

East Timor

National Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive and Multi- Sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS/STI. 2002 – 2005

**Ministerio da Saude
Timor Leste**

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Executive Summary

HIV prevention is a priority in building the new nation of East Timor as articulated by the Prime Minister Dr Mari Alkatiri. The Ministry of Health lead the preparation of this first National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS/STI Prevention and Care, 2002-2005 for East Timor. The Plan has been developed through an extensive, twelve-month multi-phase consultation process which included inputs from 139 community stakeholders, twelve district-based focus group discussions involving 221 people, international experts, the United Nations theme groups, international NGOs and bilateral donors. It also involved review of existing responses in East Timor and review of twelve national strategic plans from Asia, the Pacific and Africa to draw lessons and evidence-based practices. A preliminary draft of the plan was circulated among the key stakeholders for further discussion.

The first National HIV/AIDS/STI Conference was held on 7-8 June in Dili, East Timor to consult a wide audience on the draft strategic plan. The National Conference was opened by the President of East Timor with opening statements from a person living with HIV/AIDS in East Timor, representative of the UN, the churches and the government. Participants included different Ministries, NGOs, the United Nations, International NGOs, International Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) and East Timor Police and Military services, staff from all Divisions of Ministry of Health and district level health officers. The final Strategic Plan incorporated inputs from the National Conference participants.

This Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS/STI covers a three-year span from 2002 to 2005. It provides the strategic content of the HIV component of the National Development Plan and is consistent with the National Health Policy and Plan of East Timor. The plan is developed in the context of challenges of a post-conflict new nation in its Nation-building phase, which requires extensive capacity building, building of social capital, infrastructure and institution development.

Four mutually supporting strategies guides this Plan:

1. Creating an enabling environment.
2. Coordination, research and evaluation mechanisms.
3. Promoting development responses to reduce HIV vulnerabilities.
4. Building community resilience.

A National HIV/AIDS/STI Programme Coordination Secretariat is being set-up within the Ministry of Health with the Director of Special Services Division as the manager of the Secretariat. The Secretariat supports the East Timor HIV/AIDS/STI programme. The programme will be developed based on the National HIV/AIDS/STI Strategy Plan and guided by a National HIV/AIDS/STI Advisory Council composed of representations from Ministries, church, NGOs, private sectors with additional observers from the United Nations Theme Group, Bilateral Donors and International NGOs. The member plus observers composition of the National HIV/AIDS/STI Advisory Council could be the

Country Coordination Mechanism of East Timor for the Global Fund for TB, Malaria and AIDS.

Successful implementation of this first Strategic Plan would need strong partnership with multiple sectors: education, communication, transport, maritime, public works, finance and planning, social welfare, labour, law and judiciary, tourism, and uniformed services,

The Strategic Plan will be submitted to the Council of Ministers for review and official endorsement.

The next step of this first National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS/STI, 2002-2005 is to develop concrete, time-bound, costed annual work programme. The annual work programme shall reflect the geographic locations, specific organizations and partnership to activate a National HIV prevention programme. Due to the lack of information and system of surveillance at present, the emphasis in the first work programme is on early detection of HIV threats to East Timor society and devise appropriate, coordinated, proactive responses based on multiple sectoral partnerships at central, regional and district/ community levels. Establishment with linkages to regional and global networks could facilitate the capacity building of the future National HIV prevention Programme.

A good beginning is half way towards reaching the goals and vision of this Strategic Plan. To build a solid foundation of effective, quality responses to HIV prevention in East Timor would require substantial investments in human resources and programme infrastructures. East Timor needs a coordinated approach to mobilize external technical and financial resources to support its building of a National HIV/AIDS/STI prevention and care programme. Regular consultations with International communities, e.g. the United Nations, bilateral donors, international NGOs and multi-national business communities to support the government, NGOs and other civil society organizations are necessary to ensure achievements of the vision.

Vision

Together, East Timorese build a healthy nation by developing sustainable responses to HIV/AIDS/STI.

Goal Statement

Mobilising a multisectoral, coordinated response to reduce transmission and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS/STI so as not to hinder the socio-economic development of individuals, communities and the nation.

I. Introduction

The newly independent government of East Timor is concerned about the threat of HIV to the effort in building the nation. In its commitment to early, strategic action to prevent the spread of HIV in East Timor, the Ministry of Health initiated a process of developing a comprehensive and multi sectoral to HIV/AIDS/STI. The Prime Minister, Dr. Mari Alkatiri, publicly acknowledged the challenges of HIV to East Timor and has committed the nation to HIV prevention as a national priority. The Ministry of Health drafted this national strategic plan for HIV/AIDS/STI (NSPHA) through a steering committee consisting of members of the National Working Group on HIV/AIDS/STI and independent technical advisors.

This National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan contributes to the fulfilment of the National Development Plan¹ and the National Health Policy and Plan². It seeks to ensure an effective and coordinated response from government, local and international NGOs, religious sector, other civil society organizations, United Nations, and bi-laterals. This first plan provides the framework for the assessment of the current situation and responses, and a tool for policy and political advocacy. There is limited local research upon which to make long-term plans, however this plan is a starting point – a basis from which we can start to act.

This plan lays out the guiding principles for HIV/AIDS/STI prevention in East Timor. A concrete, time-bound, prioritised annual work programme, which includes costing of the programme, shall be formulated in consultation with key stakeholders.

II. The HIV/AIDS/STI situation in East Timor

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) causes acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), which is infectious and life long. HIV destroys the human immune system leaving the infected person vulnerable to other infections and diseases. At present, there is no vaccine to protect us against the virus and there

is no cure for the infection. The period of time from infection with HIV to the recognisable signs of AIDS can be anywhere from three to ten years, and in this period, knowingly or not, an infected person can spread the infection to others. The UNAIDS estimate that of the 58 million people worldwide who are already infected, 7.8 million are in Asia and the Pacific. Worldwide, 22 million people have already died from AIDS and nearly 15,000 new infections occur every day due to lack of prevention efforts. An HIV epidemic has the potential to subvert East Timor national development economically, socio-culturally and politically.

Based on findings from a situation assessment, the actual prevalence of HIV/AIDS/STI in East Timor is not known due to lack of an HIV surveillance system. Recorded HIV infections in East Timor have been low. Un-protected sexual networking of individuals living with HIV/AIDS further acts as a bridge of infection into the wider population. For example, unknowingly an infected person could transmit his/her infection to the spouse.

Poverty, social conflicts, high rate of illiteracy, lack of educational facilities and qualified teachers contribute to the overall population's lack of HIV knowledge, awareness and skills in prevention thus fuel their vulnerability to HIV. In addition, youth are sexually active and some engage in drug use. It is not uncommon to have sexually transmitted infections. However, condom use for prevention of STI/HIV is very low at present.

East Timor has a strong Catholic church and venerated community leaders. The social fabric, coupled with the recent struggle for independence and self-determination reflect the placing of community well being over Individual well-being, the importance of extended family and kinship networks and the yearnings for human rights.

East Timorese culture provides strong moral values yet women's status in society is low. In addition to population displacement and an increase in domestic population movement, there is an influx of foreigners, which bring with them diverse behaviours, cultures and values. People with HIV/AIDS/STI are invisible thus there is no open acknowledgment of their difficulties. Potential stigma and discrimination could be an obstacle for care and support outreach.

Establishing an HIV/AIDS/STI surveillance system, which could provide early warning signals to the potential spread and increase of HIV epidemics in East Timor, is critical. Such a surveillance system would differ from the conventional focus of sero-surveillance. Sero-surveillance only captures infections already occurred. A surveillance system that could reflect early warning signals includes mapping of HIV vulnerabilities, appropriately designed behavioural surveillance complemented by a sero-surveillance. The East Timor surveillance system needs to be able to capture the social determinants including magnitude, pattern, of profile migration of people and their vulnerabilities many of which are linked to locations or occurrences of constructions or economic development. STI, drug

resistant TB and their association to HIV transmission in East Timor also need to be linked to such a system.

III. The national HIV/AIDS/STI strategic planning process

The guiding principles of the National HIV/AIDS/STI Strategic Plan draws on government leadership to enable a multisectoral collaboration and partnership, right to health, gender and culturally sensitive services include evidence-based learning and best practices.

The East Timor Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS/STI has been developed through community consultations, review of existing responses, matching of evidence and international best practices to East Timor circumstances and exploration of potential donor supports. Considering the unique institutional challenges of a post conflict, newly born nation, the strategic plan includes an institutional framework, as well as development of administrative and policy guidelines. The plan also acknowledges the community values as the foundation of this action framework.

This first National HIV/AIDS/STI strategy seeks to ensure multisectoral efforts in reducing the causes and consequences of HIV/AIDS/STI are effective and coordinated.

Situation assessment

The first step in developing this strategic plan was a situation assessment³ in the form of community consultations. The Ministry of Health consulted key stakeholders on the principles, strategies, priorities and institutional framework as well as ascertaining the current HIV/AIDS/STI knowledge and attitudes. Interviews were conducted with 139 community representatives based on a structured questionnaire. Ten district-based focus group discussions were conducted with 221 people covering a cross-section of the communities, e.g. political groups, youth, religious groups, *sucu* chiefs and government workers. The consultation findings are reflected in Section II *The HIV/AIDS/STI situation in East Timor*.

Review of existing responses in East Timor

A response analysis has been conducted⁴. This analysis reviewed what is being done in terms of activities, coverage, roles, adequacy and weakness. Most responses were on raising public awareness, particularly amongst youth. Efforts are being made to improve knowledge base of health staff. Activities up to now are limited due to lack of materials in local languages; capability of NGOs and number of trained and qualified outreach workers.

There is a need for genuine ownership of responses by East Timores. The future responses have to be culturally sensitive and technically sound. There is a gap in response packages, which could be disseminated to wider geographic areas to improve coverage. At present, HIV/AIDS/STI prevention responses in East Timor

are patchy. This plan is the first step towards a coordinated, strategic response to ensure priority and strategic coverage.

The plan has incorporated inputs by experts from the United Nations system and other bi-lateral agencies. It reflects a dynamic process that will continuously be refined as the knowledge of HIV situation in East Timor improves and as the ability to respond is strengthened. This plan was presented to independent reviewers and key stakeholders for comments and for resource mobilization.

IV Lessons from other Countries

A broad literature review was conducted as well as review of twenty national and regional HIV/AIDS/STI strategic plans in Asia, the Pacific and Africa. The emphasis is on addressing the social and behavioural determinants in order to design proactive preventive measures and mitigate consequences of HIV infection. The following points summarized highlights from the literature review.

➤ ***Multi-sectoral collaborative responses are necessary***

HIV/AIDS/STI has the potential to subvert the building of a new nation. It is not just another health care problem. To mitigate the socio-economic impact, it is the responsibility of every East Timorese to prevent HIV. Active participation of sectors such as education, communication, construction, finance, planning, public works, transportation, social welfare, labour, law and judiciary, tourism, military and police is essential. Mobilisation of *sucos*, district and central levels administrators, political parties, churches, and other faith-based communities are basic ingredients to attain the vision of this National Strategic Plan.

➤ ***Capacity building is the foundation and integrated approach is effective response***

Adequate training, technical assistance, institutional and professional capacity building for health care providers and other sector workers are essential for effective responses to HIV/AIDS/STI prevention among vulnerable populations in East Timor. Creating strategic national and international training opportunities for the selected individuals and groups, inviting carefully selected technical assistance in programme management, quality control, policy making, surveillance, and skill building are envisaged in this plan. Integrated STI management and preventive efforts of other sectors are essential component of a national response to HIV/AIDS/STI.

➤ ***The needs of vulnerable populations are manifold, supportive social climate respecting human rights is effective prevention***

As in other post-conflict situations, East Timorese are vulnerable to HIV. For building a healthy nation gender specific vulnerability, poverty, population mobility, access to treatment, levels of education and cultural barriers of condom use are critical factors influencing the outcome of interventions. Stigma and discrimination are barriers to effective prevention. Essential infrastructures,

service and support systems contributing to reduce populations' vulnerabilities are to be developed.

V. Resources mobilization

A good beginning is half way to success. To build a solid foundation of effective, quality responses in East Timor would require substantial investments in human resources development and developing a sound programme infrastructure. East Timor needs substantial financial and technical inputs at this moment to convert this strategic plan into concrete, coordinated actions.

Regular consultations will continue to be held with bilaterals, multilaterals and international non-governmental organizations to match the priority national HIV/AIDS/STI actions with potential available technical and financial resources.

The Government of East Timor is committed to *a rapid capacity building of individuals and institutions* for the prevention of HIV and a supportive social environment where people with HIV/AIDS/STI enjoy equally the basic human rights in East Timor. It will achieve this through strategic partnership with key stakeholders within the country assisted by bilateral and multilateral agencies.

VI. The National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS/STI Prevention and Care in East Timor

Vision

Together, East Timorese build a healthy nation by developing sustainable responses to HIV/AIDS/STI.

Goal statement

Mobilising a multisectoral, coordinated response to reduce transmission and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS/STI so as not to hinder the socio-economic development of individuals, communities and the nation.

Strategies

The four strategies to achieve the goals are

1. Create an enabling environment
2. Promote development responses to reduce HIV vulnerabilities
3. Build community resilience
4. Develop coordination, research and evaluation mechanisms

These four inter-related and mutually supportive strategies for the National HIV/AIDS/STI Strategic Plan is shown in figure one.

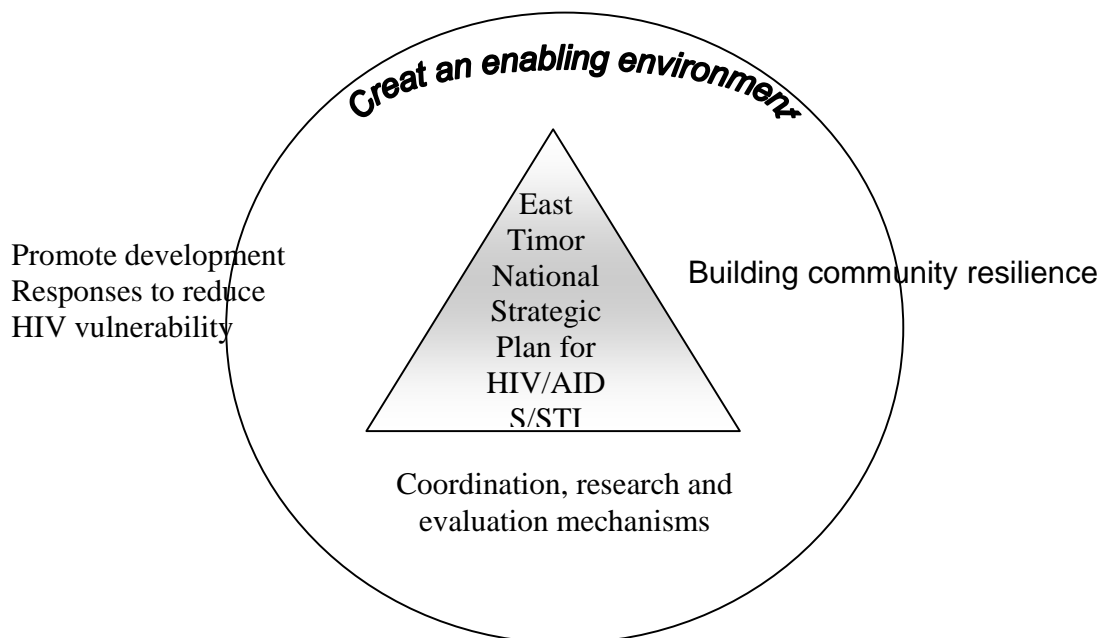


Figure 1. Frame work of the mutually supportive strategies

Strategy One Creating an enabling environment

An 'enabling environment' is an environment at the local and national levels within which social, economic, cultural and political mechanisms. Such an environment fosters active individual and community involvement and promotes effective policies and programs to reduce HIV vulnerabilities. This strategy implies equipping communities and individuals with knowledge, commodities and services, which are necessary to prevent the spread of HIV.

There is an urgent need to develop cohesive HIV/AIDS/STI policies that support effective responses by facilitating action and providing people with the ability to protect themselves. A supportive policy framework will drive culturally appropriate programs that will provide people with the means, knowledge and ability to promote safe behaviour. Support for voluntary counselling, testing and confidentiality. Promote condoms to prevent infection. Reduce harm from injecting drug use. Prevent stigma and discrimination. Retain employment for HIV positive people. Promote access to services and information in languages understood by the people.

An enabling environment that respects the rights of people who are vulnerable to, or infected and affected by HIV is vital for effective HIV prevention. Concerted efforts to develop an enabling environment are essential for the future National HIV/AIDS/STI program in East Timor.

Objective: *East Timor is capable of advocating and creating an enabling environment for prevention and care*

Actions:

- Strengthen the multisectoral National HIV/AIDS/STI Advisory Council's capacity.
- Engage the Justice Ministry and the community to develop a legal and policy framework on HIV/AIDS/STI, which is non-discriminatory, protects individual confidentiality, ensures workplaces have HIV prevention programs including continued job security for HIV positive employees. These policies should provide input into, and be part of the justice, human rights and gender equality programs outlined in the National Development Plan.
- Promote leadership for HIV prevention within each sector.
- Devise specific laws to protect the rights of people vulnerable to or infected and affected by HIV/AIDS/STI including availability of and access to appropriate prevention, treatment options, care and support services and networks. This includes establishing procedures for protecting the confidentiality of those tested for HIV.
- Improve the population's overall understanding and compassion for those infected and affected, thus building a more caring and supportive society.

Desired outcomes

- An East Timor legal and policy framework on HIV/AIDS/STI is established.
- Prevention, care and support services are accessible to priority populations in priority locations

Strategy two Coordination, research and evaluation mechanism

Effective program management is essential for a successful National HIV/AIDS/STI prevention and care and support program. This strategy prioritises the developing of assessment, coordination, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms necessary to achieve that. East Timor is a new nation, and has the opportunity to develop mechanisms specific to its situation. Monitoring is a key tool for early indication in change in prevalence and can steer the direction of responses.

The government of East Timor, through the Ministry of Health, coordinates the implementation of the national strategic plan. The Ministry will provide overall coordination and secretariat support of HIV activities in East Timor of the involvement across Ministries, between levels of government (national, districts, sucos), NGOs, private sectors, other civil society organizations in addition to cooperative technical assistance from all stakeholders including bilateral and multi-lateral agencies.

Building and developing the HIV competence of Government, non-government and the communities is a foundation for effective responses. These resources are to be supported by a streamlined management and reporting structure including regular, pro-active monitoring and evaluation as well as sharing of experiences among implementing entities.

The social variables such as changes in practices and behavior of the population, gender related vulnerability to HIV/STI infection, cultural shifts, population movements and implications of development projects on potential HIV infections should be monitored.

Objective: *The national AIDS program is capable of detecting early warning signals based on changes in the epidemics and of devising relevant and timely responses.*

Actions for assessment

- Mapping of vulnerability to identify vulnerable groups (eg street children, male and female sex workers, men who have sex with men, uniformed services, foreign visitors, returnees, etc.), mobility patterns and profiles, urban-rural differentials and gender differential and cultural shifts.
- Establish behavioural sentinel surveillance.
- Monitor the drug abuse pattern of young people and an early warning system on injecting drug use.

- Develop National HIV/AIDS/STI sero sentinel surveillance system
- Develop National HIV/AIDS/STI case reporting system.
- Link monitoring and other analyses to develop a feedback loop and provide feedback to the communities, which include national and district comparisons as an early warning system.
- Develop an evaluation framework, which includes program evaluation and monitoring indicators and procedures that will provide the necessary feedback for pro-active adjustment of interventions.

All national monitoring will need to be consistent with, and linked into the national monitoring strategy outlined in the National Development Plan.

Actions for program management & coordination

- Establish multi sectoral National HIV/AIDS/STI Advisory Council - the key advisory body of the government, to provide policy, program guidance for the implementation of the national HIV/AIDS/STI strategy. The NHAAC should consist of a representative from each sectoral ministry, as well as one representative from the NGO sector, mass organizations, the church, donors, private sector, people with HIV/AIDS and UN agencies. Such a composition could serve as the “county coordinating mechanism” as required by the Global Fund for TB, HIV/AIDS and Malaria.
- Develop a program management organizational structure, personnel profiles, descriptions for each role, and selection criteria/procedures for staffing, including performance appraisal system. This should be consistent with the public administration and governance program in the National Development Plan, particularly transparency, institutional strengthening, decentralization and participation.
- Devise mechanisms that integrate active community participation (including vulnerable communities and PWHA) in data collection, clinical and social research, thus strengthening program’s reach and social impact.
- Develop the capacity to provide costing and cost-benefit analyses of alternative program/response options including treatment options to aid in selecting cost-effective options suitable for the East Timor context.
- Establish a national research ethics and standards committee.
- Develop a research plan, which includes social and operational research.
- Develop a system to monitor, compile and disseminate “lessons learned” on a continuing basis, and to use this as the foundation for scaling up effective interventions. This will need to include a HIV/AIDS/STI information-clearing house. Develop an information exchange to ensure receiving key reports, and for dissemination of information.
- Identify the functions of different stakeholders responsible for implementing components of the future national HIV/AIDS/STI programme.
- As part of program planning, develop an annual work program detailing location, time-frame personnel, costing and achievement indicators for priority actions.

Actions for building partnerships

- Engage government sectors, (I)NGO, CBOs, bilateral, multi-lateral organizations to provide technical and financial support for HIV/AIDS/STI programs. This includes foreign affairs, agriculture, education, finance, justice, transport and communication, water and public works, etc.
- Devise an ongoing consultation mechanism with the Church and other religions groups to engage their support for the implementation of the national strategies. In partnership with religious groups, develop training on HIV/AIDS/STI for spiritual leaders.
- Engage the press, private sector and tourism sectors to advocate HIV prevention.
- Develop HIV/AIDS/STI prevention and response advocacy for members of parliament.
- Facilitate on going community consultation on HIV/AIDS/STI issues
- Strategically engage international technical assistance to strengthen the local capacity to implement the priorities of the strategic plan.

Actions for resource mobilization

- Assess and devise a training plan based on the national strategic plan and annual work plan. This could include trainee profiles, technical skills required, post training functions of the graduates, mechanisms for training others, etc.
- Identify and negotiate with key international training institutions/universities for the provision of fellowships/ scholarships and collaborative arrangements for technical resource network. For example, satellite conferences supported by the World Bank could provide one of the avenues for this network.
- Collaborate with the UN resident coordinator to organise regular donor roundtables as a venue for providing progress reports on implementation of the strategic plan, and for soliciting financial/technical support for filling the program gaps.
- Develop a gap analysis between existing resources and program requirements, to be used as the basis for a proposal to submit to the Global Fund, utilising available technical advice, and political networks.
- Support mechanisms that provide coordination of available resources to ensure fulfilment of priorities and geographic and sectoral coverage

Desired outcomes

- The monitoring system detects changes in HIV prevalence and provides sufficient information to adjust program responses.
- The program addresses the particular needs of vulnerable groups
- Program responses reflect findings from monitoring system.
- The National HIV/AIDS/STI Advisory Council provides high quality advice and guidance for the program.
- The community participates in data collection, social and clinical research and policy development.

- Clear guidelines and expectations exist for the roles of community groups, (I)NGOs, donors, bi-laterals and multi-laterals.

Strategy Three Promoting development responses to reduce HIV vulnerability

This is a people-centred strategy to develop community-driven responses to HIV/AIDS/STI by reducing the underlying socio-economic vulnerabilities which contribute to the lack of options available to people.

East Timorese should have appropriate access to HIV prevention information, skills to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection. Access to be available for necessary preventative commodities (condoms, clean needles, syringes, STI medication, etc), services and technical support. Special attention will be given to youth and other vulnerable groups such as entertainment workers, men who have sex with men, patients with sexually transmitted infections, the hospitality industry and prisoners.

An effective and sustained HIV/STI education program for members East Timor and international uniformed services is essential.

Leaders at all levels should have access to HIV/AIDS/STI related information, education and communication, in ways that are understandable and acceptable to them. This information could include a regular update of the HIV/AIDS/STI statistics in their communities with comparisons to other communities and national statistics.

Objective *The Health system is capable of providing HIV/STI prevention services, and appropriate care and support measures.*

Actions for the health system

- Developing HIV diagnostic facilities and voluntary HIV screening for STI patients.
- A Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) facility, with a referral network which can support regional centres.
- Build health care workers' skills in identification of HIV infection and clinical management of AIDS patients,
- Establish clinical guidelines, procedures and training, including
 - promotion of universal precautions including reporting of accidents
 - preventing mother to child transmission
 - post exposure prophylaxis for the health care providers
 - syndromic management of STIs
 - treatment of AIDS patients

- consistent with the National Development Plan strategy on Education and Health
- Conduct quality control of existing condom supply, and a feasibility assessment of condom social marketing. Establish condom distribution logistics.
- Develop a safe blood supply system, institute 'risk behaviour screening' for the blood donors, promote a auto-transfusion programs
- Develop HIV prevention program for government employees, and the communities that their work brings them into contact with (eg road construction, transport, maritime etc.).
- Gender sensitive and equal access to information, services and support, consistent with the gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women component of the National Development Plan.
- Introduce a general drug use awareness program to promote the use of clean needles and syringes
- Monitor of the drug use situation

Desired outcomes

- HIV testing procedures and facilities are available for priority populations
- Clinical guidelines, procedures and training for health workers are in place
- All government employees have access to HIV prevention training

Objective 2 *Communities are provided with preventative knowledge, skills and commodities for prevention that can reduce their vulnerability*

Actions for people

- Develop targeted HIV prevention messages in language understood by the people in line with the development strategy in the National Development Plan
- Engage the Ministry of Education to develop a school based HIV/AIDS/STI curriculum for educational institutions.
- Develop and provide targeted information and education and behavioural change communication (including peer education) for “in and out of school youth”, mobile populations, men who have sex with men, entertainment and sex workers, hospitality industry employees, injecting drug users
- Promote access to condoms to prevent STI and HIV infection, to the East Timor population, as well as foreign visitors, peace-keepers, and members of the uniformed services
- Engaging TV/Radio and printed media to provide airtime for HIV prevention communication, in line with strategies in the National Development Plan.
- Develop community-based HIV prevention activities.

Desired outcomes

- The population of East Timor are aware of the importance of HIV prevention.
- Children in school are aware of the importance of HIV prevention.

- Specific target groups are aware of the importance of HIV prevention

Objective 3 *The development system is capable of integrating HIV preventive responses in their sectors.*

Actions for sectors

- Engage with the specific ministries to provide HIV prevention programs, linked to national training strategies. Specifically;
 - To engage the Minister for Water and Public Works in relation to construction workers, their families and surrounding communities
 - To engage the Minister for Transport and Communications in relation to Maritime transport – seafarers, fishermen
 - To engage the Minister for Agriculture in relation to Rural development
 - To engage the Minister for Justice in relation to uniformed services
 - To engage the Minister of Foreign affairs in relation to customs/immigration and drug traffic control
 - All civil servants
 - To integrate HIV/AIDS/STI training into the strategies outlined in the National Development Plan for development in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.
- Education
 - School – Training teachers and other school staff, integrated with the strategies outlined in the National Development Plan
 - Develop programs to address HIV/STI Prevention needs of the School Children, out of school youth
- Develop cultural orientation programme for visitors to East Timor that includes messages about preventing HIV transmission, including condoms and their availability.

Desired outcomes

- Government workers in all sectors have HIV prevention built into sector specific training packages
- The school curriculum covers HIV/STI prevention needs.
- Visitors to East Timor are provided with HIV prevention messages.

Strategy Four Building community resilience

This strategy involves a conscious effort to strengthen support networks, build up knowledge and skill bases to devise sustainable responses. This requires building partnerships with other communities, governments, NGOs, private sector and civil society organisations. For East Timor this strategy is particularly relevant in its post-conflict stage, as it will have positive impacts wider than responding to the HIV/AIDS/STI epidemics.

Objective 1: The people of East Timor are capable of withstanding the HIV epidemic by strengthening trust and the social safety net

Actions for development responses

- Develop the social safety net through creating economic opportunities that
 - Create alternative income generation opportunities, for example “one village – one product” promotion
 - Reduce poverty
 - Improved household food and livelihood security
 - Improve economic resilience
- Ensure that these responses are linked to the poverty reduction and rural development components of the National Development Plan

Actions for community based prevention, care and support

- Engaging the church for program support and to reinforcing the church youth group network
- Ensuring the involvement of relevant groups in the policy and decision-making processes: People living with HIV/AIDS, equal participation of males and females and involvement of the community voice
- Promoting greater involvement of people with HIV/AIDS in all walks of life so that all East Timorese may benefit from lessons learned about HIV prevention.
- Train NGOs, and CBOs to be able to deliver HIV awareness raising and preventive education, as well as peer support networks for vulnerable communities.
- Household vulnerability reduction – awareness raising in communities where there are mobile populations in order to protect family members, particularly communities where there are a large number of people moving between rural communities and urban centres.

Desired outcomes

- Vulnerable groups have improved access to resources and reduced poverty.
- People living with HIV/AIDS, and their families are receiving support from social network.
- Mobile population understand the implications of HIV infection and change behaviour accordingly.

Objective 2 *Mitigating the social, economic and psychological impact of HIV/AIDS/STI.*

Actions for impact mitigation

- Care and Treatment –

- Design care options, protocols and guidelines that are appropriate for the local socio-economic circumstances, taking into account traditional knowledge base and use of indigenous herbal remedies for symptomatic relief.
- Develop supportive care options for AIDS patients, in hospitals, as well as in the community.
- Home based care and management.
- Community based care and management including psychological support.
- Explore alternative treatment/care/support modalities that fit with East Timor's cultural circumstances.
- Facilitate the formation of self help groups
- Further develop social support networks and social capital
 - Promoting community-wide participation in prevention care and support as a norm
 - Developing support networks such as - PWHA
 - Social capital
 - Forming economic groups/associations/clubs

Desired outcomes

- Those with HIV/AIDS and their families utilise a range of care and treatment options.
- Those with HIV/AIDS and their families and have access to support networks.

IX. Implementation, roles and responsibilities

'HIV/AIDS in East Timor is everybody's business. The Government of East Timor would enable the objective of the National Strategic plan through a broad partnership of stake holders such as bilateral and multilateral agencies, NGOs, institutions of civil societies, members of faith based organizations, people infected and affected with HIV/AIDS, people vulnerable to the infection and the population in general. The Ministry of Health on behalf of the Government of East Timor would play the role of overall coordination and policy making. Government would receive advice on implementing the National Strategic Plan through the National AIDS Advisory council.

The government of East Timor would seek the support of the UN agencies to implement the National strategic plan through a United Nations System Integrated Plan on HIV/AIDS. Such a plan will be the single most valuable indicator of the commitment of the United Nations system to the National Strategic Plan.

X. Monitoring and evaluation

On going monitoring and evaluation of the National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS/STI of East Timor will take place on a number of different levels. At the highest level, there will be clearly stated desired outcomes, and outcome measures for each objective in the National Strategic Plan. These are summarised in this document. Each program response will also require an evaluation component to ensure feedback about the effectiveness of chosen responses. Each response which has been prioritised for action will also require clear outputs, and measurement against the predicted cost-benefit. These should form part of the development of the project brief. Qualitative feedback will also be required on a regular basis to ensure that the program is involving stakeholders, is addressing the National Developmental objective and policy frame work of the Government of East Timor, Ministry of Health and the Advisory Council.