



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

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EDITORIAL



**Mr. Félix Koa, President
of the Alliance of
Mayors and Municipal
Leaders on HIV/AIDS in
Africa, Cameroon
Chapter**

Since the first cases of HIV infection were identified in the years 1986/87, the national prevalence rates among the general population have continuously risen in Cameroon, climbing from 0.5% in 1987 to 5.5% in 2004 (EDSC III) with peaks of up to 12% in certain populations and provinces.

EDSC III (Enquête Démographique et de Santé du Cameroun: Demographic and health survey of Cameroon) for 2004 shows that people in every age bracket are affected, especially those between the ages of 25 and 39. According to the survey's estimates, the infection prevalence rate is 1.4% in the 15-19 age bracket, 9% for 30-34 year olds and 4.7% for persons aged 45-49. It further confirms the global trend that the epidemic affects a greater number of women; women, with a prevalence rate of 6.8%, are

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LAUNCH OF THE CAMEROONIAN CHAPTER OF THE ALLIANCE OF MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL LEADERS ON HIV/AIDS

Under the auspices of the Prime Minister, Head of government, the Cameroonian Chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa was launched in Yaoundé on the 30th of November 2005. This launch was particularly brilliant because it was one of the highlights marking the events of the National Week of Action on HIV/AIDS that lasted from the 24th of November to the 1st of December 2005.

The launch was preceded by a planning, advocacy and awareness-raising workshop. The purpose of the workshop was two-fold. On the one hand, it was to inform participants on the status of the epidemic, on the Alliance and the UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme, the strategies of action implemented and to share experience with other countries having already created an alliance, in particular Mali. On the other hand, the workshop aimed at defining strategies leading to the development of a basic document that would serve as the Alliance's plan of action and a means to mobilise resources.

Both events enjoyed the strong support of the government, especially the launch ceremony that was chaired by the Minister of Health and by his counterpart, the Minister of State of Decentralized Local Government.

Representatives of the government, local authorities, United Nations agencies, the diplomatic corps and national and interna-

tional organisations also graced these events by their presence.

The programme of the launch ceremony included, in addition to various entertainments, the reading of the Declaration of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS and speeches by the President of the Alliance, by the Coordinator of the United Nations System and by the Minister of Public Health, chairman of the National Committee on AIDS.

The speakers congratulated the mayors on their courageous mobilisation in the face of HIV/AIDS of which they have the immediate experience in their communities. Ms. Sophie de Caen, Coordinator of the UN System, stressed that, "the HIV/AIDS epidemic significantly hampers development... Cameroon is not spared with a general HIV prevalence of the epidemic of 5.5%, and rates reaching the threshold of 12% among women in cities and in certain regions. More than 53,000 persons have died as a consequence of this scourge since the beginning of the epidemic and with an estimated number of 210,000 orphans, the situation is preoccupying."

The establishment of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Cameroon reflects the concern and wish of local authorities of Cameroon to become personally involved as actors at the forefront of the fight against HIV/AIDS in Cameroon

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LAUNCH OF THE CAMEROONIAN CHAPTER OF THE ALLIANCE OF MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL LEADERS ON HIV/AIDS

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at the place which is theirs: amongst the people, with the people and for the people for whom they bear responsibility.

In order to mitigate the impact of the epidemic, the Government of Cameroon has set out a strategic plan to take action on AIDS which was launched in September 2000 by the Prime Minister, Head of Government. This plan incorporates the implementation of local responses to HIV/AIDS.

The Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Cameroon thus emerges as a formidable means to decentralize action on HIV/AIDS, a means to ensure the continuity of actions and interventions with a view to attaining the hoped for reduction of the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS. The Alliance and its “road map” for action – AMICAALL – is very simply an excellent tool for local development.

AMICAALL PROGRAMME REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

The annual AMICAALL Programme Review and Development Workshop was held in Dakar, Senegal from 20-22 July 2005. Those gathered at the workshop included: National AMICAALL Coordinators and Focal Points from 12 African countries, and representatives from the Alliance Secretariat, Alliance Coordinating Committee, UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme (UN APP), UNAIDS, donors and partnering organisations. The workshop participants reviewed the national AMICAALL Programme activities to date; identified the key priorities and constraints hindering country-level action; and came up with strategies and actions for the further development of coordinated, decentralised action on HIV/AIDS as part of ongoing efforts to address the “implementation gap” between national plans and expanded services and support programmes reaching people and communities. One key outcome from the workshop was inputs for the Alliance and UN APP work plans for the coming year.

Many important topics were also addressed at the workshop and time allotted for sharing of country-level experiences and perspectives among the participants in addition to one-on-one meetings between

AMICAALL Coordinators/National Technical Advisors, the Secretariat staff and UN APP. Ms. Katy Cissé Wone, Deputy Executive Secretary of the National AIDS Council, gave an update on the HIV/AIDS situation in Senegal and the current challenges the country is facing in its response to the epidemic. Dr. Warren Namara, UNAIDS Country Representative in Ghana, gave a presentation on “The Three Ones” and AMICAALL. As defined by UNAIDS, The Three Ones are: 1) one agreed HIV/AIDS action framework, 2) one national AIDS coordinating authority; and 3) one agreed country-level monitoring and evaluation system. Dr. Namara said that the AMICAALL principles mirror the thinking behind the Three Ones and recommended that the AMICAALL Programmes should be firmly linked into their national strategic frameworks.

Ms. Victoria Lonje, Alliance Executive Secretary, gave a presentation on Women and HIV. She outlined how women are being disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS and identified inequities and cultural practices that affect women. Participants then brainstormed gender strategies that could be used by the AMICAALL programmes. Mr. Kenneth Mswana, National Coordinator for the AMICAALL Zambia Programme, led a brainstorming session and discussion on what countries and governments are doing to localise the Millennium Development Goals. Other sessions focused on: “Identifying Key Priorities for AMICAALL Programme”, “Secrets of Being an Effective AMICAALL Coordinator” and “Monitoring and Evaluation”.

ALLIANCE TECHNICAL STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

The second Technical Standing Committee (TSC) meeting of the Alliance was convened in Dakar, Senegal on 18 July 2005. The TSC was set up to provide guidance to the Executive Secretary and Coordinating Committee of the Alliance on programme execution, technical support and resource mobilisation and review the annual programme work plan and budget of the Alliance. The TSC meeting brought together donors and other partners supporting the work of the Alliance and AMICAALL, including representatives from USAID, the Government of Netherlands and STOP AIDS NOW!, a Dutch NGO. The meeting was chaired by Mina Mauerstein-Bail, Director of the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme.

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A number of key observations and recommendations came out of the meeting. First, the Alliance and AMICAALL national programmes should build on their comparative advantage: working with mayors, local governments and community-based organisations to expand decentralised, multisectoral responses to HIV/AIDS. Second, the Secretariat must expand its technical capacity to better respond to requests from local

government partners. Last, donors want to see a greater focus on outcomes at the country level in reporting and documentation prepared by the Secretariat and AMICAALL programmes. This includes capturing the catalytic role that AMICAALL may play in programme and service development at the local level.

COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE ALLIANCE IS CONVENED

Members of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa Coordinating Committee met in Dakar, Senegal on 19 July 2005, to review the activities and achievements of the Alliance Secretariat and AMICAALL programmes and provide policy guidance on strategic actions to be implemented in the coming year. The Coordinating Committee members were welcomed during the official opening by representatives from the City of Dakar and the UNDP/Senegal.

The day-long meeting also included an update on advocacy, partnership development and resource mobilisation by the Director of the UN AMICAALL

Partnership Programme, followed by discussion about upcoming events, such as the Africities meeting in Nairobi, Kenya in September 2006. Cameroon and Central African Republic were approved as new members of the Alliance. The outgoing Executive Secretary and co-founder of the Alliance, Ms. Fikile Mthembu, was made a co-opted member of the Coordinating Committee. The Alliance and the UN APP also hosted a farewell reception for Ms. Mthembu, and thanked her for her outstanding contribution to the development of the Alliance.

UN WORLD SUMMIT: LOCALISING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

For the United Nations' World Summit, which included an assessment of progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA) issued a joint press release (www.amicaall.org and www.uclga.co.za). This statement drew attention to the pressing needs of communities affected by HIV/AIDS and called for better access by these communities to the increased availability of current resources. The President of the newly established UCLGA, Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, Mayor of Tshwane (Pretoria), South Africa, said that, "UCLGA intends to work closely with AMICAALL (Alliance of Mayors' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level) to ensure that adequate funding is sourced, and that the deployment of donor aid be better coordinated so as to ensure that aid goes where it is really needed".

A UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) Mayors' Session was held with the President of the General Assembly on 8 September 2005, preceding the Millennium Summit. UCLG called for increased investment at the municipal level to build and enhance

local government capacity for expanding and sustaining community-based HIV/AIDS services and programmes, in partnership with civil society organisations, as well as scaling up responses to HIV/AIDS in the workplace, in partnership with the private sector.

"Ultimately it is in the streets of your cities and towns that the value of what's decided here will be tested," the Secretary General, Kofi Annan, said to the mayors and other local representatives attending the UCLG Summit at UN Headquarters in New York on 8 September 2005. "It is there, in the daily lives of your citizens, in their safety and security, in their prosperity and sense of opportunity, that our progress will be most visible, and our setbacks felt most keenly." "While our goals are global," he added, "They can most effectively be achieved through action at the local level."

ICASA 2005: SKILL BUILDING SESSION ON MAINSTREAMING HIV/AIDS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Under a jointly sponsored initiative of UNDP, UNAIDS and the World Bank, the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme, Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and national AMICAALL programmes were invited to organise a skill building session during the International Conference on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa (ICASA), the 4-9 December 2005 in Abuja, Nigeria. This session included direct interaction among participants, as well as exposure to good practices. Selected mini-case studies illustrating opportunities and obstacles in implementing municipal responses to HIV/AIDS were discussed in small groups. Lessons learned, from concrete settings, were also presented by AMICAALL resource persons from Kenya, South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia. A report of the session can be found at: www.amicaall.org.



Elhadj Amadou Sy, Director of HIV/AIDS Group, UNDP (left) and Dr. Tegegnetwork Gettu, UN Resident Coordinator, Abuja, Nigeria. 2005

WORLD AIDS DAY 2005: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS PROMISE TO FIGHT HIV AND AIDS



This year a joint initiative called “STOP AIDS” has been launched by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and its partners: The World AIDS Campaign, UNAIDS, the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and AMICAALL. The Local Governments Committing to the “STOP AIDS” Campaign urges governments to “keep the promise” they made at the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) in June 2001 by supporting local government initiatives and building the capacity of local authorities to fight HIV/AIDS. The Campaign’s “local government promise” to fight HIV and AIDS has been inspired by the Alliance’s Abidjan Declaration and encourages local governments to:

- Make HIV/AIDS a policy priority for [their] city;
- Reach out and involve [their] citizens/communities in developing and implementing [their] HIV/AIDS response programmes;
- Build the institutional capacity within [their]

local governments to respond to HIV/AIDS and promote partnerships with community actors; and

- Guarantee accountability and transparency in all [their] actions to combat HIV/AIDS.

The Alliance and the AMICAALL network encourage local government authorities, mayors and municipal leaders and their partners around the world to unite around this campaign. For more information, please see the websites: www.cities-localgovernments.org and www.amicaall.org.



Local Government Promise to Fight HIV and AIDS

ALLIANCE PARTICIPATES IN FOUNDING CONGRESS OF THE UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF AFRICA (UCLGA)

UN APP was invited to organise a special session on HIV/AIDS and local governance at the founding Congress of United Cities and Local Government of Africa (UCLGA) that took place on 15-18 May 2005 in City of Tshwane, South Africa. UCLGA, a new pan-African local government association, was launched to direct the future of local government in Africa. Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, Executive Mayor of Tshwane, was elected President of UCLGA.

During the session, presentations were made on HIV/AIDS and the role and contribution of local government by: local officials, the Alliance and UNAIDS. The strategy and approaches underpinning AMICAALL were adopted by UCLGA to guide local government action on HIV/AIDS.

8TH WORLD CONGRESS OF METROPOLIS

UN APP was invited to participate and share information on the Alliance/AMICAALL at the 8th World Congress of Metropolis in Berlin, Germany, held 11-15 May 2005. Metropolis, an association with a membership of approximately 90 cities, supports the interests of major cities throughout the world by promoting exchanges and collaboration with the aim of improving the living conditions of their constituents.

Focus on Kenya

AMICAALL KENYA: REACHING OUT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES



Ms. Margaret Jobita,
AMICAALL-
Kenya
Coordinator

In October 2005, the AMICAALL Kenya Programme held its third sensitisation and planning workshop with local government authorities. The workshop brought together representatives of Rift Valley Province local governments, the Kenya National AIDS Council (NAC), UNDP and local AMICAALL focal points. The NAC representative presented the Kenya National AIDS Strategic Plan and called upon local government leaders to become more engaged in tackling HIV/AIDS in their communities. In accordance with the “Three Ones” (one HIV/AIDS action framework, one national AIDS coordinating authority and one national-level monitoring and evaluation system), the AMICAALL Kenya Programme works in close collaboration with the NAC, and other partners in the country, to promote

a coordinated, multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS at the local level.

Through the sensitisation and planning workshops, AMICAALL Kenya is supporting local government authorities to identify priority actions that can be undertaken at the ward and local government levels to expand much needed services and support to vulnerable households and communities that complement national efforts. The NAC has recognised AMICAALL Kenya as a key link in filling an important implementation gap at the local level.

PWC MISSION PROVIDES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO AMICAALL KENYA

A four-person team from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) spent eight weeks in Kenya providing technical assistance to the AMICAALL Programme during July and August 2005. The PwC team members came from varied places: Canada, Cyprus, Spain and Thailand. In a partnership facilitated by the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme, PwC has donated technical assistance to AMICAALL Programmes in Namibia, Swaziland and Uganda during the last five years. AMICAALL Kenya was one of only five programmes worldwide chosen to receive PwC technical assistance in 2005 under its Ulysses Programme.

Working with the AMICAALL Kenya National Technical Advisor, the PwC team focused their efforts in two municipalities: Malindi and Nyeri. After un-

dertaking a series of meetings with key stakeholders in the local authorities, the PwC team teamed up with local partners to facilitate carrying out a series of assessments aimed at enhancing local government responses to HIV/AIDS. On the basis of these participatory assessments, a report containing a series of recommendations for addressing capacity and systems development was prepared. Recommendations focused on local planning, financial management, information management and monitoring and evaluation.

Focus on Namibia

MOBILISING LOCAL RESOURCES IN NAMIBIA



**Ms.
Moderatha
Shaduka,
AMICAALL-
Namibia
Coordinator**

On 28 September 2005, a gala dinner was held in Namibia to mobilise resources for the Otjiwarongo Multi-Purpose Help Centre, which provides a range of services including support to orphans and vulnerable youth. Over N\$579,000 (US\$88,900) in cash and in-kind support was raised. The Centre was built through efforts of the municipality and a coalition of local partners with support from the AMICAALL Namibia Programme, UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme, *STOP AIDS NOW!*, VNG International and the Dutch municipality of Heusden. Honoured guests included Dr. Sam Nujoma, Former President of Namibia; Ms. Moderatha Shaduka, former mayor of Otjiwarongo and now the AMICAALL Coordinator in

Namibia; Mr. Hans Poley, representative of the Netherlands Embassy; Mr. Theofelus Eiseb, Mayor of Heusden; and Mr. Otto Ipinge, Mayor of Otjiwarongo.

Established in 2003, the Centre runs a day care programme for orphans and vulnerable children, most of who are AIDS orphans in the care of unemployed grandparents or destitute family members. In addition, the Centre has a home-based care programme for the terminally ill and elderly and counselling services to provide emotional and psychosocial support to those who are sick, suffering or having serious social problems.

SKILLS, OPPORTUNITIES AND SELF-RELIANCE (SOS) WORKSHOP IN NAMIBIA



Reducing the impact of AIDS on orphans and vulnerable young people has been identified as a key priority of the AMICAALL Namibia Programme. The SOS initiative is receiving funding support from the OPEC Fund for International Development and the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and technical support from the international NGO, ORT IC. SOS is being implemented via a consortium of partners in three municipalities in Namibia, enabling orphaned and vulnerable youth to access vocational training and youth development services as well as other support.

In June 2005, a workshop was held in Namibia, bringing together all key stakeholders and partners to review the monitoring and evaluation plan and to ensure that information on indicators of achievement are collected in an efficient and systematic manner. The workshop is part of ongoing efforts to en-

hance the capacity of partners working together at the local level, public and private and to scale up services to vulnerable populations.



Mr. Frankie Fredericks with Namibian schoolchildren to raise support for youth. Rehoboth, Namibia.



Metalwork students in Windhoek at the Kayek Centre.

AMICAALL NAMIBIA: EXPANDING CITY-TO-CITY COOPERATION

The Government of the Netherlands, through the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) via its international consulting arm, VNG International, is providing support to expand city-to-city cooperation between Dutch and Namibian towns. In collaboration with the AMICAALL Namibia Programme, VNG International is now expanding to two other municipalities, bringing the number to three: Gobabis, Otjiwarongo and Rundu. Through a coordinated effort and building on the approaches developed by AMICAALL Namibia, VNG International will

help to mobilise human and financial resources (via city-to-city cooperation) to expand HIV/AIDS-related services in these towns. The Dutch cities involved in this partnership include: Heusden, Nieuwegein and Smallerland. AMICAALL Namibia is now working with 20 municipalities in the country, and a growing number of partners at the local, national and international level, to strengthen the institutional capacity of municipalities to integrate HIV/AIDS in their municipal agendas and support a coordinated local government/civil society response to HIV/AIDS at the local level.

AMICAALL NAMIBIA RECEIVES PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF *CHANDA'S SECRETS*

AMICAALL Namibia is a recipient of proceeds from the sale of the young adult novel entitled, *Chanda's Secrets*. Written by Allan Stratton, the novel is the fictitious story of a 16-year-old girl living in an illusory sub-Saharan African country that is afflicted with the AIDS epidemic. The book explores the universal themes of community, friends, family and the struggle for truth and puts a human face on the AIDS epidemic in Africa. *Chanda's Secrets* has won a number of prestigious awards, including the 'Children's African Book Award for 2005 Best Book Older Readers' and the 2005 'Michael L. Printz Honor

Book.'

The AMICAALL Namibia Programme received two donations in 2005 totalling approximately US\$3000. An award fund from the proceeds has been set up linked to the Skills, Opportunities, Self-reliance (SOS) Programme in Namibia, which focuses on expanding access to vocational training and youth development opportunities for orphans and vulnerable young people. These initial donations have been designated to support caregivers who have completed a training course and plan to start their own baking business.

Focus on Uganda

AMICAALL UGANDA FOCUSES WORLD AIDS DAY CAMPAIGN ON MUNICIPALITIES IN NORTHERN UGANDA



Mr. John Mugisa
AMICAALL-
Uganda
Coordinator

To mark World AIDS Day 2005, AMICAALL Uganda, in collaboration with UNDP Uganda, the Kitgum City Council and all districts in northern Uganda, brought together national and international partners in the country to focus attention on HIV/AIDS in the northern region. Years of prolonged insurgency have fuelled the spread of HIV. Prevalence rates are as high as 10%-16% in this area. The Mayor of Kitgum Town, Alex Tabu Odongo, said, "taking the World AIDS Day to Kitgum is good news for people of the northern region because many people in the town have problems of HIV/AIDS and they need support."

The town of Kitgum hosts 15% of the district's total population of 281,374. However, due to the current insurgency, the town has experienced a dramatic in-

crease in population as a result of rural-urban migration increasing the current population to 150,000, 40% of whom are youth. AMICAALL Uganda has already initiated a number of activities in Kitgum, including the organisation of sensitisation seminars on voluntary counselling and testing and the prevention of mother-to-child transmission, support of drama and radio programmes to increase awareness and distribution of food supplements to people living with HIV and those taking anti-retroviral drugs. Radio sets have been distributed to parishes, internally displaced person camps and night commuters.



AMICAALL UGANDA RECEIVES PEPFAR FUNDING

The AMICAALL Uganda Programme received funding support from the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to support a Strengthening Urban Community Interventions for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) project. The focus of the activities is on the technical quality of a continuum of services provided to OVCs and the community response for care and support of them, as well as standards to improve their quality of life.

This project will be implemented in four sites of Kampala: Central, Bombo, Hoima and Busia, targeting support for a total of 1000 orphaned

children. Under this project, AMICAALL Uganda will also establish a Psychosocial Support Centre in Kampala Central Division that will provide psychosocial support services that integrates HIV prevention.

HIGHLIGHTS 2005

January-March 2005

- The Alliance and UN APP welcomed three new AMICAALL Coordinators: Ms. Deliwe Malema for Malawi, Ms. Mah Drabo Niangadou for Mali and Ms. Margaret Jobita for Kenya.
- The Alliance and UN APP participated in the AIMF (International Association of Francophone Mayors) Conference, “Cities, Societies and AIDS,” hosted by the city of Brussels. Alliance/AMICAALL experience and materials were shared. A summary of the meeting is available in the Alliance Newsletter Volume 2, Issue 5.
- AMICAALL Malawi has prepared a one-year action plan aimed at enhancing local government capacity to respond to HIV/AIDS in five municipalities. The AMICAALL Coordinator in Malawi is working with local authorities, the National AIDS Commission and other partners to facilitate the implementation of this action plan. Seed funding support for these activities is being provided by the World Bank. The Alliance Secretariat and the UN APP are providing ongoing technical support and guidance.
- The AMICAALL Mali Programme began its first phase of programming activities in six municipalities by establishing Municipal HIV/AIDS Teams. The next steps include: targeted capacity development to carry out data collection on existing services and gaps, preparation of municipal assessments and plans, enhancement of coordination and collaboration at local level, ensured effective links with national planning and coordination mechanisms and developed monitoring and reporting systems. The AMICAALL Programme in Mali is working in collaboration with UNDP, UNAIDS and Canadian partners. The Alliance and UN APP are also providing short-term technical support.
- AMICAALL Namibia facilitated the establishment of Municipal HIV/AIDS Task Teams in Grootfontein and Tsumeb municipalities. Workshops were conducted in the two municipalities to assess the way forward, and follow up includes the preparation of Municipal HIV/AIDS Service Directories, which will provide a baseline of existing services.
- AMICAALL Swaziland collaborated with the Academy of Education Development (AED) to develop a behaviour change strategy designed to reduce the Prevalence of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS (PMTCT). The strategy promotes the utilisation of PMTCT services offered by the Swazi Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.
- AMICAALL Swaziland facilitated the establishment and strengthening of 40 feeding centres in urban areas in response to the growing food insecurity resulting from HIV/AIDS, unemployment and limited farming land. The services, which are made possible through funding from the Global Fund, are being implemented in collaboration with NGOs, urban authorities and community groups.
- AMICAALL Swaziland, in partnership with the Swazi Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and nine municipalities, facilitated training of 206 home-based care volunteers. The training is part of ongoing efforts to expand home-based care services.
- AMICAALL Swaziland collaborated on several youth-focused initiatives, including the development of strategic directions to address the growing challenges facing young people in Swaziland.
- AMICAALL Uganda, with support from UNDP, produced an urban workplace guide for managing HIV/AIDS in municipal and urban workplaces. The guide is being distributed to all local authorities in Uganda and is used to encourage municipal and urban work places to initiate HIV/AIDS workplace policies and programmes.
- AMICAALL Uganda, with technical support funded by the Alliance, facilitated consultations with key stakeholders in Lira Municipality and Makindye Division of Kampala in an effort to enhance coordinated responses to HIV/AIDS at the local level.
- AMICAALL Uganda hosted a delegation from the South African city of Bloemfontein and the

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Municipal Development Partnership as part of on going efforts to enhance south-south cooperation.

- AMICAALL Zambia, working in close collaboration with the National AIDS Programme, completed a round of planning activities at district and local levels aimed at integrating local and national planning efforts.
- Electronic Bulletin Volume 1, Issue 14 issued.

April-June 2005

- The Alliance and UN APP welcomed the new AMICAALL Coordinator for Cameroon, Ms. Annie-Michele Salla Nzie.
- The Alliance is invited to make a presentation on the role of municipalities in the response to HIV/AIDS at a technical planning and information-sharing workshop organised by the South Africa Development Community (SADC) Local Government Minister's Forum.
- Preparatory activities for the launching of the national chapter of the Alliance in Cameroon have been initiated. A mayoral working group has been set up to guide this process. Ten municipalities have been identified for a first phase programme. Five municipalities have prepared municipal HIV/AIDS profiles and service directories in collaboration with local partners. Funding for preparatory activities is being provided by GTZ and UNDP, with technical support from UN APP.
- As part of the ongoing collaboration between PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), UN APP and the Alliance, a team of PwC consultants undertook an assessment mission to Kenya. The assessment mission included visits to two municipalities to gauge local needs and realities and to initiate preparations for a PwC technical assistance assignment scheduled for later on in the year.
- A workshop was convened by the AMICAALL Kenya Programme to solicit input on the development of an AMICAALL Kenya strategic plan. Participants at the workshop included members of the AMICAALL Kenya Committee, 40 leaders from local authorities, municipal officials and other key stakeholders.
- The AMICAALL Mali Programme conducted workshops for Municipal HIV/AIDS Teams from Banamba, Commune V de Bamako and Niro Sahel. The purpose of the workshops was to sensitise the teams on the implications and impact of HIV/AIDS on communities, review the functions of the Municipal HIV/AIDS Teams, provide guidance for the preparation of their local HIV/AIDS action plans and to ensure effective collaboration and accordance with national plans and strategies.
- AMICAALL Namibia, in collaboration with SIA-PAC, UNDP, UN APP and other national and local partners, organised a workshop to review the Municipal Impact Assessment and Strategic Planning Toolkit. Copies of the Toolkit can be obtained from the National AMICAALL Programme in Namibia. Electronic copies of the Toolkit are available on the website: www.amicaall.org.
- AMICAALL Namibia was identified as the first recipient of proceeds from the sale of the book, *Chanda's Secret*, the young adult novel about the life of a 16-year-old girl living in a fictional sub-Saharan African country that is afflicted with the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Allan Stratton is the author of this book. The funds will be used to set up a scholarship fund linked to the Skills, Opportunities, Self-Reliance (SOS) Programme in Namibia that focuses on expanding access to vocational training and youth development opportunities for orphans and vulnerable young people.
- The AMICAALL Zambia Programme received funding from USAID for programme activities that include: local leadership training in HIV/AIDS; establishment of local authority workplace and community programmes; and the preparation of municipal HIV/AIDS directories for Kitwe and Livingston.
- UN APP was invited to participate and share information on the Alliance/AMICAALL at the 8th World Congress of Metropolis in Berlin, Germany. Metropolis is an association, with a membership of approximately 90 cities, which supports the interests of major cities throughout the world by promoting exchanges and collaborations

HIGHLIGHTS 2005

with the aim of improving living conditions of their constituents.

- UN APP organised a special session on HIV/AIDS and local governance at the founding congress of United Cities and Local Government – Africa (UCLGA) that took place in May 2005 in Tshwane, South Africa. During this session, presentations on HIV/AIDS and the role and contribution of local government were made by local government officials, the Alliance and UNAIDS. The strategy and approaches underpinning AMICAALL were adopted by UCLGA to guide local government action on HIV/AIDS.
 - In June, a workshop was held in Namibia that brought together all key stakeholders and partners of the Skills, Opportunities, and Self Reliance (SOS) initiative in the country. Participants reviewed the monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure that information on indicators of achievement were collected in an efficient and systematic manner. SOS, which provides vocational training and youth development services in three municipalities, is being implemented in collaboration with the AMICAALL Namibia Programme, UN APP and technical partner, ORT IC, with a grant from the OPEC Fund.
 - The Alliance and UN APP welcomed Ms. Victoria Lonje as the full-time Executive Secretary of the Alliance. She took over the responsibility from the first Executive Secretary, Ms. Fikile Mthembu, in June. With heartfelt appreciation and gratitude, the Alliance and UN APP bid farewell to Ms. Mthembu, who had served with distinction as the first Executive Secretary of the Alliance on a part-time basis.
 - Alliance Newsletter Volume 2, Issue 5 issued.
 - Electronic Bulletin Volume 1, Issue 15 issued.
- July-September 2005**
- The AMICAALL Coordinator in Kenya, Ms. Margaret Jobita, attended a briefing workshop organised by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in Ireland in June. The workshop was held for all their participants in this year's round of the Ulysses programme. The Alliance and UN APP have partnered with PwC on its Ulysses programme since 2001. This year, a four-person team from PwC has been assigned to work with the AMICAALL Kenya Programme and provide technical support to enhance municipal level management systems to address HIV/AIDS.
 - The AMICAALL website, www.amicaall.org, was selected as one of the ten best local governance websites in Africa by the Global Observatory of Local Democracy and Decentralization (GOLD), a United Cities and Local Government (UCLG) initiative. The AMICAALL website, which is managed by the UN APP with input from the AMICAALL programmes network and the Alliance, was launched in March 2002.
 - The second Technical Standing Committee (TSC) meeting of the Alliance was convened in Dakar, Senegal on 18 July. The TSC was set up to provide guidance to the Executive Secretary and Coordinating Committee of the Alliance. The TSC brings together donors and other partners supporting the work of the Alliance and AMICAALL.
 - Members of the Alliance Coordinating Committee met in Dakar, Senegal on 19 July to review the activities and achievements of the Alliance Secretariat and AMICAALL programme activities, as well as to provide policy guidance on strategic actions to be implemented in the coming year.
 - The annual AMICAALL Programme Review and Development Workshop was held in Dakar, Senegal, from 20-22 July. The workshop provided an opportunity for national AMICAALL Coordinators and Focal Points (from 12 countries), Alliance Secretariat staff, Alliance Coordinating Committee members, UN APP staff and representatives from UNAIDS, donors and partnering organisations to all come together. Workshop participants reviewed national AMICAALL programme activities; identified the key priorities and constraints hindering country-level action; and identified strategies and actions for the further development of coordinated, decentralised action on HIV/AIDS as part of ongoing efforts to address the “implementation gap” between national plans and expanded services and support programmes reaching people and communities.

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- After attending the Alliance Coordinating Committee meeting and the AMICAALL Programme and Review Workshop in July 2005, the representative from the Central African Republic, Mr. André Samba, convened local government authorities when he returned to brief them on the key issues discussed at the workshop. These included the “Three Ones” and the involvement of local government, women and HIV/AIDS and localising the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- The National AIDS Commission approved a grant of approximately US\$200,000 to support the work of the AMICAALL Malawi Programme. In an increasing number of countries, the contribution of local government authorities to the national response to HIV/AIDS is being recognised and supported by National AIDS Programmes/Commissions.
- The AMICAALL Malawi Programme, in collaboration with the Alliance Secretariat, organised a workshop with the Lilongwe Municipality on 22-23 August. Workshop participants included officials from all municipal departments. The workshop provided an opportunity for city officials to review ongoing efforts to respond to HIV/AIDS, explore constraints and identify ways and means of more effectively mainstreaming HIV/AIDS at the local government level. Following the workshop, meetings were convened with representatives from the Lilongwe City HIV/AIDS Coordinating Committee (Municipal HIV/AIDS Team), District AIDS Coordinating Committee (DACC), Malawi Association of Local Government Authorities (MALGA), AMICAALL Malawi Programme and Alliance Secretariat. These activities are part of ongoing efforts by AMICAALL Malawi to enhance capacity to respond to HIV/AIDS at the local and community level and to promote approaches that result in more direct support to people and affected communities.
- The AMICAALL Swaziland Programme took steps to launch an SOS initiative targeting orphans and vulnerable children and affected households. Preparatory work was launched in August 2005 with support from the Alliance Secretariat, UN APP and ORT IC.
- The Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) and the AMICAALL Zambia Programme are working together to enhance the capacities of local government to respond to HIV/AIDS at the local level. Through a demand-driven approach to the provision of technical assistance based on local needs and realities, SNV and the AMICAALL Zambia Programme have teamed up and are working together to support local government and communities to scale up decentralised responses to HIV/AIDS.
- For the United Nations’ World Summit in September, which included an assessment of progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA) issued a joint press release (www.amicaall.org and www.uclga.co.za). This statement drew attention to the pressing needs of communities affected by HIV/AIDS and called for better access by these communities to the increased availability of resources now available.
- A UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) Mayors’ Session was held with the President of the General Assembly on 8 September, preceding the Millennium Summit. UCLGA called for increased investment at the municipal level to build and enhance local government capacity for expanding and sustaining community-based HIV/AIDS services and programmes, in partnership with civil society organisations, as well as scaling up responses to HIV/AIDS in the workplace in partnership with the private sector.
- “Ultimately it is in the streets of your cities and towns that the value of what’s decided here will be tested”, the Secretary General, Kofi Annan, said to the mayors and other local representatives attending the UCLG Summit at UN Headquarters in New York on 8 September. “It is there, in the daily lives of your citizens, in their safety and security, in their prosperity and sense of opportunity, that our progress will be most visible, and our setbacks felt most keenly”. “While our goals are global,” he added, “they can most effectively be achieved through action at the local level”.
- The AMICAALL Zambia Programme was nominated to lead the process of guiding districts in

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developing integrated district HIV/AIDS strategic plans and contributing to the HIV/AIDS chapter in the National Development Plan for 2006-2011. This collaboration will facilitate the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS at both local and national levels.

- The AMICAALL Namibia Programme, in partnership with ORT IC, UN APP the OPEC Fund, and other partners, launched a Skills, Opportunities and Self-Reliance (SOS) initiative in 2004 to help adolescent orphans and vulnerable youth access vocational training and other services. A year later, hundreds of orphans and vulnerable youth in three municipalities are directly benefiting from this collaborative effort. In August 2005, the International Youth Award (a component of the programme) was launched in the municipality of Rehoboth, an event attended by local and international dignitaries and Namibian Olympic sprinter, Mr. Frankie Fredericks. SOS Namibia has recently received a President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) grant, through USAID/Namibia, as part of a five-year strategy to promote urgently needed HIV/AIDS-related services to the most affected countries.
- On 28 September 2005, a gala dinner was held in Namibia to mobilise resources for the Otjiwarongo Multi-Purpose Help Centre, which provides a range of services including support to orphans and vulnerable youth. Over N\$579,000 (US\$88,900) in cash and in-kind support were raised. The Centre was built through efforts of the municipality and a coalition of local partners with support from the AMICAALL Namibia Programme, UN APP, *STOP AIDS NOW!*, VNG International and the Dutch municipality of Heusden. Honoured guests included Dr. Sam Nujoma, Former President of Namibia; Mrs. Moderatha Shaduka, former Mayor of Otjiwarongo and now the AMICAALL Coordinator in Namibia; Mr. Hans Poley, representative of the Netherlands Embassy; Mr. Theofelus Eiseb, Mayor of Heusden; and Otto Ipinge, Mayor of Otjiwarongo.
- The "HIV/AIDS Advocacy Guide for Local Authorities in Namibia", developed by the AMICAALL Namibia Programme, can be found at the website: www.amicaall.org.
- *The Local Governance and HIV/AIDS: A Toolkit*

for Impact Assessment and Strategic Planning, developed via a partnership between the AMICAALL Namibia Programme, Namibia National Planning Commission, SIAPAC, UNAPP and UNDP, can be found at the website: www.amicaall.org.

- Electronic Bulletin, Volume 1, Issue 16 issued.
- Electronic Bulletin, Volume 2, Issue 17 issued.

October-December 2005

- On 15 November 2005, Mr. Janherman Veenker died in Amsterdam at the age of 55. A person living with HIV and a long-time AIDS activist, Mr. Veenker had been working as the Senior Program Coordinator at *STOP AIDS NOW!* since 2003. He is remembered for his commitment and tireless work on AIDS for the past 20 years, especially fighting issues of stigma and discrimination. The Alliance and UN APP remember Mr. Veenker as a colleague and friend. The Alliance and UN APP have partnered with *STOP AIDS NOW!*, a Dutch foundation, since 2002.
- In 2005, a joint initiative called "STOP AIDS" was launched by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and its partners: The World AIDS Campaign, UNAIDS, the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and AMICAALL. The Local Governments Committing to the "STOP AIDS" Campaign urge governments to "keep the promise" they made at the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) in June 2001 by supporting local government initiatives and building the capacity of local authorities to fight HIV/AIDS. The Campaign's "Local Government Promise" to fight HIV and AIDS has been inspired by the Alliance's Abidjan Declaration. The Alliance and the AMICAALL network are encouraging local government authorities, mayors and municipal leaders and their partners around the world to unite around this campaign. For more information, please see the websites: www.cities-localgovernments.org and www.amicaall.org.

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- Under a jointly sponsored initiative of UNDP, UNAIDS and World Bank, UN APP, the Alliance and national AMICAALL programmes were invited to organise a skills building session during the International Conference on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa (ICASA) on 4-9 December 2005 in Abuja, Nigeria. Selected mini-case studies, illustrating opportunities and obstacles in implementing municipal responses to HIV/AIDS, were discussed in small groups. AMICAALL resource persons from Kenya, South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia presented lessons learned in concrete settings. A report of the session can be found on the website: www.amicaall.org.
- The Government of the Netherlands, through the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) via its international consulting arm, VNG International, is providing support to expand city-to-city cooperation between Dutch and Namibian towns. In collaboration with the AMICAALL Namibia Programme, VNG International is now working with three municipalities. Through a coordinated effort and building on the approaches developed by AMICAALL Namibia, VNG International is helping to mobilise human and financial resources (via city-to-city cooperation) to expand HIV/AIDS-related services in these towns. Three Dutch cities are involved in this partnership. AMICAALL Namibia is now working with 20 municipalities in the country, and a growing number of partners at the local, national and international level, to strengthen the institutional capacity of municipalities to integrate HIV/AIDS in their municipal agendas and support a coordinated local government/civil society response to HIV/AIDS at the local level.
- In October 2005, the AMICAALL Kenya Programme held its third sensitisation and planning workshop with local government authorities. The workshop brought together representatives of Rift Valley Province local governments, the Kenya National AIDS Council (NAC), UNDP and local AMICAALL focal points. The NAC representative presented the Kenya National AIDS Strategic Plan and called upon local government leaders to become more engaged in tackling HIV/AIDS in their communities. In accordance with the “Three Ones”, the AMICAALL Kenya Programme works in close collaboration with the NAC, and other partners in the country, to promote a coordinated, multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS at the local level.
- The Alliance and UN APP welcomed Mr. Jerome Kamwala, the new coordinator for AMICAALL Tanzania.
- On 9-10 November 2005, a workshop was held in Cameroon to map out strategic directions to respond to the growing challenges of HIV/AIDS and advocate for greater support to local government in efforts to confront the epidemic. The workshop included representatives of local and national government, government representatives of Canada and France, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, NGOs, civil society and the Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS. The outcome of this consensus building and planning workshop is the finalisation of a framework for collaborative action to expand multisectoral responses to the epidemic within municipalities and communities. This will enable the implementation of a coordinated effort to enhance local government capacity to respond and scale-up decentralised services and programmes.
- Following the two-day workshop, the Cameroonian Chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa was officially launched in November 2005. Mayors, who are already part of the Alliance and AMICAALL network, shared their experiences with Cameroonian mayors. The workshop and preparatory activities have been supported by UNDP Cameroon, GTZ and UN APP. Five municipalities have already initiated start-up activities.
- To mark World AIDS Day 2005, AMICAALL Uganda, in collaboration with UNDP Uganda, the Kitgum City council and all districts in northern Uganda, brought together national and international partners in the country to focus attention on HIV/AIDS in the northern region. Years of prolonged insurgency have fuelled the spread of HIV. Prevalence rates are as high as 10%-16% in this area.

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- The Mayor of Kitgum Town, Alex Tabu Odongo, said, “taking the World AIDS Day to Kitgum is good news for people of the northern region because many people in the town have problems of HIV/AIDS and they need support.” The town of Kitgum hosts 15% of the district’s total population of 281,374. However, due to current insurgency, the town has experienced a dramatic increase in population as a result of rural-urban migration increasing the current population to 150,000, 40% of whom are youth. AMICAALL Uganda has already initiated a number of activities in Kitgum, including the organisation of sensitisation seminars on Voluntary Counselling and Testing and the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission, support of drama and radio programmes to increase awareness and distribution of food supplements to people living with HIV/AIDS and those taking anti-retroviral drugs. AMICAALL continues to increase HIV/AIDS awareness through such programs. Radio sets have been distributed to parishes, internally displaced person camps and night commuters.
- The AMICAALL Uganda Programme received funding support from the United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to support a project, *Strengthening Urban Community Interventions for Orphans and Vulnerable Children* (OVC). This project focuses on the technical quality of a continuum of services provided to OVCs and the community response for care and support of OVCs, as well as standards to improve their quality of life. It is being implemented in four sites in Kampala targeting support for approximately 1000 orphaned children.
- A documentary video has been produced by the AMICAALL Programme in Uganda. The video, which is approximately 20 minutes long, highlights actions to strengthen the institutional capacity of urban local governments to effectively respond to HIV/AIDS at the local level; community-based HIV/AIDS initiatives in cities and towns targeting vulnerable households; and public, private and civil society partnership development and resource mobilisation to expand local HIV/AIDS-related services. The video is being made available on CD-ROM thanks to support from UNAIDS and UN APP. For more information on the video, please contact the AMICAALL Uganda Programme at: amicaall@utlonline.co.ug.
- AMICAALL Namibia has initiated the preparation of a case study, with support from the Alliance and UN APP, as part of ongoing efforts to document municipal HIV/AIDS initiatives. The case study will be available on the website: www.amicaall.org.
- A second donation was made by the publishers of *Chanda’s Secret*, a young adult novel about a teenage girl in Africa affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. AMICAALL Namibia is the recipient of these funds that, in turn, are contributed to a scholarship fund that is linked to the Skills, Opportunities and Self-Reliance (SOS) Programme. The SOS programme in Namibia focuses on expanding access to vocational training and youth development opportunities for orphans and vulnerable young people.
- The Alliance and UN APP welcomed the new AMICAALL Coordinator for Côte d’Ivoire, Ms. Desirée Djomand.
- The AMICAALL Côte d’Ivoire Programme has prepared its work plan for 2005–2007. Activities include the preparation of a longer-term strategic plan that will be integrated into the national AIDS plan/strategy as well as targeted capacity development in 10 communes.
- The AMICAALL Toolkit has been produced to help guide local government authorities and their partners in efforts to enhance collaboration and action on HIV/AIDS. The publication contains tools developed and used by the AMICAALL network in developing, implementing, monitoring and reporting on their programme activities across a range of countries. The Toolkit is the result of a joint effort by the Alliance and UN APP with support from UNAIDS, UNDP and the World Bank. Electronic copies of the Toolkit, in both English and French, are available on the website: www.amicaall.org. Hard copies in limited numbers can be obtained from UN APP.
- Electronic Bulletin, Volume 2, Issue 18 issued.

EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 1)

clearly more vulnerable than men (4.1%°) (EDSC III).

In 2003, UNAIDS assessed that in Cameroon, 560,000 persons lived with HIV, of whom 43,000 were children and 290,000 women. It was estimated that orphans numbered 210,000.

Cameroon's response to the epidemic was swift and, since 1987, numerous activities to prevent the spread of the epidemic have been undertaken throughout the country.

In September 2000, the Government adopted the National Strategic Plan of Action on AIDS. Since then, its effective implementation, refocusing interventions on women and youth, calling for increased community based responses to HIV/AIDS, has led to tangible results, be it in terms of prevention, of providing care or of the social mobilisation against this scourge.

The establishment of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Cameroon and its official launch on the 30th of November 2005, reflects the concerns and wishes of the local government authorities of Cameroon to become personally involved as actors at the forefront of the fight against AIDS in Cameroon; and to do so at the place which is theirs: among their people, with their people and for the people for whom they bear responsibility.

The Alliance/AMICAALL is thus an excellent means to decentralize action on HIV/AIDS, a means to institutionalize actions and interventions to achieve the hoped for reduction of the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS. Simply put, the Alliance/AMICAALL is a wonderful tool for local development.

The Cameroonian Alliance organized a planning workshop that closed with the adoption of the Alliance's strategic framework for action. Municipal teams are being established in the 5 municipalities that already have profiles and local service directories. Partners are being identified.

The continuing support of the UN-AMICAALL, of UNDP, UNAIDS and of government authorities, as well as the contributions of UNFPA, of Canadian Aid and of GTZ, have helped the Alliance of Cameroon to get under way.

The major challenge to be addressed for this initiative to be a powerful lever for coordination, follow-up and for the durability of the local responses initiated by the government so far, is to ensure that the Cameroonian Chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders and its AMICAALL programme are known better so as to facilitate their expansion through the membership of all the municipalities of Cameroon.

PHOTOS FROM THE CAMEROON LAUNCH



Mayor Amieh Assouh (L), Vice President of the Alliance, and SE Urbain Olangena Awono, Public Health Minister (R)



Ms. Sophie Caen, UNDP Resident Representative and Mayor Koa Félix, President of the Alliance in Cameroon

NOTEBOOK

FAREWELL TO FIKILE MTHEMBU

Ms. Fikile Mthembu, first Executive Secretary of the Alliance, who served on a part-time and pro bono basis, was thanked for her outstanding contribution to the development of the Alliance during a reception organised in her honour on the occasion of the meeting of the Alliance Coordinating Committee in July 2005, in Dakar, Senegal.

Ms. Mthembu, a lawyer and first elected female mayor in Swaziland (Manzini), was recognized by the Alliance and UN APP for her strong commitment to the goals of the Alliance and AMICAALL as well as for her untiring efforts to mobilise key national and local actors not only in Swaziland but around the world to support local government action on HIV/AIDS. She played a key role in the

early days of the development of the Alliance as an active member of its Coordinating Committee and was instrumental in helping to mobilise commitment and support from local, national and international leaders and partners from a range of institutions and organisations.

Ms. Mthembu will continue to contribute to the work of the Alliance/AMICAALL as a co-opted member of the Coordinating Committee. It is with heartfelt appreciation and gratitude that the Alliance and UN APP bid farewell to Ms. Mthembu.

THE ALLIANCE AND UN APP WELCOME FULL TIME EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The Alliance and UN APP are pleased to welcome Ms. Victoria Lonje in the position of Executive Secretary of the Alliance. Ms. Lonje commenced her duties in June 2005. Ms. Lonje, from

Malawi, has been working on HIV-related issues for many years, most recently with the National AIDS Council in Malawi.

ALLIANCE WEBSITE SELECTED AS ONE OF THE TEN BEST IN AFRICA

The Alliance website, www.amicaall.org, was selected as one of the ten best local governance websites in Africa by the Global Observatory of Local Democracy and Decentralization (GOLD), a United Cities and Local Government (UCLG) initiative. GOLD compiled a comprehensive list of all websites on local governance in Africa which were identified and analysed according to geographic and thematic fields, accessibility of products and services, and site structure, functionality and management. Based on these criteria, www.amicall.org was chosen as one of the ten best websites in Africa.

The website, managed by the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme (UN APP), with input from the AMICAALL programmes network and the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa, was launched in March 2002. It was developed as a platform from which best practices and the AMICAALL programme experiences can be shared.

Upcoming Events

<i>Events</i>	<i>Dates</i>
Steering Committee on Civil Society Participation in the United Nations General Assembly on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS HIV/AIDS Process) New York, USA	11-13 January 2006
World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty (WACAP) Valencia, Spain	29-31 March 2006
Children in Distress (CINDI) Conference Pietermaritzburg, South Africa	3-7 April 2006
World Urban Forum Vancouver, Canada	19-23 June 2006
XVI International AIDS Conference Toronto, Canada	13-18 August 2006
Africities, Nairobi, Kenya	18-24 September 2006

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