaps in terms of our policies and benefits where they apply. **YOUR COMPANY NAME** does not discriminate against a qualified individual with regard to job applications, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, or other terms, conditions or privileges of employment.

YOUR COMPANY NAME recognizes that an employee with HIV/AIDS or another life-threatening illness may wish to continue in as many of their normal pursuits as their illness allows, including work. **YOUR COMPANY NAME** will be supportive of and make reasonable accommodation for the employee who is medically able to perform his or her job. An employee's medical information is personal and will be treated as confidential.

While accommodating employees with life-threatening diseases and other disabilities, however, **YOUR COMPANY NAME** recognizes its obligation to provide a safe work environment for all employees. **YOUR COMPANY NAME** is sensitive and responsive to coworker's concerns and will emphasize employee education. We will continue our efforts to be adequately informed about HIV/AIDS and will make this information available to employees on a regular basis.

The following work practices are an adaptation from those developed by the Allan Vincent Smith Foundation, in Hamilton, Bermuda. The work practices have been modified to suit the needs of the environment of **YOUR COMPANY NAME**, but the meaning of each point remains the same.

- People with AIDS or HIV infection are entitled to the same rights, benefits and opportunities as people with other serious or life-threatening illnesses.
- Employment practices comply with local laws and regulation and/or the practices of the parent company, whichever is greater, and where applicable.
- Employment practices are based on the scientific and epidemiological evidence that people with AIDS or HIV infection do not pose a risk of transmission of the virus to coworkers through ordinary workplace contact.
- Senior management unequivocally endorses nondiscriminatory employment practices and education programs or information about AIDS.
- **YOUR COMPANY NAME** will communicate policies and practices to employees in simple, clear, and unambiguous terms.
- **YOUR COMPANY NAME** will provide employees with sensitive, accurate and up-to-date information about risk reduction in their personal lives.
- **YOUR COMPANY NAME** will protect the confidentiality of employee's medical insurance information.
- To prevent work disruption and rejection by coworkers of an employee with AIDS or HIV infection, **YOUR COMPANY NAME** will undertake education for all employees before such an incident occurs and as needed thereafter.
- **YOUR COMPANY NAME** does not require HIV screening as part of pre-employment or general workplace physical examinations.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact the Manager - Human Resources and Administration.

Source: Allen Vincent Smith Foundation of Bermuda

From the National AIDS Fund Sample Policy

(Company) does not unlawfully discriminate against employees or applicants living with or affected by HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) or AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). The (Company) recognizes that HIV infection and AIDS, the most serious stage of disease progression resulting from HIV infection, pose significant and delicate issues for the workplace. Accordingly, we have established the following guidelines and principles to serve as the basis for handling employee situations and concerns related to HIV infection and AIDS.

1. The (Company) is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. This commitment stands on the recognition that HIV, and therefore AIDS, is not transmitted through any casual contact.

HIV is a blood/borne virus, and is spread only through intimate contact with blood, semen, vaginal secretions, and breast milk. For over ten years, scientists have made new discoveries about HIV infection and AIDS. But one piece of information has never changed—the disease spreads. Scientists have recognized this fact since 1982. The basic facts about HIV transmission and prevention are sound.

2. The (Company) will treat HIV infection and AIDS the same as other illnesses in terms of all our employee policies and benefits, including health and life insurance, disability benefits and leaves of absence. Employees living with or affected by HIV infection and AIDS will be treated with compassion and understanding, as would employees with other disabling conditions.
3. In accordance with the law, the (Company) will provide reasonable accommodations for employees and applicants with disabilities who are qualified to perform the essential functions of their positions. This applies to employees and applicants living with HIV infection and AIDS.

Generally, disabled employees have the responsibility to request an accommodation. It is the policy of (the Company) to respond to the changing health status of employees by making reasonable accommodations. Employees may continue to work as long as they are able to perform their duties safely and in accordance with performance standards. Supervisors and managers are encouraged to contact the Human Resources Department for assistance in making reasonable accommodations.

4. Coworker concerns will be handled in an educational fashion. The Human Resources Department can provide information and educational materials. In addition, the names of community-based organizations in our operating areas are appended. Consult one of these groups for support and information. Supervisors and managers are encouraged to contact the Human Resources Department for assistance in providing employees with information and assistance.

Recognizing the need for all employees to be accurately informed about HIV infection and AIDS, the (Company) will make information and educational materials available. Employees who want to obtain information and materials should contact the Human Resources Department.

5. Coworkers are expected to continue working relationships with any employee who has HIV infection or AIDS. Coworkers who refuse to work with, withhold services from, harass or otherwise discriminate against an employee with HIV infection or AIDS will be subject to the same disciplinary procedures that apply to other policy violations.

6. Information about an employee's medical condition is private and must be treated in a confidential manner. In most cases, only managers directly involved in providing a reasonable accommodation or arranging benefits may need to know an employee's diagnosis. Others who may acquire such information, even if obtained personally from the individual, should respect the confidentiality of the medical information.
7. (Company) maintains an "open-door" policy. Employees living with or affected by HIV infection and AIDS, and those who have any related concerns, are encouraged to contact their supervisor, office administrator, (Company)wide director, the Employee Relations and Development Manager, or the Chief Administrative Officer to discuss their concerns and obtain information.

If you have questions about this policy, its interpretation, or the information upon which it is based, please contact any of the individuals listed in item (7) above.

Appendix: List of local HIV/AIDS information and service organizations (optional).

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