



THE ALLIANCE OF MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL LEADERS ON HIV/AIDS IN AFRICA

Vol. 1, Issue 7, November 2002

EDITORIAL



Col. John B.C. Kabungo
MAYOR OF LUSAKA

HIS WORSHIP, MAYOR OF LUSAKA, COL. KABUNGO

Zambia is a landlocked country. It has a population of about 10.5 million. About 51% are women. The annual growth rate is 2.9%. The population of Lusaka, the capital city, is 1.7 million and annual growth rate is 6%. 20% of the adult population, aged 15 to 49 years, is living with HIV/AIDS. This age group is the one we depend on to transform the economy of the country. Females are more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS due to both biological and socio-economic factors. These factors put females at a higher risk of infection than males.

The impact of HIV/AIDS in the socio-economic context is very profound. It threatens the very fabric of economic growth, human capital development and retards the labour productivity. HIV/AIDS has robbed us of our loved ones and we should not relent in our efforts. In order to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic by reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS and mitigating its impact the entire Zambia Mayors and Municipal leaders from the 72 councils country wide met and formed an Alliance whose chapter was launched in Lusaka on 24th August 2002. The commitment was therefore made by all 72 Councils to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS and mitigate its impact. The preparations and the launch of the Chapter was fully funded by the UNDP in Zambia, for which Zambians are very grateful.

The Alliance is confident that local authorities could make a significant contribution in the fight against HIV/AIDS because they are closer to the community and that infrastructure already exists for the implementation of programmes.

Lack of technical capacity has been identified as one of the major obstacles to meeting the objectives of

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BARCELONA 2002 AIDS CONFERENCE

The Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme participated in the XIV International AIDS Conference in Barcelona from 7 to 12 July 2002, and presented the AMICAALL strategy to a wider international audience. The Alliance's poster and abstract "From Rhetoric to Action: African Mayors and Communities Working Together" was featured during the "Interactions

Between Other Policy Areas and HIV/AIDS: Actors' Roles and Responsibilities" session, providing an opportunity for Conference participants to obtain more in-depth information about the Programme. Videos highlighting AMICAALL activities were shown during the conference and documents on the Alliance and AMICAALL were distributed. Interviews with Spanish TV provided an opportunity to highlight the challenges of HIV/AIDS

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Members of the Manzini Youth Care Choir and Fikile Mthembu, Executive Secretary of the Alliance (top left), with Former President Bill Clinton.

LAUNCH OF ZAMBIA CHAPTER, AUGUST 23/24

The Official Launch of the Zambia Chapter of the Alliance was preceded by a one-day sensitisation workshop held at Mulungushi International Conference Centre in Lusaka on August 23rd 2002. The workshop attracted 115 participants

from the local governments throughout Zambia, together with representatives of UNDP, Government, NGO's and others.

The workshop concluded with the presentation and signing of the Local

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in Africa and presented insight on what local government leaders were doing in respect to these challenges.

During a meeting with the Mayor of Barcelona, a city-to-city twinning was initiated between Barcelona and Windhoek, Namibia with a focus on HIV/AIDS.

The Manzini Youth Care Choir, comprised of 23 orphans and former street children, captivated the audience at the Conference. Through their music, they contribute to raising awareness about HIV/AIDS. This group of talented youngsters is but one tangible illustration of the exceptional contribution the Manzini Youth Care Centre, a Manzini based NGO working with vulnerable children and young people, is making to the social

development of Swaziland, a country seriously affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The Manzini Youth Care Centre, also a partner in the AMICAALL Swaziland Programme, provides a range of support services aimed at helping these young people integrate into their communities. The Manzini Youth Care Choir was one of the most visible and inspiring components of the Cultural Programme of the Barcelona Conference, appearing at numerous events, including the concert "AfriCat Voices for Hope" where they represented Sub-Saharan African countries and at the World Leaders Satellite Session, featuring speakers like former US president, Bill Clinton. ■

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Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) Declaration on HIV/AIDS. The Declaration was presented by the Town Clerk, Lusaka City Council, Mr. Francis Muwowo, and endorsed by each of the Local Governments present, with the AMICAALL Swaziland National Coordinator and Acting Administrative Officer, Alliance Secretariat, as witnesses.

The following day, August 24th 2002, the Zambia Chapter of the Alliance was officially launched. The event commenced with representatives of local governments and invited guests assembling early at Northmead Shopping Centre for a march of solidarity to Mulungushi International Conference Centre, the venue of the launch ceremony. The march included schoolchildren and was led by the Zambia Defence Force Brass Band.

The Launch ceremony commenced at 11h00 with entertainment from a local cultural group. Present to witness this historic occasion were members of the diplomatic corps, members of parliament, government officials, NGO's, civil society organisations and other notaries including Mayors, Municipal Leaders and government officials from all over Zambia. The

guest of honour was the Minister for Local Government and Housing, Hon. Michael Mabenga, who was representing the Republican President, His Excellency Mr. Levy Mwanawasa.

The LGAZ President, Col. Kabungo, acknowledged and welcomed guests, followed by a powerful statement by the Deputy Coordinator of the Alliance, Mr. Fisho Mwale, in which he challenged government and local authorities to act decisively in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

The Resident Coordinator of the UN System in Zambia, Ms Olubanke King-Akerele, spoke next. She presented the UN perspective and committed continued support to the Programme. She expressed appreciation to all who had contributed to making the launch a reality. Special recognition was paid to the Director, UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme, Ms Mina Mauerstein-Bail for her vision, perseverance and commitment to the AMICAALL concept, which has seen increasing success.

Following Ms. King-Akerele's speech, the Mayor of Chililabombwe, Cllr Veronica Mtonga, read The LGAZ Declaration on HIV/AIDS.

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reducing HIV prevalence in Zambia. This has resulted into ineffective translation of policies and strategies for systems development and management at all institutional levels.

UNDP, as a capacity strengthening organization, will employ a strategy that will support projects, which cover three main elements of prevention, care and mitigation of the effects of the disease. Effective response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic requires a partnership approach, involving government ministries, local and international non-governmental organizations, community based organizations, religious organizations, the private sector, UN agencies and bilateral donors.

UNDP, in cooperation with other development partners, non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations has been requested by government to provide support in scaling up HIV/AIDS interventions and strengthening the national capacity for assessing and monitoring the impact of HIV/AIDS.

As local authorities in Zambia, we are very grateful to the UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme and other cooperating partners for the support rendered to organizations engaged in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

We hope other cities in Africa are encouraged to join this growing family of African Mayors and Municipal leaders and would emulate our efforts and also consider launching chapters in their respective countries. ■

The Guest of Honour, Hon. Michael Mabenga, presented the Keynote Address on behalf of His Excellency the President and declared the Zambia Chapter of the Alliance officially launched. In doing so, the Honourable Minister commended the local governments on the initiative and committed the support of the Government to the programme. ■



March preceding the launch of the Zambia Chapter of the Alliance.

BARCELONA AND WINDHOEK: MAYORS WORKING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS HIV/AIDS

During a meeting facilitated by the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme, at the World AIDS Conference in Barcelona in July 2002, the Mayor of Windhoek extended an invitation to the Mayor of Barcelona, Joan Clos I Matheus to visit Windhoek in early September.

The Mayor of Barcelona and a delegation of five officials from the City of Barcelona were the guest of Mayor Matheus Shikongo for two days. A visit to the Alliance Secretariat offices was included on the programme for the official tour

of the City of Windhoek. The visit culminated in an agreement to formalise a twinning relationship between the Cities of Barcelona and Windhoek which will soon be signed. The agreement will result in tangible assistance to the City of Windhoek in three identified priority areas – the AMICAALL Namibia Programme, assistance to orphans and tourism. Several ideas were exchanged on how the assistance can materialise and all involved were impressed with the openness of dialogue and commitment of the City of Barcelona to assist in concrete ways. ■



Left to right: Mayor of Barcelona: Joan Clos I Matheus, Mayor of Windhoek: M. Matheus Shikongo, Acting Executive Secretary of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa: Ms Fikile Mthembu.

Co-ordinating Committee:

Co-ordinator: Ernest N'Koumo Mobio, Abidjan - 1st Deputy Co-ordinator: Fisho P. Mwale, Lusaka
Executive Secretary: Fikile Mthembu

Contributors:

Col. John Kabungo, Mayor of Lusaka, Zambia
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This issue of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders Newsletter has been prepared with the support of the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme, Geneva.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AFFECTED BY HIV/AIDS

Millions of children worldwide will lose one or both parents to AIDS over the next ten years. The total number of children orphaned by the epidemic since it began is 13,2 million and this figure is projected to double by the year 2010. Sub-Saharan Africa is hardest hit. It is home to over 90 per cent of the AIDS orphans in the world, with 12.1 million orphans.

The epidemic has forced vast numbers of children into precarious circumstances, exposing them to exploitation and abuse, and putting them at high risk of also becoming infected with HIV. Many also face discrimination and rejection within their extended families and communities

Consequently, many children and young people are struggling to survive on their own in child-headed households. Others have been forced to fend for themselves in the streets, living in poverty and fear. The impact of increasing numbers of unprotected, poorly socialised and under-educated young people will be felt for decades.

Through the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL) Programme, steps are being taken to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable members of society.

The United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in June 2001 urged *“the international community, particularly donor countries, civil society, as well as the private sector, to complement effective national programmes to support programmes for children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS in affected regions, and to direct special assistance to sub-Saharan Africa”*. ■

DECLARATION OF MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL LEADERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

We, the Mayors and Municipal leaders of the Republic of Zambia, having taken cognizance of the magnitude of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the significant impact on our cities, towns and villages, under the auspices of the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ), join our government and other Local Authorities in Africa and Launch the Zambian Chapter of Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Considering that local government, as an integral part of the national structure of governance, is the level of government closest to the people and, therefore, well placed to respond to the many challenges posed by HIV/AIDS.

Honouring the resolution during the 46th Annual Conference of the Local Government calling for a commitment towards efforts to support and coordinate the eradication of HIV/AIDS and gender disparities in our cities, towns and villages.

Recognizing and supporting the National Strategic Framework to promote multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS Programmes in Zambia

Believe that the Private Sector is a key partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Expressing deep concern about the increase in orphans, street children, widows/widowers in our cities, towns and villages, acknowledge the impact on sustainable development.

Acknowledging that poverty, in all of its manifestations, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDS; local authorities are deeply concerned that HIV/AIDS is compounding poverty, reversing development gains and compromising the future development of our country.

Recognizing that the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is an essential element in an effective response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including in the areas of prevention, care, support and treatment, and that it reduces

vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and prevents stigma and related discrimination against people living with or at risk of HIV/AIDS.

Convinced that all Local Councils in Zambia need to develop and implement policies and strategies appropriate to the specific HIV/AIDS related social, economic, developmental, cultural, human rights and health dimensions in our communities.

To this end we have agreed to:

- Contribute to the reduction of the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS in our communities by implementing effective measures to reduce HIV transmission;
- Promote co-ordinated local multi-sectoral approaches for HIV/AIDS prevention and care of infected and affected people;
- Participate in efforts to mobilize the necessary human and financial resources to implement local strategies;
- Ensure the active involvement of people

infected and affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic in designing and implementing programme;

- Strengthen solidarity amongst our cities, towns, villages and developing effective partnerships with national and international public and private stakeholders.

We, therefore commit ourselves to:

- Ensuring that the search for effective solutions to HIV/AIDS is a public policy priority;
- Effectively involving our citizens in designing action plans, defining local strategies, and implementing activities;
- Providing the necessary institutional support to our cities, towns and local communities and strengthen their capacity to intervene;
- Guaranteeing transparency and accountability in programme management.

We, Mayors, Local Government and Municipal leaders, hereby endorse this declaration. ■



Dr Golden Bolla (Director of National AIDS Council), Mayor of Livingstone, Mayor of Lusaka and President of the Local Government Association of Zambia Col. John Kabungo, Mr Fisho Mwale (Deputy Coordinator of the Alliance), Cllr Patrick Tembo Mayor of Kitwe.

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, M. LEVY MWANAWASA, SC

Delivered by Hon. Michael Mabenga

On the occasion of the launch of the Zambia Chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa – Lusaka - Saturday 24th August, 2002.

Mr. Chairman, I am very delighted to be present here today at this auspicious gathering where we are witnessing yet another milestone of launching the Zambia chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Mr. Chairman, the question of HIV/AIDS cannot be underestimated in the human development process. Indeed the tragedy of HIV/AIDS touches virtually everyone and challenges us all. Obviously, the spread of HIV/AIDS is not only significant impeding efforts to reduce poverty in Zambia, but is also affecting the overall economic performance both at the city/village and national level.

Mr. Chairman, because of the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, the country is being challenged to find innovative solutions to contain the problem. I am equally aware that in Zambia HIV/AIDS was officially recognized as a public health problem in 1986.

Since then Ladies and Gentlemen, the government of Zambia has made efforts to address the issue in its efforts to fight against the epidemic; government established the National AIDS Prevention and Control Programme with the responsibility to co-ordinate HIV/AIDS programmes and mobilise resources from bilateral and multilateral partners. Since that humble beginning I am delighted to note that government did receive a positive response from partners and a number of programmes were instituted.

Mr. Chairman, I am informed that since 1991, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been working with the Zambian government and civil society in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Support has included areas such as awareness prevention and home care programmes. UNDP has also provided leadership in enhancing capacity at ministry of health for them to develop sustainable community based care programmes. I wish to put on record governments appreciation of this support from our co-operating partners.

Mr. Chairman, in the last few years, African Mayors and Municipal leaders have stepped forward as change agents in the efforts against the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This is a commendable initiative.

I am informed Mr. Chairman that the Alliance of which the Zambia chapter we are about to launch today has as its overall goal, the contribution to limiting the spread of HIV/AIDS and to reduce its social and economic impact on urban and peri-urban communities in Africa, and that they shall also promote an expanded, multi-sectoral response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic at local level.

Mr. Chairman, this goal is in line with the fact that you as local leaders together with your local authority officials, know your communities better and are, therefore well placed as leaders to play your roles as advocates and mobilisers of communities against HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Chairman, the Alliance of Mayors initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL) strategy should strive to expose and create appropriate

solutions and decision making by communities, local government authorities and civil society partners in order to create maximum impact on the ground.

Mr. Chairman, as the Zambia chapter embarks on this noble cause, I wish to implore upon you to ensure that HIV/AIDS responses are mainstreamed into the Municipal service delivery agenda. This I believe is very important if particularly you are to achieve an all inclusive, responsive and gender sensitive but yet dynamic and enabling action programmes.

At this juncture may I, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of Zambian people and government thank the bilateral and multilateral partners who in the past have worked with us on addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS. In particular, I wish to thank UNDP who have been consistent in the support and are still helping with logistical support to kick start the Zambia chapter of the Alliance and wish to reiterate government's support to this cause. We shall unflinchingly be with you all the way. This should also appeal to churches and parents who should be open in discussing matters of sexuality if we are to fight the pandemic.

Master of ceremonies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen with these few words, it is my honour and privilege to declare the Zambia chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa officially launched.

May God Bless You All

Thank-you. ■

MAYOR OF LUSAKA'S SPEECH

As a summary of the statement by the President of the Local Government Association of Zambia, Col. John C. Kabungo on the Occasion of the launch of the Zambia Chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa at Mulungushi International Conference Center on Saturday 24th August, 2002.

Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to be part of this gathering today when the civic leaders are about to make history.

I say about to make history because we will be witnessing the launch of the Zambia Chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Mr. Chairman we are going to see an idea being turned into reality.

In the last few years, African Mayors and Municipal Leaders have stepped forward as leaders in the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The Alliance was formed to promote an expanded, multi-sectoral response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic at the local level. It works in partnership with civil society organizations and communities and has as its focus the unique role that Mayors and Municipal Leaders can play as advocates and mobilizers of communities to turn rhetoric into action.

National Chapters of the Alliance have so far been launched in African countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Swaziland,

Namibia, Uganda, South Africa, Mali and Burkina Faso. Launches are also being planned in the near future in Malawi, Mozambique, Benin and Kenya. Interest from other countries is blossoming daily.

With support from UNDP and UNAIDS, the Alliance developed a multi-sectoral strategy called AMICAALL –The Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level, which translates the goals of the Alliance into concrete actions in countries and communities. It calls for a locally led multi-sectoral approach that compliments and supports National Programmes.

AMICAALL creates a context for exploring appropriate solutions and decision making by communities, local government authorities and civil society partners, all working together. The strategy aims at strengthening local capacity to sustain community efforts by focusing on people rather than on the virus.

AMICAALL country programmes are underway in Swaziland and Uganda, and national plans of action have been prepared in Namibia and Burkina Faso and are already for implementation.

In addition, many partnerships have been established with the private and public sectors, as well as civil society organizations, which have resulted in beneficial outcomes. There are many more opportunities for expanding the partnership network.

The Alliance and the AMICAALL initiative are supported

by the UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme, which was launched in April 2001. The programme focuses on promotion of the AMICAALL strategy, facilitating public/private partnership development, resource mobilization, documentation and dissemination of lessons learned and institutional support to the Alliance Secretariat.

From the commitments made at Africities 2000 to today's historical event, much progress has been made.

We can see that Zambia is serious – the commitment has transferred into reality. On behalf of the coordinator of the Alliance, and all Alliance members, we express sincere appreciation to all our supporters – without your material assistance, encouragement and support this project would not have happened. We hope that other donors and private sector will also render support to the Alliance in order for us to effectively carry out our planned programmes.

Before I leave the floor, allow me to say that this launch is indeed very timely, because as we are all aware, our productive young generation is threatened with extinction by the HIV/AIDS scourge.

I wish to implore to parents to be open with their children in discussing matters of sexuality. It is time to stop hiding behind traditions and customs, where it is considered taboo to talk to our own children about such matters. ■

FORGING LINKS BETWEEN THE AMICAALL-UGANDA PROGRAMME AND CANADIAN CITIES: AMICAALL-CANANDA PROJECT

The goal of this initiative is to facilitate the creation of city-to-city / community-to-community twinning projects between Ugandan and Canadian cities. The Canadian cities of Calgary, Hamilton and Winnipeg were selected as the focal cities for the initial phase of this initiative. Focal points from the health sector and the municipalities have been established in each of the three cities.

In Winnipeg the focal people are Dr. Allan Roland, a Professor of Medicine at the University of Manitoba and Mr. Gred Zador, a senior official in the Mayor's office. On a visit to Kampala earlier this year, Dr. Roland was able to facilitate discussions around a twinning endeavour with Dr. Mugisa, National Coordinator of the AMICAALL Programme, and Mayor Kizito, the current Mayor of Kampala. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), who manage a partnership fund of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), have agreed to fund the first phase of the Kampala-Winnipeg twinning project.

In Hamilton a community level proposal has been submitted to The Presbyterian Church of Canada through its Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D) Division.

A database of Canadian supported projects and initiatives underway in Uganda has been created. The database was created for the purpose of information dissemination, the coordination of efforts and possible future collaborations. The database includes academic partners, church partners governmental projects and NGOs. ■

SOUTH AFRICAN CITIES NETWORK PARTNERING WITH THE ALLIANCE

Port Elizabeth in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality, Republic of South Africa, hosted the 2002 South African Cities Network workshop on the 22nd and 23rd of July. The South African Cities Network is an information and knowledge-sharing network, looking at the role that cities will play in the integrated, global economy.

As a result of labour migration, trade, foreign direct investment and international business operations, economic activity has crossed the traditional nation-state boundaries and has changed the face of the city to form what has been coined 'city-regions.' A prime example of a city-region is the whole Gauteng region of the Republic of South Africa.

Representing the Alliance and the UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme at the workshop were the Deputy Coordinator of the Alliance, Mr. Fisho Mwale, Mr. Terry Parker, the acting Administrative Executive of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa, and Dr. As Sy (Consultant).

The Alliance and UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme representatives urged participants to create a secure environment for those living with the HIV/AIDS virus, allowing them to come out without fear of societal rejection, thus turning around the trend of pushing the disease underground. They stressed that to bring about such a change, a partnership between the political leaders and the people was needed.

Political leaders at the local level can contribute to bring innovative responses to the many challenges posed by the epidemic on all aspects of life and development. Another key challenge for municipalities heavily affected by the epidemic is how to make sure that local authorities can cope with the health dimensions of HIV/AIDS and at the same time keep the economic sector functioning.

The Chairperson of the South African City Network thanked the Alliance and the UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme and stated that the AMICAALL programme should be regarded as a natural partner of the Cities Network in the HIV/AIDS programme with a specific focus on "information sharing and networking." ■

THE MAYOR OF WINDHOEK'S ANNUAL REPORT

Earlier this year, Mayor Matheus Shikongo, presented his annual report to the CEO of the City of Windhoek, Martin Shipanga, elected Councilors of the City of Windhoek, members of the press and the general public. The Alliance was featured prominently in the annual report, an excerpt of which follows:

The year under review has witnessed intensified activities at a political level to fight against the epidemic HIV/AIDS. Following the two UN-sponsored consultative meetings in 1997 and 1998, African leaders came together and formed the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS. The Alliance's overall goal is to reduce the social and economic impact of the epidemic on communities in Africa, by promoting expanded multi-sectoral responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic at the local level. The Alliance therefore works in partnership with civil society organisations and communities.

Following a major milestone for the Alliance during the Africities Summit held in Windhoek in May 2000 where a decision was taken to establish an Alliance Secretariat (headquarters), I am pleased to state that with the support of the City of Windhoek, Government of Namibia, USAID, the UN Alliance of Mayor's Initiative for Community Action on HIV/AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL) Partnership Programme, the Alliance Secretariat was set up in November 2001 and is now functional.

On November 23rd, 2001, the Namibia chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa was launched in Windhoek under the auspices of the Association for Local Authority of Namibia (ALAN). Mayors across Namibia have demonstrated political commitment to fight the epidemic as stated in the declaration signed at the end of the gathering and officially declared Namibia the 18th country to join the Alliance in Africa. It remains our unshaken conviction that there cannot be proper local governance and adequate delivery of services to our people while the residents of our cities, towns and villages are harassed and threatened by the scourge of this pandemic. ■

USAID SUPPORTS ACTIONS ON HIV/AIDS IN WINDHOEK

The Windhoek Municipality in Namibia has approved a programme aimed at helping prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The programme which builds on the work of the national AMICAALL programme, will be jointly funded by the City of Windhoek and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

USAID will provide a grant of N\$647 800, while the City will contribute N\$215 920. The programme will consist of two core components, namely behavioural change and the establishment of multi-purpose centres.

It will place special focus on girls and women in target communities and also strive towards creating an environment for an integrated community-based approach towards HIV/AIDS. Apart from benefiting Windhoek communities, people in towns that have high HIV/AIDS prevalence rates, such as Walvis Bay, Swakopmund, Ongwediva and Oshakati, will benefit from the programme through sharing of experiences.

Namibia ranks as one of the most HIV/AIDS affected countries in the world with an HIV prevalence of about 22 per cent of pregnant women.

More than 80,000 cases of HIV infection have been diagnosed and reported in Namibia but the actual number is estimated to be more than double this number. ■

CAN AMICAALL'S GRASSROOTS AIDS APPROACH BE USED FOR OTHER NEEDS?

Summary of an article by: James Hall - From Times of Swaziland

A new initiative by the Kingdom's town and city officials to tackle AIDS may do more on the local level to address the crisis than the health ministry on the national level. The country's mayors say the people themselves know best their needs, and they are coordinating funding to carry out the people's projects. Can such a philosophy-turned-to-action be applied to other pressing matters?

The Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL) is in the process of spreading the message of the new grassroots opportunity at a series of regional launches. The most recent was held at Vuvulane, in the northeastern sugar belt region, and attended by Principal Secretary for Housing Mbuso Dlamini. Dlamini's attendance at an AIDS-awareness function in addition to the usual government and NGO health groups signaled a recognition that the disease has gone beyond a medical emergency, and is bringing economic and social havoc, especially to municipalities.

"AIDS makes all the problems in towns worse," Dlamini said, tying AIDS to other social problems. "People cannot move out of poverty in the slums if they are sick. What good is taking pills when the water is polluted?"

What to do? The officials at AMICAALL make it a point to state their initiative supplements work already being done in the health sector, and should not be seen as a response to the health ministry's handling of the crisis. Critics of the

health ministry are not as diplomatic, and say new thinking and approaches are essential if Swaziland is not to overtake Botswana as the country with the highest HIV infection rate.

AMICAALL-Swaziland is an attempt by mayors and municipal authorities to do something constructive by listening to the people most affected by the crisis, their constituents. The chairperson of the Executive Council of the initiative is Nokuthula Mthembu, who is chairperson of the Ezulwini Town Board, where AMICAALL coincidentally is headquartered.

"The voice of the people will determine how we will combat HIV/AIDS in towns," she says.

And not just in towns. Rudolph Maziya, national coordinator of AMICAALL-Swaziland, says, "About 25% of Swazis stand to directly benefit from AMICAALL financed projects. But there is a spillover effect, and many more people will benefit because town and rural people intermingle in Swaziland. People work in towns, but they visit or live in rural homesteads."

What projects are we talking about here? People may decide what their communities most need is an orphanage for the children who are left without caregivers when their parents are taken by AIDS. The United Nation's children's welfare agency UNICEF projects an annual 10 000 new orphans in Swaziland annually as AIDS-related diseases take their toll.

Or people may determine that what will best serve themselves and their neighbours is a clinic which provides blood tests, or a hospice for AIDS patients unable to receive

home care. Or . . . it is impossible to say what Swazis will think of when they realise their ideas may be realised as concrete reality. A groundswell of creativity may result when people are encouraged by the notion that their concepts will not disappear into a maze of bureaucracy and authority, never to be heard from again.

Government does tend to work from the top down, with experts determining the people's needs. Projects can be imposed, and though this may be done with the best intentions, such projects are not accepted with the same enthusiasm as self-generated projects, where people think they own them because they are the creators.

Of course, AMICAALL will have experts to evaluate projects, and unlikely projects are not going to receive funding. The mayors will also assess suggestions before passing them on. There will be some mistakes, but in the end there will be not only helpful projects created, but a new philosophy of assistance.

Where else can such a philosophy be applied? In what other areas can the grassroots approach be taken, particularly in urban areas? For years in rural lands, residents of "Tinkhundla" have generated local projects through their "tindvuna." These have covered a wide spectrum of development initiatives, in some cases bringing clean water, roads and river-spanning bridges to underdeveloped areas.

Financing is also available from government schemes to start up small businesses and cooperatives. Donor agencies funnel assistance to these small-scale economic

empowerment initiatives the way AMICAALL-Swaziland is set to assist with funding originally provided by the African Capacity Building Foundation and local sources.

But look at the host of problems facing towns. There is inadequate housing, resulting in expanding "informal settlements" (i.e. "slums"). There is a lack of safe drinking water in some places. Health facilities are strained. The network of sexual abuse services to counsel and assist victims of abuse and violence needs expanding. Economic empowerment initiatives are as necessary in towns as they are in rural lands.

Here is where the mayors' initiative on AIDS can offer guidance. Mayors' offices can set up coordinators for specific concerns, to receive project ideas from the public, and dispense financial assistance. These coordinators can work with donor agencies to approve initiatives.

It is not enough to dispense funds. These may be squandered through incompetence or pilfering. Technical assistance and some supervision are also required. Again, the AMICAALL model if it proves successful will show the way.

There is also a reluctance of donors to contribute to the general budgets of municipalities, where monies might be spent in areas other than what the donor had in mind. AMICAAL sees to it that its contributions are used for a specific crisis.

This provides the accountability everyone wants.

A sound philosophy, an innovative approach, and directed to one of the most worthy needs of our country: the battle against AIDS. Let us see how this can be applied to other issues of ongoing need. ■

HIGHLIGHTS FROM NATIONAL AMICAALL PROGRAMME IN SWAZILAND PROGRESS UPDATE

Appointment of Local Coordinators has been effected. Three Coordinators started work at the beginning of August. These include the coordinators for Mbabane, Manzini and Ezulwini/Mankayane. The remaining will start work during the month of September. These will cover Nhlanguano/Hlathikhulu, Piggs Peak/Ngwenya and Siteki/Vuvulane/Lavumisa. Lavumisa will also have an assistant coordinator. The cities/towns of Mbabane, Manzini and Ezulwini have provided office accommodation and furniture to their Local Coordinators. The National AMICAALL Coordinating Office is providing them with computers, printers and computer stands. Other municipalities are preparing to accommodate their Local Coordinators.

A capacity building workshop on community based planning, facilitated by the Micro-projects program of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, was conducted in July. The participants of this two session workshop consisted of 11 interim Local Coordinators and 11 members of Municipality HIV Teams representing 11 municipalities. Following the workshop, the municipality representatives assisted communities in preparing a total of sixteen proposals. These proposals will be considered for funding by the Executive Council of the National AMICAALL Programme in its sitting on September 15, 2002.

A response analysis study on the nature and extent of the current response to AIDS in Urban centers is underway. The consultants are expected to submit a report at the end of August. The consultancy was awarded to Ms. Faith Mkhonta of the University of Swaziland.

The production of a manual on HIV/AIDS facts has been completed. The manual will be used to disseminate HIV/AIDS information within municipalities: it will facilitate standardization of the quality and scope of information that is disseminated to urban populations. The consultancy was awarded to Mantanga Training Center in Swaziland.



The National Coordinator of the AMICAALL - Swaziland Programme, M. Rudolph Maziya.

A team of thirteen persons undertook a 2-day visit on August 20-23, 2002 to see how Botswana is implementing Voluntary Counseling and Testing Services. This study tour arose from the interest of the larger municipalities to establish similar centers. Participants in the activity came from all municipalities. Two participants, a Nurse and a Laboratory Technologist represented the City Council of Mbabane.

An AMICAALL team from Swaziland participated in the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The team constituted of the chairperson of the AMICALL Executive Council (Team leader) and three of the Local Coordinators who had started work. A paper was presented on behalf of AMICAALL-Swaziland. Participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development is part of on-going efforts to share lessons and experiences.

The AMICAALL-Swaziland programme has received an additional US\$300, 000 from the National Emergency Response Committee on HIV/AIDS (NERCHA). This funding support will cover the period April 2002 to March 2003: it represents a contribution on behalf of local authorities.

The global fund proposal has been upgraded and will be re-considered in a sitting of the Fund that is scheduled for September 2002. Efforts to mobilize additional resources are on going.

All municipalities have now launched a local AMICAALL programme. ■

BUILDING ALLIANCES BETWEEN FRENCH AND AFRICAN MUNICIPALITIES

In July 2002, a meeting was held in Geneva with Mr. Jean-Luc Romero, President of the Association of Locally Elected Officials against AIDS in France (ELCS), Mayor Ernest N’Kouomo Mobio, Mayor of Abidjan and Coordinator of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and Ms. Mina Mauerstein-Bail, Director of the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme. The purpose of the meeting was to follow up on discussions that had been initiated in early 2002 on developing partnerships between municipalities in France and Africa, within the framework of the Alliance/AMICAALL. Mr. Romero extended an invitation to the Alliance to participate in the annual meeting of the ELCS, scheduled to take place in Paris in November 2002.

The Association brings together over 10,000 municipal leaders in France. This would provide an excellent opportunity for the Alliance to make itself better known in France as well as to explore concrete actions with representatives of the French government, at various levels.

The Coordinator of the Alliance was also invited to write an editorial for the next issue of the ELCS newsletter which reaches a large audience in France.

Swiss television interviewed Mr. Romero who spoke openly about his own HIV positive status and the need to expand support to and solidarity with countries and communities in developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa where the epidemic is undermining decades of development achievements. He expressed his support for the work of the Alliance and AMICAALL which also featured in the coverage by the Swiss television. ■

CHILDREN ON THE BRINK 2002: AN EXCERPT

*A Joint Report on Orphan Estimates and Programm Strategies by
UNAIDS, UNICEF, USAID*

An Expert:

HIV/AIDS is having a devastating impact on the world's youngest and most vulnerable citizens. An estimated 40 million are living with HIV today, including almost 3 million children under age 15. One of the most telling and troubling consequences of the epidemic is the number of children it has orphaned or seriously impacted. Today more than 13 million children currently under age 15 have lost one or both parents to AIDS, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa. By 2010 this number is expected to jump to more than 25 million.

Turning the tide of this emergency requires immediate and sustained action at all levels. Following are critical points that can help develop well coordinated and compassionate responses from families, communities, governments, and others:

HIV/AIDS has created an orphan crisis: This unprecedented orphan crisis will require radically scaled-up national, regional, and community responses for at least two decades – especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

Orphans due to other causes also demand attention: In 12 African countries, projections show that orphans will comprise at least 15% of all children under 15 years of age by 2010.

Other children are also vulnerable: Increasing numbers of children are living with sick or dying parents or in households that have taken in orphans.

AIDS threatens children's lives: Children suffer psychosocial distress and increasing material hardship due to AIDS. They may be pressed into service to care for ill and dying parents, be required to drop out of school, or experience declining access to food and health.

Communities with high proportion of orphans require urgent assistant: Because they are the center of the crisis, these communities are the most overstretched.

Collaboration is key: No one can tackle this crisis alone.

This report is available at www.usaid.gov

How to join the Alliance

I, the undersigned: _____
 Title: _____
 Country: _____
 City: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Fax: _____
 Email: _____

want to become a member of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa, and subscribe to the Newsletter.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Please send this form to the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa Secretariat, P.O. Box 60401, Katutura, Windhoek, Namibia

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Notebook

The UN-AMICAALL Programme takes part in the 3rd Meeting of Anchor Institution of the Africa Bureau of the Urban Management Programme at Dakar, 17-19 July 2002.

In the framework of the relations it has developed with HABITAT, the UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme was invited to take part in the 3rd Meeting of Anchor Institutions of the Africa Bureau of the Urban Management Programme which took place at Dakar from the 17th to the 19th of July 2002. Representing the Partnership Programme, Prf. Babacar Kanté, Legal Counsel for the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa, addressed the meeting on the subject of the Alliance of Mayors and its strategy, AMICAALL. Following discussion of this and the statements of other institutions such as the International Labour Office (ILO), the Anchor Institutions of the UMP concluded their debates by recommending the establishment of a new network, named African Network of Urban Management Institutions (ANUMI) to replace the Anchor Institutions of the UMP.

Upcoming events

- AWEPA Conference, November 13 to 15, 2002, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. awepa.bb@antenna.nl
- AULA Conference, May 25 to 30, 2003, Windhoek, Namibia. iula@ecoweb.co.zw
alan@iway.na