

Young People's Leadership in the East Asia Pacific Region

**Current and planned UNICEF Leadership Initiatives for the
protection and development of young people from HIV/AIDS
and related harm**

Prepared for the UN Subregional Theme Group on HIV/AIDS,
21 April 2003 meeting



unicef

Young People's Leadership in HIV/AIDS prevention and care in the UNICEF East Asia Pacific Region

As the leading UN children and young people's development agency, UNICEF has a number of ongoing strategic programme, advocacy and partnership initiatives designed to strengthen and expand leadership for and by children and young people. HIV/AIDS prevention and care is now one of 5 UNICEF global priorities, in addition to girls' education, integrated early childhood development, immunisation "plus", and improved protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination. This means that 4 out of 5 UNICEF global organisational priorities are focused on the health and well being of children and young people, and directly working to reduce vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. (UNICEF Medium Term Strategic Plan summary, see Attachment A) The MTSP and the UNICEF mission statement and vision are all about facilitating leadership at all levels of society, the family, community, political, religious and economic leaders, including children and young people. UNICEF is integrating HIV/AIDS prevention and care across this dynamic leadership agenda.

UNICEF is guided by a vision of the world where leaders commit to use their power and influence to assure, for every child, the rights and opportunities to grow to adulthood in dignity, security and self-fulfilment. The Convention on the Rights of the Child guides law, attitudes, policies and programmes for children. Governments, private bodies and civil society focus their efforts on achieving social and economic development and human rights for all, through striving to reach the goals of the Millennium Summit and the International Development Targets. Families are assisted in their role as teachers and protectors of their children. In order to achieve these aims, all sectors of society need to be committed and hold themselves accountable for taking actions on behalf of children. This should include a broad range of partners, including the entire United Nations system, Governments, international financial institutions, NGOs, religious groups, the private sector, the media, the general public, families and, not least, children themselves. This requires the mobilization of potential partners well beyond existing coalitions for children to include new and hitherto unlikely partners. The UNICEF Vision.

Current and planned UNICEF Leadership Initiatives for the protection and development of young people from HIV/AIDS and related harms

- 1. Corporate partnerships - private sector responsibility** UNICEF has developed a capacity for working with the business community in mobilising resources and advocacy action in support of UNICEF's mission and Medium Term Strategic Plan. Within this framework UNICEF (EAPRO) will provide leadership in working with our corporate partners to develop and implement a "corporate code of conduct" representing minimum requirements on social and working environments relating to HIV/AIDS in the workplace. The approach should be extended to customers and suppliers of our corporate partners. The objective is to facilitate a corporate socially responsible model for creating a positive & socially healthy working environment. Initial activities will focus on the development of case study approaches that will serve as models for others' within the business community.
- 2. Corporate Partnerships & the media** - presenting a positive perspective of young people by young people

Partners: MTV Asia-Pacific, young people & UNICEF

Background: In 2003, MTV Asia-Pacific, Levi-Strauss Asia-Pacific and UNICEF ran a multimedia campaign called "Speak Your Mind". The aim was to allow young people in the region to voice their opinions on matters of concern to them through television and the Internet. This allowed them access to the electronic media that could carry their voices to an extensive audience.

The campaign involved a competition which attracted 22,000 young entrants, the making of four documentaries including one on HIV/AIDS, the launching of Asian Youth Day on August 1, and the presentation by the young winners of the competition of the Asian Youth Charter to the United Nations Secretary-General.

Throughout the campaign HIV/AIDS emerged very much as an issue of concern to young people and there is the potential to do a lot more on this subject.

2003-4 plan:

Aim: To raise awareness of HIV/AIDS issues among young people and generate discussion among this group

How: Through a widely watched youth television channel which broadcasts throughout Asia and the Pacific

To design a multimedia campaign, around the issues of HIV/AIDS that would follow-on from "Speak Your Mind". MTV is very interested in this issue having run campaigns on the subject in other parts of the world. A regional campaign could be designed, which might involve similar elements as included in "Speak Your Mind", for example the documentaries, the competition, public service announcements by young people and with superstars, special events on Asian Youth Day and Worlds AIDS Day.

As with "Speak Your Mind", MTV would provide the technical production and design expertise and of course the air-time for the campaign. UNICEF would coordinate provision of advice on the content.

3. Regional Religious Leadership Initiative - Buddhist leadership

Where is it active? Thailand, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Cambodia, China, Viet Nam, Mongolia and Bhutan

What does it do? Provides training, project development support, opportunities for exchange and shared learning across the region for HIV/AIDS prevention and care targeting young people and their principal caregivers.

UNICEF budget support? Currently an estimated US\$ one million per year.

Over the past four years the UNICEF EAPRO Buddhist Leadership Initiative has grown from a few isolated groups of committed monks and nuns to national and subregional networks supporting ground-breaking work in mobilising the religious response to the epidemic using existing institutional, community and government structures.

Drawing on technical assistance from EAPRO and Thailand's Sangha Metta Project, UNICEF Cambodia has supported Cambodia's most senior religious leaders, the Supreme Patriarchs, and the Ministry of Cults and Religions to develop a national policy on Buddhist involvement in the HIV/AIDS response. In Thailand, UNICEF is now working with the Department of Religious Affairs within the Ministry of Education to expand the powerful grass roots response in the North of Thailand to other regions of the country. Sensitive designed training programmes developed by Sangha Metta equip monks to lead communities in prevention and care in Southern China. Today, a steadily increasing number of Buddhist monks, nuns and lay teachers in the Mekong subregion and as far away as Bhutan, are using ideas and skills they have gained from the UNICEF Buddhist Leadership Initiative to assist their communities to mitigate the impact of AIDS and to prevent young people from contracting HIV.

4. Regional Religious Leadership Initiative - Islamic leadership

Overall objective To contribute to reduction of transmission of HIV/AIDS in Indonesia through leadership advocacy and training and core participation of Islamic youth and their organisations.

To develop a dynamic model for Islamic leadership and Islamic youth participation in HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

The project will be implemented at central and provincial levels in Java.

- To increase the effective participation for religious leaders, teachers and youth in HIV prevention efforts
- To increase the access of youth in selected Islamic schools, both Government and private (Madrasahs, Madrasahs Ibtidayah, Madrasahs Tsanawiyah and Pesantrens), and those attending mosques to information and education about HIV/AIDS to reduce their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS

Activities

- Review of existing work by Islamic leaders to identify gaps and entry points, review of available materials
- Baseline surveys in selected schools, mosques and Islamic youth organisations
- Based on review of existing materials, development of training of trainers manuals, IEC materials and advocacy materials
- Advocacy workshops with the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah and the Council of Ulama to articulate the impact of HIV/AIDS in children, youth and women in Indonesia
- Training of trainers for school based life-skills and mosque intervention
- School based interventions, including curriculum development using Islamic scriptural references
- Mosque based interventions
- HIV education and awareness through Islamic youth organisations.

In Indonesia, Islamic leaders initiated HIV prevention activities on a small scale in 1995, following advocacy by UNICEF to take a lead in HIV response. The advocacy was based on the findings from a situation analysis on HIV/AIDS, including impact on women and children. In September 1995 high-level policy makers from the Government and three major religious groups participated, with UNICEF support, in the International AIDS Conference in Chiang Mai. A national workshop of religious leaders followed in November 1995 with the aim of reaching a consensus on the role of religious leaders in supporting the national HIV strategy. UNICEF also supported a successful pilot project of HIV education and awareness, including peer education, for students in Muslim boarding schools, “Pesantrens” in South Sulawesi. Following completion the project did not continue due to funding constraints.

The second HIV/AIDS ASEAN Regional Workshop of Islamic Religious Leaders was held in Jakarta In July 2000, with the objectives of reviewing the situation and existing activities and formulating a plan of action with clear objectives and activities for implementation. Yet, implementation of HIV activities by the religious community has been limited. In view of the rapidly progressing HIV epidemic in Indonesia, there is an urgent need to scale up the coverage of the prevention and care programmes so that a greater number of people, in particular young people, can have access to information on how to protect themselves from HIV.

5. Partnerships with young people - building a positive perspective of the strengths and protective qualities of young people as leaders and partners in HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

Perspectives of young people in our region are increasingly negative. Leaders at all levels, government, community, religious and private sector, increasingly associate young people with problems, young people as risk takers in the negative sense. There is insufficient understanding and recognition of the protective and positive qualities of young people, of the contributions they can make towards effective HIV/AIDS prevention and care, of the leadership role they play in their peer, family, community and social settings. Insufficient attention is given to the causes and conditions that give rise to greater vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and drug and substance use by children and young people.

These are the same conditions that give rise to sexual exploitation, and poor health and nutrition. These causes and conditions include (1) Sub-standard education, materials, facilities and teaching, (2) Lack of health and development services focused on the needs of young people, (3) Uninformed parenting, by parents who are multiply disadvantaged by poverty. Together, they create a context of multiple vulnerability, and make up the structural determinants of vulnerability to HIV/AIDS by children and young people. All children and young people can be made vulnerable by particular circumstances of their lives. Even in times of severe resource constraints vulnerable members of society must be protected. To respond to the impact of such vulnerability without making the necessary investment in creating secure homes and communities, without providing the necessary services of sufficient quality, is to create and sustain such vulnerabilities.

In response to this, UNICEF plans to expand and strengthen current initiatives with young people across the region, working with young people and their organisations, in social mobilisation and group formation to respond to organisational gaps, with key Cosponsors and INGOs working with young people, and relevant national organisations, government and non-government, and mass organisations.

Positive and developmental framework for working with young people, UNICEF is planning to develop such a framework with key organisations and young people that will demonstrate the positive, protective and leadership qualities of young people, as well as a range of mechanisms for making the best use out of these. Guided by the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, this will take place over the coming 2 years, and assess and analyse the situation and vulnerabilities of young people in the region with regard to a range of vulnerabilities and risks, especially HIV/AIDS and drug and substance use, in countries in various stages of economic and social transition. It will emphasise the importance and the benefits of listening to young people and seeking their help and their leadership in the finding of solutions to the problems faced by young people.

Department Level, Ministry of Education Forum on the Integration of Lifeskills-Based Education into National Core Curricula.

Models for integration of the Lifeskills approach to HIV/AIDS and substance abuse prevention have appeared in many countries in the region. None of these models have yet achieved the desired goal of behavior development and change among young people. UNICEF, UNESCO [and UNFPA] will provide leadership in working with the agencies responsible for curriculum development and implementation to share country experiences in Lifeskills-based education across the region and analyze these efforts through a developmental framework. The expected outcome would be greater advocacy support for co-curriculum revision and integration into national core curricula, linkages to health services, and the development of mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

Young People's Forum, Work AIDS Conference, Bangkok 2004.

Young people will be provided a forum to engage other young people and agencies working with young people, government agencies and civil society, to discuss current responses to HIV/AIDS among young people. Special focus will be placed on unmet

health and developmental needs and the resilience and factors that protect young people from infection with HIV. UNICEF will coordinate this activity based on the successful UNICEF coordinated Young People's Track at the 14th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug Related Harm in Chiang Mai, April 2003. (See Attachment B: Summary Report and UNICEF Country Consultations on Young People, Drugs and Substances.)

Menu of Best Practices in Working with Young People

Throughout the region there are more and more examples of young people becoming involved at all stages in issues that concern young people. Many of these, however, are not well documented. UNICEF and UNESCO will lead other Cosponsors in taking leadership in working with young people, government agencies and civil society to determine the criteria for *Best Practice* in HIV/AIDS and drug and substance use prevention programming among young people and to document programs that meet these criteria.

6. Ministerial Consultations

UNICEF holds biannual Ministerial Consultations focusing on the health and well being of children and young people in the East Asia and Pacific Region, bringing together senior government representatives from some 14 countries to consider achievements and lack of achievements against agreed targets concerning children and young people. HIV/AIDS is one of the key issues considered at this meeting. The next UNICEF Ministerial Consultation is scheduled for 5-7 May in Bali, Indonesia.

7. HIV positive people – leadership from the most directly affected persons

What is it? Support for the leadership role of HIV positive people, and the formation and support of self-help groups through the *With Hope & Help* video documentary kit, and supporting HIV positive resource persons in HIV/AIDS prevention and care initiatives, as speakers, in technical review and planning, and as UNICEF staffpersons.

When did it start, where does it operate: The *With Hope & Help* initiative began in 1999, the contracting and employment of HIV positive people as resource persons and staff, in 2001.

What budget is involved? *With Hope & Help* has a cumulative UNICEF investment of approximately US\$ 400,000.

UNICEF has always believed that those at the heart of the issue also must be at the heart of the response. This is evident from our decades of work with children and young people, and the framing, monitoring and reporting on country level adherence with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As we all know, the majority of HIV positive people are young, 15-24 year olds represent more than half of all new infections. We also know that the vast majority of people affected are the children and younger siblings in families where one or both parents are HIV positive.

UNICEF is one of several organisations working to reduce the discrimination and stigma attached to being HIV positive or being in an affected family or community. For UNICEF, the focus has been to move forward to encourage compassion, understanding and support, rather than to respond to negative feelings and actions. This is evidenced in our work and support for the Regional Buddhist Leadership Initiative, and our emerging work with Islamic and Christian leaders and communities. A specific initiative to promote the experiences and qualities of young HIV positive people is the UNICEF *With Hope and Help* initiative. A number of country specific video documentaries produced in Thailand, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Viet Nam, and China, with production planned in 2003 in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. The video documentary is supported by practical manuals providing guidelines for effectively using the video at individual, family and community level, guidelines for supporting HIV positive people, and a self-care guide for HIV positive people. The country kits are then distributed to services organisation together with training in their effective use. In all countries the video has also been shown on national television at the request of national authorities.

8. Training for senior UNICEF Management – HIV/AIDS strategic programme planning leadership

In late 2001 UNICEF developed a training package for UNICEF senior management, and carried out 2 one-week training sessions during the course of 2002 with input from a range of technical partners, including UNAIDS, FHI, Education Development Centre, the Thai Ministry of Public Health, the Thai National AIDS Bureau, HIV positive people, and young people working in sex work. The objective of the training is to support a programme and advocacy leadership by UNICEF in key areas of national and regional responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemics, with a priority focus on young people. An HIV/AIDS strategic review and planning workshop format was designed in 2003, to build on the first training package, with the assistance of the Burnett Institute, Centre for International Health and key technical specialists, within and external to UNICEF.

ATTACHMENT A: MTSP summary

Distribution:
General

E/ICEF/2001/13
7 November 2001

Original: English

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2001
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

Medium-term strategic plan for the period 2002-2005

Summary

The medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for the period 2002-2005 combines a reinforced results-based management approach and a human rights-based approach to programming. Building on the lessons learned from the implementation of the medium-term plan (MTP) for the period 1998-2001 (E/ICEF/1998/13 and Corr.1), the new plan establishes five organisational priorities, more clearly defines objectives and indicators, and strengthens the strategic use of the evaluation function. The MTSP was developed through a widespread consultation process, involving both junior and senior staff from headquarters and regional and country offices.

Chapter I outlines the role of the MTSP in the management of UNICEF and briefly describes organisational priorities. Chapter II describes a vision for the children of the world and the role of UNICEF. Chapter III analyses the global situation, describes the organisational context and outlines the lessons learned from the MTP for the period 1998-2001. A brief outline of the guiding principles used in the development of the MTSP is included in chapter IV. **Chapter V describes in detail the five organisational priorities of UNICEF: girls' education, integrated early childhood development, immunisation "plus", fighting HIV/AIDS, and improved protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination.** Chapter VI outlines the strategies that UNICEF will use to pursue the organisational priorities: programme excellence; effective country programmes of cooperation; partnerships for shared success; influential information, communication and advocacy; and excellence in internal management and operations. Chapter VI also discusses the implications of the MTSP organisational priorities for country programmes of cooperation.

Chapter VII discusses the resource implications of the MTSP. Funding targets and strategies, which emphasize the crucial role of regular resources in maintaining the integrity of multilateral cooperation for children and in producing results for children, are also laid out in Chapter VII. Chapter VIII discusses the monitoring, reporting and evaluation implications of the MTSP. For the first time, a plan is proposed for the evaluation of the MTSP. Chapter IX describes the financial medium-term strategic plan. Chapter X contains the recommendation. The annexes provide additional details on targets, indicators, core intervention areas and partnership frameworks, and on regional sub-emphases.

* E/ICEF/2001/12.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) is the UNICEF corporate plan for the period 2002-2005. **The MTSP provides the framework for UNICEF activities in programmes, partnerships, alliances, advocacy and internal operations at headquarters and in regional and country offices for the next four years. It serves three main functions. First, it provides an outline of the role in and contribution of UNICEF to the promotion of the draft *World fit for children* (WFFC), the final declaration of the forthcoming General Assembly Special Session on Children, for the first four years of that agenda, and for the long-term development agenda of the Millennium Declaration and the International Development Targets. Second, the MTSP describes UNICEF organisational priorities and objectives for the next four years, as well as the strategies and financial base necessary to meet those objectives. Finally, by clearly defining what UNICEF seeks to achieve and how it will achieve it, the MTSP serves as a tool of accountability for UNICEF to all its stakeholders.**

2. UNICEF will play both an operational and a catalytic role in the promotion of the draft WFFC, the Millennium Declaration and the International Development Targets. Through its programmes of cooperation, the organization will directly contribute to achieving results for children. Programmes and projects for service delivery, capacity building and empowerment are the vehicles for producing results. Through its alliances, partnerships, advocacy, monitoring, research and policy analysis at all levels, UNICEF will also influence actions of a much larger group of actors for children, including Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations and private sector bodies. The MTSP describes how UNICEF will play both the operational and catalytic roles over the next four years.

3. Based on the analysis by the Secretary-General of the situation of children worldwide a decade after the World Summit for Children (“We the children: End –decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children”, A/S-27/3), and based on its own comparative advantage, UNICEF has identified five priority areas where it can make the biggest impact on the lives of children, in support of the Millennium Declaration, the International Development Targets and the draft WFFC: girls’ education; integrated early childhood development (ECD); immunisation “plus”; fighting HIV/AIDS; and improved protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination.

4. UNICEF will pursue these organisational priorities not only through programmes of cooperation, but also through alliances, partnerships, advocacy, monitoring, research and policy analysis at all levels. The organization will use its global presence, its country programme capacity and its voice to help change the world with children. In pursuing these priorities, UNICEF will put children at the heart of every agenda and find effective ways to ensure that children’s voices are heard. Following the principle of mainstreaming emergency operations, the five organisational priorities will be pursued in both regular and emergency programmes. UNICEF will pursue these priorities in a manner consistent with the spirit and the longer-term perspective provided by the Millennium Declaration, the International Development Targets, the draft WFFC, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. UNICEF views the two Conventions as complementary.

5. The MTSP for the period 2002-2005 serves as an instrument of accountability for the organization to its stakeholders by strengthening its longstanding commitment to results-based management. Results must ultimately be seen as the progressive realisation of the rights of the child; in this way, the MTSP combines results-based management with the more recent commitment of UNICEF to a rights-based approach to programming for children and women. Having described its organisational priorities and the objectives that it will seek to achieve, UNICEF will report systematically on results achieved against the five organisational priorities, and on the constraints faced. In the everyday practice of development cooperation, results for children are achieved through partnerships between many organizations. UNICEF will report on results for which it can be held accountable within the context of such partnerships. The annual report of the Executive Director (Part II) to the Executive Board will focus on results achieved against the five organisational priorities.

6. Achieving results, as well as continued strengthening of UNICEF internal systems to achieve those results, will be contingent in large measure on adequate growth of UNICEF income, especially regular resources. The UNICEF fund-raising target continues to be \$1.5 billion per annum by 2005, with a

target of 7 per cent annual growth in regular resources income over the MTSP period. A steady real growth in regular resources income is required if UNICEF is to maintain its universal presence, build capacity in new areas and maintain its lead role as the impartial advocate for the world's children and catalyst for constructive change for and with children.

7. The MTSP has been developed based on the principles, concepts and tools endorsed by the Executive Board in the UNICEF mission statement (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.2), the multi-year funding framework (MYFF) (E/ICEF/2000/5), the report on "Emerging issues for children in the twenty-first century" (A/AC.256/3-E/ICEF/2000/13), and the principles expected to be approved by the General Assembly in the draft WFFC. The goals of the draft WFFC are not fully finalised, but their general direction is broadly agreed to, and they correspond closely to the priorities expressed in the Millennium Declaration, the International Development Targets, the World Education Forum Framework for Action and the Declaration of Commitment of the United Nations Special Session on HIV/AIDS.

8. The MTSP was developed through a wide process of participation. In addition to the global management team and the regional management teams, three groups played central roles in its development: an inter-divisional taskforce representing all headquarters divisions and offices and chaired by the Division of Evaluation, Policy and Planning; a network of regional office focal points; and, for the first time, a sounding board of 15 country office-based staff below the level of representative.

II. THE UNICEF VISION

9. UNICEF is guided by a vision of the world where leaders commit to use their power and influence to assure, for every child, the rights and opportunities to grow to adulthood in dignity, security and self-fulfilment. In such a world, the best interests of the child, non-discrimination, the participation of children, and their survival and full development are the basic principles of governance. The Convention on the Rights of the Child guides law, attitudes, policies and programmes for children. Governments, private bodies and civil society focus their efforts on achieving social and economic development and human rights for all, through striving to reach the goals of the Millennium Summit and the International Development Targets.

10. In such a world, childhood is a time of loving and playful learning. Families are assisted in their role as teachers and protectors of their children. They have the time, knowledge and commitment to foster the development of positive attitudes and behaviour in their children. Societies accept the collective responsibility to expose every child to the knowledge, skills and education needed to survive, grow and develop. This is a world where the safety and well-being of each child are priorities, where gender, religion and ethnicity are differences that enrich the world, and where children are taught to respect each person's dignity.

11. In order to achieve these aims, all sectors of society need to be committed and hold themselves accountable for taking actions on behalf of children. This should include a broad range of partners, including the entire United Nations system, Governments, international financial institutions, NGOs, religious groups, the private sector, the media, the general public, families and, not least, children themselves. This requires the mobilization of potential partners well beyond existing coalitions for children to include new and hitherto unlikely partners. Only with a broad-based and diverse partnership dedicated to the cause of children will it be possible to build - together with children - a better world.

12. UNICEF recognises that the rights, equality and empowerment of women are particularly important in the creation of healthy families, communities and nations, and as positive models of development for girls and boys. UNICEF is therefore committed, as described in its mission statement, "to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social and economic development of their communities". UNICEF is the passionate driving force behind this vision and will continually strive to inspire solutions, mobilise resources and turn the spotlight on critical issues as it works with partners to make vision and principles come alive for children.

D. Organisational priority number 4: fighting HIV/AIDS

Rationale

HIV/AIDS has emerged as the single most important threat to the fulfilment of children's and women's rights in sub-Saharan Africa, and increasingly in other regions of the world. Even regions where prevalence is still relatively low have millions of infected and affected people. The history of the pandemic indicates that, once a relatively low level of prevalence is reached (around 2 per cent), the number of people infected with HIV is likely to grow rapidly. No region is safe. The HIV/AIDS pandemic exacerbates many of the interlocking problems that affect children, including poverty, malnutrition, discrimination, inadequate access to basic social services, armed conflict, gender inequities and the sexual exploitation of girls and women. The pandemic also depletes and stretches capacities at all levels – within government services, communities and families – which are key to ensuring the protection and fulfilment of children's rights. The rationale for an aggressive response to HIV/AIDS is based not only on an appreciation of the threat that HIV/AIDS constitutes to children, but also on the recognition that HIV infection is preventable and that effective technologies and interventions exist to halt the epidemic and provide care, protection and support for those affected and infected. The challenge in the medium term is to mobilise the leadership, commitment, popular participation and resources.

UNICEF medium-term targets for the period 2002-2005

Contributing to the achievement of the commitments agreed at the United Nations Special Session on HIV/AIDS, the medium-term aim of UNICEF is to “support and strengthen the capacities of individuals, families, communities and nations to prevent HIV infection and ensure protection and care for children and young people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS”. More specifically, UNICEF will support actions to: (a) prevent new infections among young people; (b) prevent parent-to-child transmission of the HIV virus; (c) expand access to care and support for children and their families living with HIV and AIDS; and (d) expand care, protection and support for children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS. Seeking these results for children, UNICEF will intensify its advocacy and programming efforts to ensure the achievement of the following medium-term objectives:

- (a) By 2005, ensure that all UNICEF country programmes have conducted a gender- and age-disaggregated assessment and analysis of the HIV/AIDS situation and its actual or potential impacts on children and young people, and have developed country programme strategies and actions to respond to HIV and AIDS, guided by the global strategy framework;
- (b) By 2005, ensure that national policies and strategies have been approved and action plans are being implemented to reduce the risk and vulnerability of young people, with special attention to the vulnerability of young girls and the involvement of male adolescents in prevention of HIV infection, in countries with emerging, concentrated and generalized epidemics;
- (c) By 2005, ensure that national policies, strategies and action plans are under implementation to prevent parent-to-child transmission of HIV in all countries affected by HIV/AIDS; and
- (d) By 2005, ensure that national policies, strategies and action plans are developed and implemented to ensure protection and care for children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS in all countries affected by HIV/AIDS.

Core interventions

Global mobilization and regional and country-level action will be focused on intensifying programming in four key areas.

Preventing HIV infection among young people

Contributing to the achievement of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICDP)+5 goal of ensuring that, by 2005, 90 per cent of young men and women aged 15 to 24 have

access to the information, education and services necessary to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection, UNICEF supports actions to:

- (a) Break the silence surrounding HIV and AIDS, address stigma and discrimination, and build participation in the response to HIV and AIDS;
- (b) Ensure that all children and young people are informed about HIV/AIDS and have life skills learning opportunities to reduce their vulnerability and enable them to avoid risky behaviour;
- (c) Promote and expand access to youth-friendly, gender-sensitive health services to enable young people's access to confidential HIV testing and counselling, to information, education and counselling, and to sexual and reproductive health services, including access to condoms and the treatment of sexually transmitted diseases;
- (d) Scale up and sustain communication and social mobilization initiatives promoting HIV/AIDS awareness and healthy lifestyles, encourage intergenerational communication, and promote peer and adult solidarity, respect and support for young people;
- (e) Increase the proportion of young girls staying in school, and strengthen the capacity of schools to respond to the HIV/AIDS pandemic;
- (f) Reduce the vulnerability of children and young people, especially girls, at particularly high risk of HIV infection, e.g., street children, injecting drug users, sexually exploited children, children in prisons and institutions, and children and young people living in contexts of violence and conflict;
- (g) Empower women and girls to protect themselves from HIV infection, promote responsible male partnership and participation, and address the gender inequities, violence, discrimination and unequal power relations that fuel the epidemic; and
- (h) Ensure that young people are central to planning, implementation and monitoring of actions which involve and affect them.

The prevention of HIV infection among young people, by reducing their vulnerability and risk to HIV infection, will form the core of the UNICEF global response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and will be a priority in all regions.

Preventing parent-to-child transmission of HIV

Guided by the United Nations Special Session on HIV/AIDS Declaration of Commitment to reduce the proportion of infants infected with HIV by 20 per cent by 2005, UNICEF supports actions to:

- (a) Prevent HIV infection among women of childbearing age;
- (b) Strengthen family and community support for women and their partners to prevent HIV infection and access services to prevent parent-to-child transmission;
- (c) Expand access to Voluntary and Confidential Counselling and Testing (VCCT) to enable pregnant women and their partners to know their status and be supported in decisions related to their own and their child's health;
- (d) Improve antenatal care to assure the good health and nutritional well-being of women and to ensure safe delivery;
- (e) Increase access and use of anti-retroviral drugs for the prevention of vertical transmission of HIV;
- (f) Provide counselling and advice for the appropriate feeding of infants born to HIV-positive mothers; and

- (g) Improve the health and nutritional status and well-being of parents and infants living with HIV/AIDS.

The prevention of parent-to-child transmission of HIV will be a particular concern in those regions and countries where HIV prevalence is already high.

Providing care for children and parents living with HIV and AIDS

UNICEF will support actions to expand care and support for children, young people and parents living with HIV/AIDS through:

- (a) Strengthening and better integrating: the care and support for persons living with HIV/AIDS components within current health system strengthening initiatives, especially the IMCI initiative; nutritional support programmes; youth friendly health services; and prenatal and postnatal care services (including prevention of parent-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS) for women and their partners;
- (b) Facilitating country access to essential drugs and supplies required for identifying and monitoring HIV status and managing AIDS; and
- (c) Strengthening home-based care programmes, nutritional and psychosocial support and family skills in the care and support for HIV-positive children and young people.

The care for children, young people and parents living with HIV and AIDS will be a particular concern in those regions and countries where HIV prevalence is already high.

Ensuring protection, care and support for orphans and children in families made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS

Seeking to ensure that all children realise their right to grow up in caring, protective families, or family-like environments, and to promote alternative care solutions that are guided by the best interests of the child, UNICEF will, depending on the local situation, support actions to:

- (a) Introduce policies and legislation to define standards of protection and care for orphans and vulnerable children based on the best interests of each child and their rights to family life, i.e., fostering and adoption, inheritance and property rights, and community-based care; and ensure that children's rights to a family, or a family-like environment, are fulfilled, including developing ways and means to ensure that recourse to institutions is a last resort, a temporary/transitional form of care until a family environment is found;
- (b) Ensure access to essential quality social services for children (health, nutrition, education, welfare and information); and ensure that orphans and children affected by HIV/AIDS are treated on an equal basis with other children;
- (c) Strengthen and support community capacity to identify and monitor vulnerable households and to provide for orphans and vulnerable children in a supportive environment under the care and protection of a responsible adult, i.e., community-based vulnerability monitoring, leadership orientation and community facilitation, support for community initiatives, and home-based care and support; and
- (d) Ensure special measures to protect orphans and vulnerable children from violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

The protection, care and support for orphans and children in families made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS will be a particular concern in those countries where HIV prevalence is already high.

The principal vehicle of UNICEF for supporting the fight against HIV/AIDS is the country programme. At country office level, UNICEF actions will include some or all of the following:

- (a) Support to situation analyses and policy studies, including a gender perspective, to deepen understanding of the factors driving the epidemic, their consequences and opportunities for action;
- (b) Support to advocacy to mobilise understanding, commitment and action;
- (c) Improvement of the quality and use of information in designing, monitoring and reporting on the response to HIV/AIDS;
- (d) Support for the establishment of policies, standards and legislation to enable an expanded response;
- (e) Strengthening of essential services (health, nutrition, education, welfare, information and community facilitation);
- (f) Developing information, communication and social mobilization interventions to achieve the targets for prevention, care and support;
- (g) Developing partnerships with non-governmental and civil society partners to support community-based action; and
- (h) Ensuring that local actors have access to state-of-the-art information on research and scientific developments, programmatic and technical guidance, and information on operational experiences, including best practices.

At the regional and global levels, emphasis will be placed on advocacy, the development of programming and technical guidance, partnership development, resource mobilization, knowledge acquisition and networking, and staff development.