

World AIDS Day 2011 Strategy Note

“Re-engaging Leadership for effective HIV Prevention”:

Background

A lot of progress has been made by many African countries in stabilising and/or decreasing the incidence of HIV infections. The number of people accessing antiretroviral treatment has increased. Provision of antiretroviral therapy has significantly contributed to saving millions of lives. By 2010, new infections had reduced significantly, globally. Nonetheless, Sub-Saharan Africa remains the epi-centre of the HIV epidemic. The SSA communities are faced with challenges of high levels of stigma and discrimination, which are key determinants to social and legal barriers to effective demand and uptake of quality and sustainable HIV services.

Socio-economic, cultural structures and networks influence behaviour that breeds multiple sexual partnerships, commercial sex, improper and or none use of condoms that drive the HIV epidemic in Uganda. Access and uptake of proven bio-medical HIV prevention interventions such as prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV (P MTCT), safe male circumcision (SMC), HIV counselling and testing (HCT) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) and coverage of preventive behavioural interventions (IEC/BCC) is low. The national response falls short of focus and targeting. Hence factors outlined above require renewed and effective leadership to bring back Uganda to the once gained centre of excellence.

HIV and Leadership

The HIV epidemic is a leadership issue. There is evidence and documentation that countries which demonstrated effective leadership were able to control the prevalence levels. For example, Uganda registered remarkable progress in the 1990s majorly because of visible committed leadership at the highest and lowest community levels.

The Role of Advocacy

The global response recognises advocacy as a critical strategy to ending the worldwide HIV and AIDS catastrophe. Advocacy constitutes one of the five key functions that were articulated in the Statute that established Uganda AIDS Commission in 1992.

Advocacy is a tool and weapon used by leaders, interest groups, networks and individuals to advance an agenda to realize a desired goal. Advocacy therefore goes hand in hand with leadership because it enables identification of issues, accords opportunities for positioning identified issues and influences budget provisions for financing advocates to execute their work.

Leadership and advocacy for HIV and AIDS response is affected by global challenges where countries are characterised and challenged by internal constant civil strife and pre-occupied by

addressing and containing economic squeeze, struggling to address food security, among others. While it is evident that where effective leadership is demonstrated significant achievements are realized; economic and geo-political challenges divert leadership attention to focus on HIV prevention and address the effects of HIV and AIDS effectively. Uganda offers a good example as once a world leader in reducing HIV from a very high rate (18%) of the national prevalence to a stable level of about 6-7%. Whereas no scientific study was undertaken to establish factors that played a key role in reducing the infections, leadership stood out as a major component that constituted best practices. Unfortunately, it the leadership of that time was neither replicated nor sustained to scale up the response, hence the stagnation.

Existing Opportunities:

The World AIDS Campaign (WAC) is an avenue that offers opportunities for communities to highlight HIV epidemic, its ramifications on individuals, households and society at large. WAC generates new ideas and appropriate strategies to infuse into HIV programming.

The global AIDS Campaign has two well known events; i.e. the International Candlelight Memorial (ICM); a community/grassroots based event when the world remembers all who have succumbed to AIDS and commits support for people living with HIV and those affected by its impact. ICM is observed on the third Sunday of May each year. The second global advocacy event is the World AIDS Day (WAD) commemorated annually on December 1st. WAD is the climax of a year-long campaign, world over. It is a day when each country takes stock of achievements, highlights challenges and shares innovations and scientific break-through as well as inciting governments and donors for commitment to continued funding of the HIV response agenda.

One major unique event exclusive for Uganda is the Philly Lutaaya Day (PLD), observed on 17th October every year, since 2002, to highlight *positive living*. PLD also serves to emphasize GIPA/MIPA and *prevention with positives* strategy, currently harnessed as key for HIV prevention.

World AIDS Day (WAD) 2011:

The WAD is the most recognised international health day in the world. It is a platform and opportunity to raise awareness on current trends of the epidemic in the world, countries and local governments. It is an aggregated commemoration of those who have passed on and celebrate victories such as increased access to treatment and prevention services. It focuses on the annual struggle to raise awareness about the status of the epidemic, breakthroughs and a beginning of a new campaign that evolves annually.

WAD in Uganda, like anywhere in the world, is observed every 1st of December each year. The day provides the most needed opportunities to disseminate important information, highlight national and international achievements, share notable research findings and increase awareness of access to care and treatment, social support and prevention. The event offers fora to show case of national interventions, facilitate access to free services such as HIV counselling and testing, reproductive health and referrals services in a stigma free environment. Most uniquely, the event brings leaders at the fore of the response.

The World AIDS Day Theme 2011 and Slogan

WAD is usually guided by a two-year theme. Uganda AIDS Commission adopts global themes but occasionally, in collaboration with its partners develops local themes to guide the campaign. The AIDS campaign theme this year for Uganda was selected locally, based on and informed by deliberations and outcomes of the June 2011 UN High Level meeting in New York and the current national focus on HIV Prevention. Thus, Uganda's WAC theme is, ***“Re-engaging Leadership for Effective HIV Prevention”***. In the campaign perspective, leadership is broadly defined to include all leaders ranging from individuals, households, communities and institutions to national political and technical cadres. This theme was launched in Mbale during the PLD commemoration last October and will guide all our WAC up to May 2012 at the ICL. Thereafter, the country will decide to continue a second year of develop a new theme.

Alongside the theme, stakeholders are challenged to develop a slogan that will be aligned to the slogan with the national or global themes. For now the proposed agenda is 'we are in it together, let's strive for zero new infections'.

WAD 2011 Organisation:

Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC) decentralised WAD way back in 2001. The decentralisation aimed at empowering local governments to own up the event and increase awareness of the activity amongst grassroots communities. Since then, every district is charged with a responsibility to ensure district based commemorations in partnership with district based actors, at a venue of their choice and performing activities of their choice based on existing capacities and HIV situations. This year Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) will co-organise the event with UAC, while KCCA will play the host.

A number of broad activities are tabled to be considered for implementation as proposed below:

1. **‘Special Juma Prayers’** on Friday 25th November by the Moslems community (Imams/IRCU);
2. **‘Special Prayers’** on Saturday 26th November by the Adventist Community (Church Leaders/IRCU);
3. **‘Special Prayers’** on Sunday 27th November by all other Christian sects (Parish priests/IRCU);
4. **‘Special Forum’** on Monday 28th and 29th November, by Urban Leaders (MOLG/AMICAALL)
5. **‘10 years Celebrations’** on Tuesday 29th by the Youth Forum (OAFLA Uganda)
6. **Parliamentary Dialogue on the Status of the Epidemic and WAD Observance** on Wednesday 30th November, by Uganda Parliament (Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS/Parliamentary Commission)

7. **‘National WAD D-Day’** on Thursday 1st December 2011 by (UAC/NOC)
8. **District/Community based WAD event** on Thursday 1st December 2011 in various districts and communities by District Chairpersons, CAOs, AIDS Focal Officers, DHOs and Partners)

Guest of Honour

All sectors will identify suitable guests to officiate their events. HE The President of Uganda will grace the WAD as the Chief Guest. Among other roles, the HE will play as Chief Guest, he will be requested to launch a number of key policy documents including the:

- Revised National Strategic Plan,
- National AIDS Policy,
- National Prevention Policy and
- Strategy on Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission.

National Organising Committee

UAC role is mainly coordination and giving guidance to the whole country through a National Organising Committee (NOC). UAC has identified strategic agencies/partners to constitute a NOC to support KCCA to organise the event. The NOC is composed on strategic partners from representing the different self coordinating entities; such as Government, civil society including International NGOs, Local NGOs and CBOs, Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), Private sector, Culture, media and Arts, Youth, Decentralised Response, Parliament, People Living with HIV (PLH), Research and Academia and People with Disabilities (PWDs) and Aids Development Partners (ADPs).

The same composition should be replicated at decentralised level as District Organising Committees (DOCs) are constituted.

Terms of Reference for NOC

Goal: The NOC working with UAC will give guidance to entire country to implement successful WAD 2011 events at the centre and in the different Local Governments.

Objectives:

The NOC will perform its duties with clear intentions to achieve agreed upon objectives. The objectives are to:

- Review and refine proposed strategy for WAD 2011
- Identify suitable activities/generate a list to share with Local Governments
- Identify and agree on activities for the national/special event
- Review and approve the budget in line with agreed upon activities
- Ensure effective national publicity of the event and interpretation of the theme
- Mobilise different constituencies to participate in the national/special event activities

- Mobilise resources to support implementation of agreed upon activities
- Propose and identify mechanisms to achieve the set objectives
- Approve venue for the national/special WAD 2011 event

Specific Tasks

The above objectives will be achieved through specific tasks outlined below:

- Holding meetings (agree on frequency/intervals, agenda and timing)
- Agreeing on specific activities for the event
- Review draft budget for input and approval
- Developing key messages and guidelines for media programmes
- Identifying and selecting television and radio stations to publicise WAD
- Identifying key personalities to present TV and radio programmes
- Agreeing on, developing and implementing fundraising strategy for the event
- Developing D-Day programme, messages relevant for IEC materials
- Handling any other specific assignments as and when needs arise
- Developing simple, specific and clear indicators to measure performance of WAD/NOC

Monitoring and Evaluation (Indicators)

- To measure performance of implementation of WAD, NOC will agree on and develop specific indicators to measure performance of WAD commemoration and performance of NOC, based on agreed objectives

Modes Operandi

- NOC will meet frequently to plan the WAD
- NOC will establish sub-committees and identify members to join the different sub-committees
- Sub-Committees will meet independent on NOC to plan and thereafter present their plans to NOC for consensus and approval
- NOC and sub-Committee members will work on voluntary basis, but are expected to demonstrate commitment to the cause

Proposed Activities

WAD provides a platform to perform a variety of activities that are useful for awareness raising, call for action, service delivery and promotion of new brands. The event also allows space for actors to show case of their services, products and research outcomes. A number of activities are listed below for consideration, but ultimately, implementers have a lieu way to select activities

they consider feasible and suitable influenced by interest, financial ability, impact, strengths of partnerships, timing and past experience, among others. The list below outlines just a few of the possible activities from which to choose:

- Processions through roads/streets in identified areas/communities
- Educative drama (songs, dance, skits and plays) and Music Gala
- Exhibitions/Expos
- Sports such as bicycle/motorcycle/motor rallies and marathon races
- Debates, Quizzes, Think Tanks and Community Dialogues, Speeches and Statements
- Parliamentary/District Council Debates/Dialogues
- HIV counselling and testing
- Social Support to the needy. These could be in form of:
 - Visiting patients in healthy facilities and or in homes
 - Visiting children in babies/remand homes
 - Feeding street children and delinquents on the streets
 - Visiting prisoners/detainees in prisons and police cells
 - Helping the elderly and OVC in need
 - Clearing communal wells, etc.
- Declarations of Commitment
- Special prayers
- Radio/television talk shows
- IEC Materials and their publicity
- Placing ads, supplements and press releases, etc.

Key Principles to Consider:

- ∞ Observing and adhering to the Three Ones (One Coordinating Entity, One Frame of Action and One M&E framework)
- ∞ Allowing space for innovations
- ∞ Meaningful involvement of persons living with HIV
- ∞ Promoting partnerships
- ∞ Meaningful participation of children
- ∞ Engendering the events

Appeal

UAC, basing on its mandate, is challenging all leadership to re-engage and demonstrate commitment starting on this year's WAD. All sectors, including the executive, judiciary and legislature; civil society; faith based organisations; the private sector and Decentralised Local Governments as well as individuals and families are called upon to effectively engage their respective "communities" to observe WAD 2011, either by *organising own events* or *participating in communal events*.

Government, donors, the private sector and individual citizens are called upon to support actors with funding support.

Uganda AIDS Commission as a lead coordinating agency working closely with and through NOC will give guidance to all sectors, districts and NGOs including FBOs and PLHAs. The Commission therefore calls upon all leaders to cooperate and embrace the initiative and support the theme, "**Re-engaging Leadership for Effective HIV Prevention**" for a renewed response.

The Commission further calls upon everyone to re-arm themselves to exercise and demonstrate effective leadership as we make HIV prevention a cornerstone in our struggle to attain *zero new infections*.

Leadership worked in 1990s when we had less information, limited capacity and resources. Today we have more leaders, more resources, up to date information and advanced knowledge about the epidemic. Let us all re-engage as leaders using improved technologies and knowledge alongside our traditional skills and values in our various capacities to push the agenda of HIV prevention to attain *zero new infections, zero mother to child transmission* and *zero AIDS deaths*. ***Yes We Can. Obama did.***

To achieve the above, we need combined efforts, good governance and more efficient management of programmes and resources for all stakeholders, including civil society organisations. Above ALL, we need a strong Partnership.

Proposals for Consideration for each sector:

✓ Members of Parliament:

The Parliamentary Committee on AIDS with support from the Parliamentary Commission should organise the Dialogue on the Status of HIV and AIDS. UAC and NOC should provide technical input. The Parliamentary Committee should identify and invite the guest of honour (GOH). The Speaker of Parliament would support effective engagement and participation of the MPs. The media houses should contribute to the documentation and reporting of the event.

✓ The Judiciary

The learned fellows should identify, propose and share some innovative ideas of participating in the event. The Chief Justice' office should be accountable for the event

✓ **The Private sector**

Private Sector Foundation should mobilise the constituency to participate through representation, funding or material development.

✓ **Ministers:**

Permanent Secretaries and sectoral AIDS Focal persons will be accountable for their respective sectoral engagements and action;

✓ **District Chairpersons and Chief Administrative Officers**

Will be responsible for the lower level leadership engagements, District WAD observance plans and implementation

✓ **People living with HIV and AIDS**

Working through their networks and associations, PLHAs should demonstrate visibility and participate in national, district and community based events. PLHAs should monitor and endure GIPA and MIPA principles;

✓ **The First Lady's**

Office of the First Lady will work with Women and Girls to realise and recognise their vulnerability and think through strategies to bring about gender equality that works in the context of HIV and AIDS

✓ **All musicians**

Should participate and meet their social responsibility by mobilising communities

✓ **All media houses**

As our critical partners are looked to for disseminating information as a social responsibility as well as initiating innovative activities for workers, partners and communities at large

Critical Assumptions:

1. Commitment
2. Voluntarism
3. Good leadership
4. Partnership
5. Partners support towards the budget

Together we share the Challenge. For God and My Country