

UPDATE ON THE WORLD AIDS DAY PREPS

“Leadership for Accelerated Prevention”

Background to the Theme:

The theme for World AIDS Campaign (WAC) 2007 is “Leadership for Accelerated Prevention”. It is derived from the decade-long broad theme and campaigning framework, “Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise.” Since the beginning of the epidemic, experience has clearly demonstrated that significant advances in the response to HIV have been achieved where and when there is strong and committed leadership. Leaders are distinguished by their action, innovation and vision; their personal example and engagement of others; and their perseverance in the face of obstacles and challenges.

Leaders are often not only those in the highest offices. Leadership in HIV and AIDS response cuts across various levels and thus, must be demonstrated at every level to get ahead of the disease, i.e. in families, in communities, in countries and internationally. Much of the best leadership on AIDS has been demonstrated within civil society organizations the world over. Advocacy was identified as a key strategy that plays a strong role in stimulating leaders to play their role in influencing behaviour, informing policy development and programming for increased action.

Why Focus on Fishing Communities?

One of the NSP priority objectives is ‘to accelerate prevention of sexual transmission of HIV including targeting of vulnerable and high-risk groups’. Vulnerable groups include: victims of domestic and sexual violence, people in IDP camps, the HIV negative partners among HIV discordant couples, older people (who are usually excluded from most HIV/AIDS programs) and people with disabilities – (visual and audio impairment; mental retardation or disorders; and significant physical limitations), victims of domestic and sexual violence and sexual exploitation.

Similarly, the NSP recognizes and attempts to cater for the high-risk groups. These include commercial sex workers and their clients, the military (uniform services), people engaging in transactional and transgenerational sex, truckers, as well as **fishermen**¹, and others who constitute fishing communities; people engaging in multiple sexual relations, and those engaging in extramarital sexual relations as well as those who use condoms inconsistently,.

Achievements so far

The campaign targeted **the fishing communities**, as a small manageable section of the high risk-groups. The following events have been implemented:

¹ Some programmes put HIV prevalence among fishing communities to over 20%. Fishermen are also noted as people with disposable cash, which puts them at higher risks to HIV infections.

1. World AIDS Campaign Launch/International Candlelight Memorial/Bon Fire

Under the guidance of Uganda AIDS Commission, a multi-sectoral National Organizing Committee (NOC) was constituted. The NOC has representatives from civil society, Government, districts, FBOs, media and the Private sector. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) was identified as a lead sector, based on its sectoral mandate over the fishing sub-sector.

The campaign was launched alongside the **2007 International Candlelight Memorial/Bon Fire** whose sub-theme also tied up with prevention, *"Leading the way to a World Without AIDS"*. The event took place **on 25 May 2007 at Katosi Landing Site in Mukono District**. Mukono District Administration (as a hosting district), MAAIF (as a sector in charge) and TASO (with outreaches in and around Katosi community) and UAC as a national Coordinator drove the process and the event was successful.

2. WAC Mini Launches:

Two mini launches were held; one at Bukungu landing site along Lake Kyoga, Kamuli District on 16 August 2007 and another at Lusaalira landing site on Lake Wamala in Mityana District on 17 October 2007. The Commission worked very closely with UNASO and the districts and the Fisheries Departments to mobilize the civil society organisations and the communities for the mini launches.

Like the Launch at Katosi Landing site, the mini-launch at Lusaalira was pegged to Philly Lutaaya whose focus is on positive living, and **"Prevention with the Positives"** as the sub-theme.

2007 World AIDS Day:

World AIDS Day (WAD) is the climax of the year-long campaign and falls on 1 December. WAD was decentralized and all districts as well as communities such as universities organize their events.

- a). A special venue is identified and supported by UAC. The special venue for this year will be Gaba landing site, Kampala District.
- b). Parliamentarians are planning to observe the World AIDS Day event with a big bang at Kasensero, Rakai District between 12 and 14 December. The exact date will be confirmed on Wednesday this week.
- c). The musicians will observe World AIDS Day through a big Concert on 16 December 2007 at Nakivuboi Stadium. At this concert, musicians will re-launch the Late Philly Bongoley Lutaaya's songs and the concert will entertain and educate the public about the dangers of the AIDS epidemic.

Proposed activities:

Activities vary based on location, situation, availability of resources and leadership as well as existing partnerships. The following broad activities have been agreed on for Gaba event:

- Radio programmes
- Television programmes
- Community film shows
- VCT launch (will focus on HIV and STIs)
- Exhibitions by different actors
- Leaders' Forum (this will take a form of workshop)
- Marching , speeches and drama
- Condom and IEC material distribution

Uganda Commission's Appeal:

Districts should constitute multi-sectoral Planning Committees to plan and coordinate the event. Civil society organisations should support the districts to organize and observe the event.

Uganda AIDS Commission plans to:

- ∞ facilitate some radio programmes based on regions
- ∞ Develop and distribute some IEC materials (these are normally few in number)
- ∞ Receive all district World AIDS day reports and consolidate them into one national report
- ∞ Participate in some district celebrations (districts need to invite the Commission)

Together we share the challenge