

the ENABLING
Policy
environment



A Crucial Cornerstone

An Introduction to
the POLICY Project
and Our HIV/AIDS Work

The success of HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care programs depends on the creation of an enabling environment. In such an environment, individuals live free from stigma and discrimination; relevant stakeholders—from both government and civil society—have the capacity, skills, and opportunities to meaningfully participate in the process; and human and material resources are mobilized to address priority action areas.

Who We Are

The Futures Group/POLICY Project has more than 25 years of experience working with governments and civil society groups to create enabling policy environments for HIV/AIDS, family planning, reproductive health, and maternal health programs.

Our HIV/AIDS Work

Creating “sound enabling policy environments in every country” is a key cornerstone for combating HIV/AIDS and mitigating the impact of the epidemic.¹ POLICY provides assistance to countries, such as those included in the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, that are seeking to avert new infections, provide treatment and care to people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHAs), and offer support to those affected by the epidemic.

POLICY works directly with government leaders, NGOs, private firms, healthcare providers, and the community to:

- raise awareness about the increasingly complex HIV/AIDS situation and motivate leaders to

¹ Ambassador Randall Tobias, US Global AIDS Coordinator, testifying before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of the Committee on Appropriations, May 18, 2004.

commit to effective national programs and high-level action to reduce stigma and discrimination;

- improve and adapt often out-of-date national policies and strategies that guide programs;
- help governments understand, mobilize, and make the best use of donor and domestic funding to mitigate the epidemic;
- revamp operational policies to motivate private and community-based provision of treatment and care;
- enhance governments' capacity to stimulate system-wide responses to meet the demand for treatment and care; and
- empower people and communities affected by HIV/AIDS to embrace prevention behaviors and to provide care and support for their fellow community members.

Our Partners

Our partners include policymakers, government departments, NGOs, PLHA networks, faith-based organizations, women's and youth groups, businesses, journalists, and affected communities, among others.

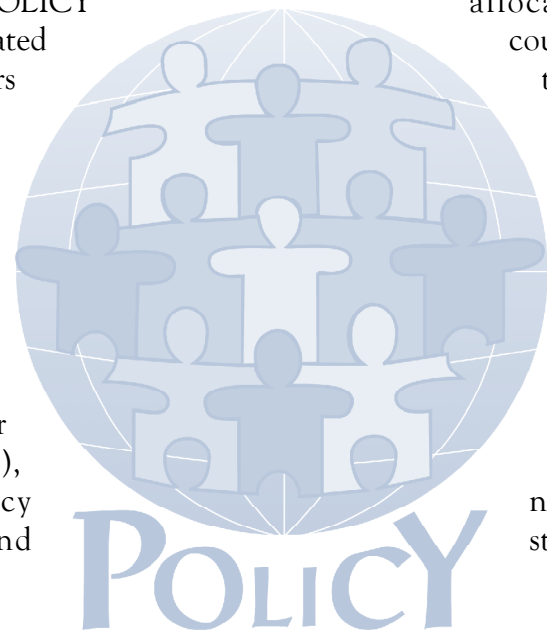
Strategic Focus Areas

To respond to the ever-changing demands of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and to help countries make the most of newly available resources for HIV/AIDS programs, POLICY offers technical assistance in four strategic focus areas.

Strengthening Leadership and Policy Formulation: Leaders can keep HIV/AIDS on the national agenda, provide direction for the formulation of policies, mobilize resources, coordinate and sustain responses, ensure that lessons learned are incorporated into policies and programs, speak out on behalf of affected groups, and break the silence surrounding HIV/AIDS. People from all walks of life, including government officials, religious and business leaders, women and youth, journalists and healthcare workers, PLHAs, and members of affected communities have important leadership roles to play. POLICY builds the HIV/AIDS-related skills and capacity of leaders from various sectors. This work includes assisting with national policy formulation, forming special committees and forums within government, facilitating multi-sectoral collaboration (e.g., inter-ministrial or public-private partnerships), and providing advocacy training to leaders and

affected communities to enable them to participate in HIV/AIDS policymaking processes.

Setting Targets and Effective Resource Allocation: POLICY is a world leader in HIV/AIDS projections, estimates, and strategic planning. POLICY helps countries assess their current HIV/AIDS situation, including the number of PLHAs and orphans, the impact of the epidemic on various sectors, and the number of people with access to essential services. We help analyze different resource needs and allocation patterns so that countries can target and use their resources cost-effectively. We identify gaps in current targets and spending plans, as well as use tracking data to routinely monitor and evaluate the impact of interventions. In turn, use of this information helps ensure the emergence of well-informed national policies and strategies.



Where We Work

POLICY currently works in more than 30 countries around the world.



LATIN AMERICA and the CARIBBEAN
El Salvador
Guatemala
Haiti
Honduras
Jamaica
Mexico
Peru

AFRICA

Botswana	Malawi	Tanzania
Ethiopia	Mali	Uganda
Ghana	Mozambique	Zambia
Kenya	Nigeria	Zimbabwe
Lesotho	South Africa	
Madagascar	Swaziland	

Regional Economic Development Services
Office for East & Southern Africa (REDSO/ESA)
Regional HIV/AIDS Program for Southern Africa (RHAP)
West Africa Regional Program (WARP)

EUROPE and EURASIA
Russia
Ukraine

ASIA and the NEAR EAST
Bangladesh
Cambodia
China
Egypt
India
Indonesia
Jordan
Nepal
Philippines
Viet Nam
Regional Development Mission/Asia

Improving Operational Policies: A key aspect of POLICY's work is to link planning and policy development to the implementation of programs on the ground. POLICY has an established track record assisting countries to develop operational policies to ensure the smooth implementation of services. Examples are helping governments draft national voluntary counseling and testing guidelines and antiretroviral (ARV) treatment policies (that include issues such as confidentiality, training and resources needs, and support for treatment adherence); assisting businesses to establish comprehensive workplace HIV/AIDS policies and programs; and developing HIV/AIDS sensitization training guidelines for various sectors.

Reducing Barriers to Access: POLICY recognizes that reducing stigma and discrimination and promoting human rights are essential in order for countries to scale up access to prevention, treatment, and care programs. So long as people risk stigma and discrimination, whether being rejected by their families or losing a job or worse, they will not come forward for testing, prevention programs, treatment, or care. POLICY works with government and community leaders to break the silence surrounding HIV/AIDS. We also help PLHAs and affected communities, who may already be stigmatized, to overcome internal stigma and feelings of shame or blame—which discourages them from taking part in HIV programs.

POLICY in Action: Recent Success Stories from the Field

- Strengthened the capacity of faith-based groups in Uganda to manage a small grants program to meet the needs of orphans and children affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Developed guidelines to improve functioning of the Country Coordinating Mechanisms of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, including greater involvement of PLHAs.
- Implemented pilot projects to identify and address barriers to ensuring women's inheritance rights in Kenya and meeting the reproductive health needs of women living with HIV/AIDS in Swaziland.
- Analyzed the coverage of essential HIV/AIDS services in 81 countries, including those contained in the President's Emergency Plan.
- Developed the capacity of NGOs in Latin America and the Caribbean to design, implement, and evaluate advocacy campaigns that address the needs of affected communities.
- Assisted in identifying operational policy barriers and in facilitating multisectoral engagement to aid in the development of Ukraine's program to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV.
- Collaborated with in-country partners to strengthen workplace HIV/AIDS initiatives in Haiti.
- Analyzed HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination in key sectors in South Africa and Mexico (e.g., faith-based groups, PLHAs, the health sector, the media, and workplaces) in order to develop indicators to guide program development.
- Worked with the most at-risk communities in Cambodia, Nepal, and Viet Nam to build their capacity to design, implement, and advocate for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care policies and programs.
- Used the GOALS Model to successfully highlight the need for increased and more efficient resource allocation in countries such as Kenya, Lesotho, South Africa, and Viet Nam.
- Facilitated multisectoral, active participation in the formulation of Malawi's first *National HIV/AIDS Policy*, approved in November 2003.
- Conducted a study on the impact of HIV/AIDS on orphans and households in Cambodia that will be used to inform policymaking and resource allocation decisions.
- Participated in the review of Nigeria's *National Guidelines for Pediatric HIV/AIDS*, resulting in a comprehensive approach for treating pediatric AIDS and including guidelines for provision of ARVs to 5,000 children.
- Supported local AIDS councils and affected communities in the Philippines to effectively implement and evaluate local action plans.
- Encouraged multisectoral responses to HIV/AIDS in Tanzania and Zambia, including building capacity of parliamentarians, district and provincial leaders, PLHA networks, and faith-based groups.

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