



The Alliance Special Edition Newsletter, October, 2010

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1. Welcome Note

This *Special Edition* of The Alliance Newsletter is presented to impart information and key decisions made at the Statutory and related meetings of The Alliance held in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, from 4th to 10th August, 2010.

Effective governance processes are essential to facilitate and underpin achievement of the objectives of The Alliance; particularly implementation of local programmes to respond to the impacts of HIV/AIDS. The meetings provided the opportunity for all levels of The Alliance governing structures to assemble, share information and learning, engage in policy dialogue, determine future direction of the organization and fulfill constitutional requirements.

National Coordinators (now Country Programme Directors) of AMICAALL Programmes gathered for two days to present progress reports, experiences and learning, and discuss future plans.

The *Technical Standing Committee*, which brought together Alliance technical partners, met to consider future operational and work plans, budgets and administrative issues, and exercise its mandate to advise the Coordinating Committee (now the Executive Council.)

The *Coordinating Committee* (now called the Executive Council) meeting was held to exercise its constitutional mandate of supporting implementation of The Alliance’s overall objectives as well as providing policy direction and coordination of activities.

In addition, a *Donors/Development Partners Forum* was held in conjunction with the statutory meetings where the opportunity was taken to enhance the capacity of the organization through establishing working relationships with potential donors in order to strengthen The Alliance's support base.

Finally, the supreme decision making body of the Alliance, the *General Assembly*, held its triennial meeting of all Alliance members.

A range of keys strategic issues were considered at these meetings. These included a review of Alliance operations plans, strategic partnerships, expansion of programmes and membership, amendments to the Alliance Constitution, the evolving role of the Secretariat and the partnership with United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA). These will be elaborated further in the articles appearing in this special issue of the Newsletter.

Of special note was the election of a new leadership team for the next three years, headed by Mayor Peter Muwanga from Uganda. Co-founder and Honorary Member of The Alliance, Fisho Mwale, also bade farewell to official office at the General Assembly after many years of dedicated service. Words from our new and outgoing Presidents and a tribute to Fisho are also included in this edition.

Overall, The Alliance meetings were successful and demonstrated that the organization's governance is vibrant, effective and passionately committed to the aims of the organization, and to the local authorities and stakeholders we serve. Further information follows.

2. Foreword from The Alliance President



*The Alliance President, Mayor
Peter Muwanga*

A decade ago, I did not see any role for a political head in the HIV/AIDS struggle. After all, AIDS is a disease or health problem better left to the experts – trained doctors, health practitioners and social workers. What role could I see then? I believe I was not alone with such warped thinking.

The best that my fellow politicians and I could do was attend funerals where we privately commented about the cause of death of the departed relative or friend as AIDS related. We could never, ever utter such thoughts in public. It was anathema to ascribe death to HIV/AIDS. It was, at the time, politically incorrect to dishonor your relative or friend with public pronouncements like that. What with widow/widower inheritance and other traditional customs considerations! It was safer to make a funeral speech/oration that largely ignored the real issue - AIDS.

In the year 2000, AMICAALL came in with a simple direct message to us municipal leaders. *Be involved. You are influential in your community so say and do something about the scourge. It can make a difference.* In Uganda, the President of the Republic had come out with a clear statement which was hailed the world over. This national leadership role had never filtered down to the municipal level. We were too preoccupied with roads, garbage, street lighting and other issues. The

Alliance then became an important vehicle in the mobilization of local leadership in the struggle against HIV/AIDS. The linkage between governance and good and effective interventions in HIV/AIDS is a given. A committed and energized leadership can and does have a significant role on interventions in respective constituencies.

All existing HIV/AIDS practitioners not only feel good when local leadership appreciates their work but are also encouraged by the recognition and participation in their activities. In other areas, local leadership plays a vital role of offering coordination of the various stakeholders' interventions. Coordination and information sharing is key in these interventions and the local leaders are best suited for this role.

Local leaders also control local resources. They have personnel and some limited funding which can be used for some modest interventions. These interventions include assisting the affected and infected and participating in sensitization programs. Empowered and committed local leaders can and do engineer budget support for HIV/AIDS interventions. These leaders can also authoritatively lobby central government and other partners for meaningful HIV/AIDS activities.

It's imperative that we use all avenues to make local leadership count in this era of HIV/AIDS ravaging the continent.

3. Fisho Mwale Calls It a Day



Co-founder of the Alliance and one of only three Honorary Members, Mr. Fisho Mwale, announced at the Executive Council meeting that he will be retiring from official position with The Alliance. Fisho has held office in the Alliance governing structures since its inception, and is widely acknowledged as being instrumental in establishing The Alliance.

"It is time for new blood and fresh ideas. It has been my honor to serve the Alliance and it is with deep passion that I am stepping aside. I leave believing in The Alliance" declared Fisho at the meeting.

Fisho, as then Mayor of Lusaka, started his involvement with The Alliance at the special session which was organized at the International AIDS Conference in Abidjan in 1997 and hosted by the Mayor of Abidjan and Alliance co-founder Mayor Ernest N'Koumo Mobio, and UNDP. It was at this symposium on HIV and the Role of Local Government that mayors called for the establishment of an Alliance and issued the Abidjan Declaration.

This was followed by another special session at the first Africities Summit in 1998, also in Abidjan; where over 100 African mayors came together to formally launch The Alliance. It was at this meeting that, through sharing his personal story, Fisho put a human face to the epidemic and motivated fellow mayors to take action to address the impacts of HIV/AIDS on their local communities. Fisho has advocated passionately and practically for local government to be actively involved in HIV/AIDS ever since.

Fisho also played a significant role at the second Africities Summit in 2000 during the special session on HIV/AIDS at that meeting. The Prime Minister of Namibia announced that the Government of Namibia and City of Windhoek were offering to make available offices that would host the regional secretariat of The Alliance. Fisho was instrumental in garnering this support.

Fisho was also a very active member of the Alliance Coordinating Committee and has chaired the Technical Standing Committee since its inception. He has also supported The Alliance Secretariat through some challenging times; displaying his highly effective management skills. He also identified the current Executive Director who came on board during a difficult time and has done an outstanding job.

Fisho also reached out to many local authorities in Africa and made himself available to represent The Alliance regionally and internationally. He also helped to create a balance between Francophone and Anglophone African members and worked hard to ensure this was one Alliance.

In his home country, Fisho has also worked hard to establish the highly successful AMICAALL Zambia programme, being made an honorary member in 2005 for his contribution to AMICAALL in Africa and Zambia. He is currently the only Honorary Member of AMICAALL Zambia.

Former Director of the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme, Mina Mauerstein-Bail, was quoted as saying “I recall that when we were in the process of establishing the Zambia AMICAALL program, through Fisho’s efforts, UNDP provided support to establish the AMICAALL program. He was very helpful with the ground work, and in getting the AMICAALL program up and running in Zambia.”

Mina further stated that Fisho applied his position as Mayor of Lusaka to help sensitize other mayors in Zambia to HIV/AIDS issues and AMICAALL.

Through Fisho’s strong commitment, he helped set up the Alliance and support it during its formative years. He has made a highly significant contribution to this effort subsequently, and has given freely of his time and energy. His endeavors were recognized by The Alliance membership when he was made an Honorary Member in 2003; a membership which now expresses their sincere appreciation to Fisho Mwale for his tireless and important contributions to The Alliance. The members also look forward to Fisho’s continued participation in The Alliance as a respected Honorary Member.

4. AMICAALL National Chapters’ Reports

The key achievements, challenges and opportunities of AMICAALL national chapters were highlighted at the two-day meeting of Country Programme Directors (CPDs) from nine member countries. At the gathering, CPDs presented progress reports on their achievements over the past two years, shared experiences, engaged in networking and discussed future programming.

The meeting provided a valuable opportunity to emphasize what AMICAALL programmes had achieved on the ground and to discuss issues of mutual concern amongst the CPDs and Alliance Secretariat.

Following is a brief outline of the achievements of each Chapter, as presented by the CPDs, followed by an analysis of the progress made. Further details are available on the AMICAALL Website.

Cameroon

Since its establishment in 2006, AMICAALL Cameroon now boasts 230 member municipalities and has clearly enhanced awareness, leadership and ownership in the local HIV /AIDS response through its development programmes.



The Alliance Secretariat staff and Country Programme Directors, who were present at the statutory meetings in August, 2010, Pretoria

Municipal HIV Teams (MHTs) have been established in 70 municipalities and through these, 700 community leaders, including 375 women have been trained. These leaders have reached 26,000 people with awareness raising in the past two years. A total of 14,500 underwent voluntary testing and counseling, of which 7.34% tested positive, as a result of this programme. Municipal profiles and service directories have been prepared in these 70 local authorities.

Other initiatives include preparation and dissemination of toolkits and guidelines on HIV and AIDS information, strategic local responses, gender and economic opportunities. Together with partner organizations, Cameroonian local authorities have provide support to 12,000 orphans and vulnerable

children and are working with 130 PLWHA groups on stigma, leadership and income generation.

Côte d'Ivoire

One of the first to be established in 1999, AMICAALL Côte d'Ivoire has focused on capacity strengthening of local authorities in participatory planning, incorporating the different needs of women and men, and sharing information and experiences.

Despite challenges emanating from the civil crisis in the country and economic constraints, AMICAALL Côte d'Ivoire and partners have managed to facilitate the establishment of 85 Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) centers, creation of 50 Municipal Information Cells on HIV /AIDS and initiated a process of integrating HIV/AIDS and gender into two municipal development plans.

Abidjan has also been selected by UNDP as the location of a Thematic Pole on Information Communication Technology, to be led by AMICAALL.

Kenya

Launched in 2004, AMICAALL Kenya has facilitated the establishment of 135 Municipal AMICAALL Committees, each with its own structure and budget lines for local HIV/AIDS responses.

Programmes being implemented by these committees include sensitization of local authority leadership, advocacy and lobbying of key decision makers on the importance of local HIV/AIDS responses, networking and support to preparation of workplace policies, municipal profiles and service directories.

Mali

AMICAALL Mali, established in 2002, includes all 703 municipalities and Bamako District, and boasts membership of 10,177 locally elected leaders. The strategic plan of AMICAALL Mali is formulated on measures to enhance equitable prevention, improve surveillance, increase access to treatment, address gender inequalities and social impacts of the epidemic, and promote partnerships.

To date AMICAALL Mali programmes have been implemented in 63 municipalities, each developing an inclusive HIV/AIDS response action plan. Approximately 125 community stakeholders per year have been trained in advocacy and local responses. Publications produced include 12 municipal profiles and HIV/AIDS service directories, a regular newsletter, an AMICAALL Mali case study and a toolkit for mayors on local responses.

Namibia

AMICAALL Namibia, launched in 2002, comprises all 54 urban local authorities. The programme has facilitated establishment of HIV/AIDS workplace policies and programmes in 15 municipalities. The programme has also conducted advocacy training and leadership development for local authority leaders and officials to enhance planning, implementation and monitoring capacity. HIV/AIDS impact assessments have also been carried out in 10 municipalities and Community Capacity Enhancement (CCE) programme in 23 local communities to inform planning.

Integration of AMICAALL programmes under one HIV/AIDS strategy with enhanced partnerships, and resource mobilization are key priorities of AMICAALL Namibia. Membership of the Global

Fund Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) and the CCE programme are important success factors.

Swaziland

All 12 urban local authorities are active members of AMICAALL Swaziland. Established in 2001, the Swaziland programme wants to build healthy and productive urban communities in the era of HIV/AIDS. To achieve this objective, a wide range of activities have been undertaken in several programmatic areas in the past two years.

Prevention activities results included over 45,000 youths being reached in peer education and in-school clubs; 6,500 clients reached with prevention of mother to child transmission (PCMT) programmes; 106 VCT promotions reached 17,000 urban residents 2,600 of whom went for testing; and, 1,860,000 condoms were distributed. In addition, workplace programmes were undertaken in all municipalities.

Under impact mitigation, home based care was provided to 3,100 clients; 7,600 orphans were reached through orphan care and child protection points; a range of food security projects and income generating projects were carried out; and an antiretroviral treatment clinic in the largest city was in operation.

Community conversations reached 32,000 residents and 35,000 participated in community mobilization initiatives which informed planning and citizen engagement. Skills development, monitoring and evaluation and production of publications also followed.

Tanzania

Dating back to 1999, AMICAALL Tanzania's membership comprises all 23 city and municipal councils, representing an urban population of some 6.3 million. The Chapter's framework programmes focus on advocacy, prevention, care and support and impact mitigation.

AMICAALL Tanzania has trained and supported 10 council multi-sectoral AIDS committees in services mapping, preparation of municipal profiles, and HIV/AIDS service directories. Advocacy forums have been facilitated for sharing experiences and learning and the Chapter has supported development and implementation of workplace programmes for two large cities. The Chapter has also assisted with M&E efforts, as well as providing special assistance to Zanzibar.

All 23 local authorities have operational HIV/AIDS plans mainstreamed into the Medium Term Development Framework; with all councils carrying out interventions in the focus areas.

Uganda

Launched in 2000, AMICAALL Uganda includes 110 municipalities and 34 municipal divisions. Key programme priorities include enhancing HIV mainstreaming in local authorities and strengthening the sustained multi-sectoral response. This is achieved through developing local leadership, advocacy and networking- with specific focus on university students and high risk groups.

Specific interventions of AMICAALL to meet these priorities included development of an HIV Mainstreaming toolkit for local government and training 330 urban leaders on the processes. Eight municipalities were supported in development of

workplace programmes and three urban councils prepared orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) by-laws to protect the rights of children.

Skills based training was conducted for urban leaders to enhance planning, coordination and management of local responses. This was supported by capacity needs assessments in three urban authorities, mapping of HIV/AIDS services in 10 councils and AIDS taskforces established in 15 councils. A behavioral change communications strategy was prepared and regular consultations with partners and stakeholders held.

The programme of risk reduction among university students included a situational analysis followed by the training of 86 peer educators who reached out to 8,200 students with HIV messages, while mobile VCT services reached 2,300. Inter-university games based on HIV messages were held and 10 condom distribution points set up. The focus on high risk groups included a vulnerability study proceeded by training of 56 peer educators drawn from the identified groups. These educators reached 5,300 sex workers, taxi drivers, market vendors and other most at risk groups. Sexuality and life skills training was provided to 280 young girls and around 400,000 condoms distributed.

Local leadership has in fact driven the urban community response in Uganda and influenced positive behaviour change.

Zambia

All 72 local authorities are members of AMICAALL Zambia, which was launched in 2002. The programme strategy focuses on attainment of the Millennium Development Goals at local level, through local leadership development and economic opportunities for HIV affected people. A

three phase programme includes awareness, workplace and community response training and implementation.

Results of the programme include:

- All 72 Mayors, Council Chairpersons, Town Clerks/Secretaries and municipal planners being trained in local HIV/AIDS responses.
- 35 municipalities having developed workplace policies and 38 establishing workplace HIV/AIDS committees.
- A total of 18 local authorities have completed the entire AMICAALL capacity building programme and six have prepared their services directories.
- The AMICAALL leadership development programme has reached 420 councillors- 25% coverage so far.

One of the flagship initiatives in Zambia is known as AA4, which is a unique partnership between civil society, local government and the business sector. AA4 establishes linkages between a targeted 84 PLHIV support groups and business development services to create viable enterprises in 7 Districts.

The programme represents a sustainable mitigation strategy through employment and income generation.

Overview and Conclusion

The Alliance has been operating at various levels for over ten years now and many lessons have been learned in this time. These lessons were reinforced at the meeting. Some important messages include:

1. Effective local leadership; both political and technical, is critical to drive the community response and influence behaviour change. Success in all countries has been attributed

to Mayors taking the lead, involvement of all stakeholders in planning and implementation and meaningful participation of women.

2. Community Capacity Enhancement has also proven to be a practical and viable mechanism in building community participation. Added to this, preparation of municipal profiles and HIV/AIDS service directories both provide information and encourage local leaders to engage with service providers and communities.
3. The need for additional resources for AMICAALL initiatives at several levels is essential. AMICAALL Chapters cannot survive entirely on membership fees or donor funds alone, which are often unpredictable. Predictable and sustainable core funding such as via local authority budget lines and/or National AIDS Councils and /or central government subvention should be sought to supplement programme funding from development partners. Efforts to source both internal and external technical and financial support for AMICAALL Chapters must be ongoing.
4. It is also important that AMICAALL should not be seen as an external 'project.' It should instead, be embedded as a core operational function of local authorities via mainstreaming and creation of a critical mass through effective HIV/AIDS local response programmes. The mandate of AMICAALL is coordination and facilitation, not implementation, which must be the responsibility of local authorities, but with support from the AMICAALL Chapter. Effective monitoring and evaluation, including information and formal documentation, is also critical.

5. Functional working relationships with national local government associations are important to facilitate programme implementation. Also, AMICAALL membership of the Global Fund CCM and other national agencies is critical for networking and resourcing opportunities.
6. AMICAALL programmes are dealing with a generalized epidemic. This means that its spread is attributed to a range of factors, differing by country. As such, it is critical to 'know the epidemic' as it affects individual countries and local authority areas, through research and data gathering.

It is clear that significant progress has been made in institutionalizing and mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into local government policies, plans, and programmes of Alliance member countries. However, this is also a long process requiring persistent effort, sustained leadership and resources. The key cross-cutting issue emerging from the country presentations is that of sustainability of AMICAALL Chapters and programmes.

5. The Secretariat Has Its Say

Several key strategic and operational issues were tabled by The Alliance Secretariat during the gathering of Country Programme Directors (CPDs) at the Pretoria meetings. The opportunity was taken to discuss these issues in detail and agree on a common platform and way forward.

Communications

Communications Manager, Alice Simushi confirmed that effective communication plays a central role in

the achievement of The Alliance's objectives. This is through creating stakeholder value, attracting, retaining and motivating strategic partners, enhancing reputation with all audiences and minimizing the impact a crisis can have on operations.

However, The Alliance remains on a learning curve as far as fully embracing organizational communication is concerned; with several challenges being faced. These challenges make it difficult to gather and compile information for donor proposals and to share and learn from each other. The Alliance can do a much better job for Chapters if communication is improved, which can happen through better use of available communications mediums and provision of current information, statistics and photographs for the newsletter and website.

Constraints at Secretariat and Chapter levels as well as possible solutions to this dilemma were discussed. It was agreed that provision of information on a monthly basis for the E-bulletin was demanding in view of competing pressures, particularly in one person offices, and a quarterly themed newsletter would be a better alternative. There was also consensus in that reports that are prepared as part of normal operations, such as quarterly reports to donors, could be sent to the Secretariat as updates, resulting in minimal additional effort.

It was agreed that the E-bulletin should be phased out and merged with the quarterly newsletter and that information related to work at Chapter level be shared as updates on the website, with a link to monthly country updates. The opportunity was also taken to reveal the revamped Alliance website that was currently being populated.

There was general approval of the revamped communications plan and website, and acceptance that the Secretariat needs to know what is happening on the ground at chapter level. CPDs committed to improving external and internal communications by providing regular information updates. The Secretariat also committed to ensuring the website is kept up to date with the information submitted, together with a Monitoring and Evaluation chart that is updated quarterly.

Resource Mobilisation

Katy Bodkin, former Resources Manager, explained that The Alliance resource mobilization strategy was aimed at improving financial and technical sustainability of the Secretariat and to support the work of national AMICAALL Chapters. As a regional organization working to build the capacity of local government, The Alliance is strategically placed to attract support from development partners.

In addition, creation of a discussion platform as a mechanism for engagement with the various collaborating partners is an integral component of the strategy. This is because it is vital that the Secretariat consults with the Chapters in order to submit relevant proposals that are in line with the strategic direction of the organization at regional, national and local level.

A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reporting framework, together with a donor database, funding tracking list and resource mobilization handbook supports the resource mobilization efforts.

Relationship building and improving visibility is critical to establishing credibility and successful resource mobilization. Initial engagement with the African Union and the Organization of African First

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Ladies Against AIDS is evidence of this, together with maintaining relationships with UNAIDS and UNDP. The Alliance also tracks conferences and events that will be useful for networking.

Ideally, The Alliance is seeking significant multi-country and core funding from a small number of strategically identified large institutional donors. Funding applications have recently been submitted to a number of potential partners including the UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNDP, the European Union, Southern Africa Trust, World Bank and Global Giving.

The reality is that due to strategic re-positioning by donors, there is less funding available, and the competition amongst recipients is fierce. Donors also want evidence of real impact and a consistent M&E system, fed from local to regional level, is vital.

The proposed way forward includes a scaled up focus on improving reach, visibility, networks and partnerships to make better use of existing systems and organizations. Working in partnership between the Secretariat and Chapters, governments, National AIDS Councils, NGO partners and donors will be a high priority.

CPDs agreed that the Secretariat should be the visible face of The Alliance and the main networking mechanism, which makes it easier to approach donors on a local level. It was acknowledged that long term funding was needed but that mobilizing resources takes time.

Regular updates on potential donors and information flow were required. It was also proposed that a forum to specifically discuss resource mobilization be held at the next annual meeting, in order to share experiences on approaching donors and how best to work together.

Technical Support Programme, Commonwealth Secretariat

Following a request for technical support, the Commonwealth Secretariat agreed to provide the services of a full time Regional Adviser on HIV/AIDS and Governance. Terry Parker was appointed to this position and will be based at The Alliance Secretariat for a period of two years from March 2010.

This assignment includes a range of technical assistance activities intended to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat to carry out its core functions and to better support national chapters. Much of the assignment is demand driven, and provides an opportunity for AMICAALL Chapters to gain from this technical assistance, within the framework of the agreed objectives and activities.

In practical terms, the main focus of the assignment is to capture and analyze experiences and learning in the implementation of HIV/AIDS responses at local level. This is in order to inform future programme development and implementation, and also assess impact. Given that most national AMICAALL programmes have been underway for a while (in some cases almost ten years) a good deal of experience and knowledge has been generated which warrants both scholarly and practical attention from a regional perspective.

A series of outputs, activities and targets have been developed to meet the objectives of strengthening programme planning, evaluation, partnerships, resource mobilization and coordination. Key amongst these are:

- Preparation of a simple, qualitative M&E framework,
- Development of a handbook on guidelines on effective management of local

government HIV/AIDS programmes based on learning from chapters,

- Identifying where the Secretariat can better support Chapters particularly to engage with development partners,
- Contribution to knowledge management and resource products, preparation of case studies and other publications, guidelines, etc.

The Regional Adviser intends to visit as many national chapters as possible to gather data and information to inform these tasks, and also to provide any assistance to Chapters as requested.

Secretariat Operations

The Alliance Executive Director, Ayanda Nabe reported that the Secretariat is currently working on the 2009 annual report, and information and feedback at country level is required for inclusion. The Secretariat agreed to provide a format for reporting, and also requested Chapters to submit their annual reports and other publications as electronic copies.

All Alliance members, with the exception of Swaziland, are in arrears of payment of Alliance membership fees. The importance of prompt payment of fees was highlighted as being to help cover operational costs and as a tangible commitment to The Alliance. CPDs confirmed the importance of being part of The Alliance and agreed to action this request.

The Executive Director also reinforced the problems surrounding deficiencies in communication and provision of information from Chapters, noting that it is not possible to learn from each other if Chapters are not committed to

information sharing. CPDs confirmed their commitment to improve on this area in future.

6. Donors/Development Partners Forum

Establishing and maintaining strategic partnerships with development partners working in the HIV/AIDS and governance sectors is critical to the work of The Alliance.

With this in mind and as part of its resource mobilization and sustainability strategy, The Alliance arranged a Donors/ Development Partners forum in conjunction with the statutory meetings. The meeting, attended by bilateral and multilateral partners including UNDP, Irish AID, the Swedish and Danish Embassies, was aimed at providing current and potential development partners with an update of the work being done by The Alliance Secretariat and across the 13 chapters.

Background presentations on The Alliance, its history and purpose, governing structures and AMICAALL Strategy were made by the Alliance President, First Deputy, Technical Standing Committee Chair and Executive Director. Emphasis was placed on good governance approaches, leadership, strategic partnerships, local responses and expansion of The Alliance membership.

A synopsis of the work being done at country level was delivered by Kenneth Mwansa, AMICAALL National Coordinator of Zambia, who presented on Southern and East Africa programmes, and Narcisse Chimi, National Coordinator Cameroon, on Central and West Africa. The presenters confirmed that through the successful programmes being implemented by local authorities, national governments and stakeholders are recognizing that local government is well placed to respond to the HIV /AIDS epidemic. African mayors and locally

elected leaders have taken up the challenge and embedded the concept of an urban response to HIV/AIDS, spearheaded, owned and integrated into municipal operations.

However, inherent challenges to moving forward exist. These include structural impediments to decentralized responses, the generalized nature of the epidemic requiring a multi-faceted comprehensive response, and the shortage of financial and human resources. Nonetheless, the presenters concluded by reinforcing that African mayors and locally elected leaders remain highly committed to AMICAALL and its principles. The leadership role is critical to effective interventions, supported by trained communities and effective participation of women.

Development partners also had the opportunity to pose questions, and the issues discussed included the relationship with other continental organizations, opportunities and challenges of expansion, the origins of the political mandate of The Alliance, partnerships, downward linkages, continuity in view of high turnover of councillors, the value add of The Alliance at regional level and achievement of strategic objectives, amongst others.

In addition, partners informed the gathering of some initiatives they are undertaking. Irish AID in particular shared the outcome of a study on regionality in HIV/AIDS responses. This study concluded that the purpose of regional programming is to build on cultural, economic, epidemiological and political commonalities to support and complement national responses. This is particularly where sensitive issues exist and regional advocacy is preferred, and for knowledge sharing and promoting cross border working.

UNDP provided information on regional and country offices initiatives aimed at strengthening HIV/AIDS responses at municipal level, and confirmed continuity of working with AMICAALL. One key initiative is a governance focused study on 15 African cities on what they are doing on HIV/AIDS, leading to a roadmap on capacity building. AMICAALL will be invited to participate in this study.

As this Forum was intended primarily as an introduction and overview of the organization, it was agreed that The Alliance will follow up with each of the collaborating partners who attended the meeting. AMICAALL will also follow up with those who expressed interest but were unable to be present, on an individual basis to explore possible cooperation based on identified synergies.

7. Revision of The Alliance Constitution

The opportunity was taken at The Alliance General Assembly to consider key structural issues that have been raised over the years that justified review of The Alliance Constitution. The constitution was last amended in 2003.

Members noted that The Alliance Constitution was founded on the principles of simplicity of form and operating procedures, legitimacy, transparency and efficiency. The scope and urgency of the HIV situation in Africa demands a flexible organization with the capacity to respond rather than a structure that is hamstrung by legal procedures.

The meeting also observed that the Constitution needed to reflect the notion that the strength of The Alliance lies in the solidarity, willingness and determination of its members to work together on appropriate local responses to HIV and local development.

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The membership agreed that these founding principles should remain enshrined in the Constitution. However, The Alliance has grown and evolved since this Constitution was first adopted, and lessons have been learned that should be captured in an amended document. Accordingly, some amendments were adopted which reflect the evolving nature of the organization and in order to ensure the Constitution meets current requirements.

Titles and Definitions (Article 2)

There has been some confusion in the past with respect to titles of Alliance positions, such as between The Alliance Coordinator and National AMICAALL Coordinators. Contemporary and more relevant terminology was considered more appropriate. As such, it was decided to change the title of Alliance Coordinator to *President*, the Executive Secretary to *Executive Director* and Coordinating Committee to *Executive Council*. Although not a constitutional issue, it was also noted that AMICAALL National Coordinator will from now on be termed *Country Programme Directors*.

The meeting also clarified that the definition of *Mayor and Municipal Leader* refers to Mayors or political heads, whether elected or appointed, of local authorities and does not include municipal officials such as City, Town or Municipal Managers, Chief Executive Officers, etc. However the critical role of the appointed officials in strategic and implementation processes was acknowledged.

Amendments were also adopted to clarify that the National Association and National Chapters are represented in The Alliance by either the AMICAALL Chair or other elected head of the AMICAALL



programme within the Association, or AMICAALL Chapter Chairperson.

Membership of The Alliance (Article 6)

Some members had raised the issue of institutional representation at Alliance meetings where both a Local Government Association and AMICAALL National Chapter exist, which was confusing. It was decided, given the evolution of the organization, that where a National Chapter of The Alliance exists, that Chapter will be recognized as The Alliance member.

An amendment was also passed to simplify the process of approving new members of The Alliance. This power has now been given to the Executive Council in lieu of the General Assembly.

Given that external factors and other variables may affect a member's ability to pay membership fees, an amendment was adopted to increase the period a member can be in arrears before loss of membership occurs from 12 to 24 months.

General Assembly (Article 10)

Given that General Assemblies are now not necessarily held at Africities Summits, an amendment was passed allowing flexibility in the scheduling of future General Assemblies, and not be locked in to Africities. It was also decided to limit the number of representatives per member country to two, in view of resource constraints and possible influencing of decisions based on weight of numbers.

An amendment to require voting at General Assemblies to be normally by secret ballot unless otherwise determined, as adopted.

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President (Article 11)

In order to protect the legitimacy of the organization, a requirement for the President and Deputy Presidents to be currently serving Mayors or political heads of a local authority in Africa was adopted. This Article was also clarified by explaining that the President and Deputies are elected by the General Assembly, and not appointed.

Executive Council (Article 12)

The number of Co-opted members of the Executive Council was reduced from four to two, given the evolution of the organization and the embedding of more experience in the membership. The amendment also provided that co-opted members are not eligible for election as President or Deputies.

The Constitution was previously silent on the issues of filling of casual vacancies on the Executive Council and the situation of a member being unable to attend a meeting (except providing for proxy votes). It was considered essential that the founding principles and legitimacy of The Alliance be protected by ensuring that only sitting Mayors or Municipal Leaders hold elected office in the governance structure of the organization.

Amendments were agreed that where a member is unable to attend the meeting for whatever reason, a casual vacancy in an Executive Council member position arises. An appropriately qualified person from the same country may be appointed by the member country to attend the meeting or for the remainder of the period of office of the Executive Council in the case of a vacancy. Should the member country fail, or not wish to appoint a replacement, the President, in consultation with

the two Deputy Presidents, may make an appointment.

Following presentation of a discussion paper on the powers and responsibilities of the Executive Council, it was decided to incorporate these into the Constitution proper. The following inclusions were adopted.

The overall responsibilities of the Executive Council shall be to:

- determine the overall vision, mission and policies of The Alliance and monitor progress in achieving these; and in this context, determine the terms of reference of any strategic reviews of the Alliance's work as may be required, including their frequency and cost, conducting such reviews and evaluating their recommendations
- ensure good governance through overall responsibility for strategies and activities of the Alliance, by governing and not managing;
- provide strong leadership and advice through applying members' experience and knowledge for the benefit of the Alliance;
- make decisions on matters that may legally be taken by the Council or that the Council has reserved for their own decision

The fundamental principles of Council members shall include the responsibility:

- for the proper political guidance of The Alliance;
- to act reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to the affairs of The Alliance;
- to act collectively and in the best interests of The Alliance;
- to avoid any conflict of interest between their personal interests and the interests of The Alliance, or between their interests in

another organization or National Chapter and the interests of The Alliance;

- to mobilize resources for The Alliance, liaise with and support the Secretariat on Alliance activities and operations;
- to approve all reports to be tabled at the General Assembly.

Technical Standing Committee (Article 13)

Given the likelihood of fluctuations in TSC membership based on the number of development partners involved with The Alliance at any point, it was agreed that the number of TSC members be amended from eight to at least five persons representing Alliance technical partners.

Executive Secretariat (Article 14)

Based on the Executive Council discussion paper, additional provisions relating to the power of the Council to consider and approve changes in staff remuneration or salary structure and to ratify matters referred from the employee grievance procedures were adopted.

Finances and Resource (Article 15)

Amendments were adopted to clarify then powers of the Executive Council to monitor budget progress, approve additional or extraordinary expenditure and to appoint the signatories to the Alliance bank accounts upon advice of the Mayor of the City of Windhoek and the Executive Director.

8. Summary of Key Issues and Decisions from Statutory Meetings

Technical Standing Committee (TSC)

The TSC met on 7th and 8th August to exercise its mandate of providing technical guidance and oversight on resources and programme execution. In addition to The Alliance Secretariat and Country Programme Directors (CPDs) representatives Kenneth Mwansa and Narcisse Chimi, the Chairman, Fisho Mwale, welcomed representatives of the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA) Charles Patsika and Samuel Kaninda, as well as Daniel Molohele from the World AIDS Campaign (WAC) to the meeting.

The key issues discussed and the outcomes of the deliberations were:

- The proposed AMICAALL HIV/AIDS and Local Government Conference remains on the agenda and is being explored, possibly in collaboration with UCLGA and other partners.
- Exploration of strategies related to expansion of The Alliance membership, given the interest from more countries, is ongoing and will be discussed at the statutory meetings.
- TSC membership has fallen due to decreases in numbers of donors and financial constraints. It was agreed that UCLGA, WAC, Commonwealth Local Government Forum and World Bank be invited to join the Committee, possibly with corporate and banking industry representation as well. The CPD representatives on the TSC for the ensuing year will be Rachel Basirika (Namibia) and Narcisse Chimi (Cameroon).
- UCLGA remains committed to the partnership with The Alliance in terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This is despite the current political divisions, which are the subject of efforts to

resolve. Programmatic work is continuing and a work plan to operationalize the MoU, linked to the Governance, Advocacy, and Decentralized Development Programme for Africa (GADDEPA), has been prepared and agreed at technical level. It is awaiting formal approval by UCLGA Executive. It was agreed that the focus of The Alliance is to fight HIV/AIDS and this focus must not be lost while UCLGA resolves its internal issues.

- As reported by the Executive Director, there is a need for longer term resourcing of the Secretariat. Technical support is currently being provided by Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO) and the Commonwealth Secretariat (however this is only for two years) assisted by university interns, to supplement the two full time staff positions. A longer term directly employed Programme Manager position is urgently required.
- The Alliance E-bulletin will be phased out and replaced by an enhanced quarterly newsletter and new website.
- The Alliance Performance Management System and Operations Manual were tabled and approved.
- The TSC welcomed the new technical support programme from the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- The invitation to participate in and run a breakout session at the Commonwealth Local Government Conference to be held in Cardiff, Wales, in March 2011 was noted. The Alliance will be represented by the President, Executive Director and CPDs Kenneth Mwansa from Zambia and Dr John Mugisa from Uganda (funding dependant).
- Following the presentation from WAC on advocacy, lobbying, leadership, information and funding opportunities, it was agreed to explore a strategic partnership between The Alliance and WAC.
- A follow up will be made with strategically targeted development partners subsequent

to the Donors Forum in an effort to mobilize additional resources.

- The Secretariat financial report and work plan were tabled, considered and approved.

Executive Council

The Alliance Executive Council (EC) met on 9th August under the Chairmanship of the President, Mayor Ayebi Gilbert Manouan from Côte d'Ivoire. Also in attendance were Deputy Presidents Mayors Peter Muwanga (Uganda) and Atoine Amie Assouh (Cameroon). Members present were Mayors Salim Kisauji (Tanzania), Sanou Aïcha Traore (Burkina Faso), Richard Mutiya Yumbe (Zambia), Ismael Pijoo Nganate (Namibia), Boniface Ochieng Awuor (Kenya) and Themba Dlamini (Swaziland). Co-opted Member Fisho Mwale and Country Programme Directors Margret Jobita (Kenya), Kenneth Mwansa (Zambia) and Rudolph Maziya (Swaziland), together with Executive Director Ayanda Nabe and Secretariat staff, were also present. Mayor Matheus Shikongo from Namibia was unable to attend at the eleventh hour.

The EC deliberated at length on issues within its policy direction and coordination mandate and made several key decisions that will guide The Alliance in the future, including:

- adoption of procedural documents including the Performance Management System and Operations Manual, together with the financial reports, audit report and work plans;
- that key operational focus areas for the immediate future will be: expanding and strengthening strategic partnerships, resource mobilisation, building capacity of the Secretariat, enhancing knowledge management by the revamped website and improved newsletter to replace the E-bulletin and strengthening the governance processes;

- the reality that core funding for The Alliance and Secretariat is tight and only essential expenditure within approved budget lines can be actioned;
- welcoming the technical support programme from the Commonwealth Secretariat and appreciating the ongoing programme with Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO);
- strategies for expansion of The Alliance membership, given that interest has been shown from Benin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Togo and Zimbabwe to join The Alliance. It is important to ensure quality programmes and not just numbers of Alliance members when involving more countries and as such resources are required. However expansion of members in view of the interest is essential to maintain the legitimacy of the organisation as a pan-African body. Membership criteria will be re-examined and investigations carried out as to local HIV/AIDS responses potential members already have in place, the level of political commitment and potential for in-country partnerships.
- all outstanding Alliance membership fees are to be cleared by end of December 2010.
- that despite the political divisions within the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA), the Memorandum of Understanding with The Alliance is being operationalized. The EC confirmed that HIV/AIDS transcends politics and The Alliance as an entity must maintain its focus and retain independence and autonomy, but without impacting on individual members' rights to do as they wish with respect to UCLGA.
- agreeing that revised powers and responsibilities of the EC, which are to be enshrined in the amended Alliance Constitution be referred to the General Assembly for consideration

- extending the contract of the Executive Director Ms Ayanda Nabe, in recognition of the outstanding work carried out.

In addition, strategic dialogue took place on options for re-engineering the organisation, assessing if the structures are working as well as they should, particularly the Technical Standing Committee, the ongoing value add of The Alliance and role of the Secretariat. These discussions will be taken up by the new leadership in order to ensure The Alliance remains relevant and effective in the contemporary operating environment.

General Assembly

The fifth triennial General Assembly of Alliance members was held on 10th August. The Assembly was chaired by the President, Mayor Ayebi Gilbert Manouan (Côte d'Ivoire). Also in attendance were Deputy Presidents Mayors Peter Muwanga (Uganda) and Atoine Amie Assouh (Cameroon). Members present were Mayors Sanou Aïcha Traore (Burkina Faso), Boniface Ochieng Awuor (Kenya), Abdel Kader Sidibé (Mali), Ismael Pijoo Nganate (Namibia), Themba Dlamini (Swaziland), Salim Kisauji (Tanzania) and Richard Mutiya Yumbe (Zambia). Country Programme Directors Margret Jobita (Kenya), Rudolph Maziya (Swaziland) and Kenneth Mwansa (Zambia), together with Executive Director Ayanda Nabe and Secretariat staff, were also present. Honorary Member Fisho Mwale attended the latter part of the meeting.

The General Assembly, being the supreme decision making body of The Alliance, considered a range of strategic and structural issues during the meeting. Key issues on the table and decisions included:

- a review of progress on achievement of the agreed strategic objectives. The main issues discussed were
 - the need for effective working relationships with local government associations,
 - better research and publications,

- need to improve communications between the Secretariat and AMICAALL Chapters,
- the new Alliance website,
- funding and skills limitations,
- the need to mobilise resources (and the ongoing efforts in this respect),
- monitoring and evaluation,
- sustainability of the organisation,
- credibility of chapters,
- reinforcement of relationships with strategic partners,
- evolution of The Alliance and the need to re-dynamise to ensure it remains relevant,
- visibility of The Alliance at forums and in African structures

These issues will be pursued by the new Alliance leadership and the Secretariat over the coming year.

- revival of non active chapters and those potentially at risk. In this regard, positive dialogue is underway with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) to restore the South Africa Chapter. The forthcoming reintroduction of local government elections in Malawi should provide the opportunity for the previously successful Malawian Chapter to re-emerge. Cooperative discussions are also ongoing in respect to issues diverting the Chapters in Kenya and Burkina Faso; which should be resolved satisfactorily shortly,
- adoption of the recommendations from the Executive Council on expansion of Alliance membership,
- presentation of the Financial Statements and audit report for 2009. The Assembly noted that again The Alliance received an unqualified audit report,
- agreement to replace the monthly E-Bulletin with a website and an improved quarterly newsletter,

- detailed consideration and adoption of amendments to The Alliance Constitution. Refer to the separate article for more details,
- membership fees will remain unchanged and members must clear their outstanding dues.

In terms of The Alliance Constitution, the President delivered his triennial report to the Assembly, noting that the organisation is learning, evolving and maturing. Mayor Manouan confirmed that the strategic plan needs to guide the organisation, supported by robust monitoring and evaluation and effective communications. Resource mobilisation and technical capacity were key institutional issues, and in this respect he noted with appreciation the support provided by the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme and especially its Director Ms Mina Mauerstein-Bail.



The Alliance Executive Council members with Secretariat staff in the aftermath of the statutory meetings held in August, 2010, Pretoria

Strategic partnerships are critical to the sustainability of the organisation and are a key focus area. The President also pointed to expansion of Alliance membership as being critical to maintaining the relevance and credibility of the organisation. In conclusion, Mayor Manouan thanked his leadership team, the Secretariat and partners for their support and contributions, noting that The Alliance is built on the collective solidarity and determination of its members, and is only as

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strong as its membership. The full text of Mayor Manouan's triennial report will be available shortly on the Alliance Website.

Elections of office bearers for the ensuing three years is also a constitutional requirement of the General Assembly, and these resulted in the election of Mayor Peter Muwanga from Uganda as The Alliance President, assisted by Mayor Sanou Aïcha Traore from Burkina Faso as First Deputy President and Mayor Themba Dlamini from Swaziland as Second Deputy.

The five members elected to the Executive Council were:

Mayor Ayebi Gilbert Manouan (Côte d'Ivoire)
 Mayor Atoine Amie Assouh (Cameroon)
 Mayor Abdel Kader Sidibé (Mali)
 Mayor Ismael Pijoo Nganate (Namibia),
 Mayor Richard Mutiya Yumbe (Zambia),
 They will be joined by co-opted members Salim Kisauji (Tanzania) and Boniface Ochieng Awuor (Kenya), together with Mayor Matheus Shikongo from the Secretariat host city, Windhoek.

Former Alliance Coordinator, Mayor Salim Kisauji announced that he was not contesting the forthcoming local government elections in Tanzania and therefore would not stand for election as an EC member (although he was eligible for appointment as a co-opted member). Mayor Kisauji has been with The Alliance since 2002 and led the organisation through some troubled times. He expressed his appreciation to colleagues for their support and wished the new leadership team every success, noting that the positions are not as rosy as they look; requiring hard work and dealing with many pressures. The President reciprocated by thanking Mayor Kisauji for his contributions, noting that he brought wisdom, humility and fraternity to the organisation.

In his farewell remarks, outgoing President Mayor Manouan advised that he remained ready to passionately support The Alliance. He congratulated the new executive leadership and thanked the former Coordinating Committee and



the Executive Director for their support. Mayor Manouan paid special tribute and appreciation to the Resource Manager, Katy Bodkin, who has completed her VSO assignment with the Secretariat. He passed his best wishes to all in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

In accepting their election with appreciation, firstly Mayor Muwanga noted that this was a strong team committed to AMICAALL. He expressed gratitude for the good work being done at country level, and pledged to continue and scale up this effort. Expansion of The Alliance will be the new President's priority, together with working with collaborating partners. Mayor Muwanga also commended his full support to the Secretariat and

staff and looked forward to working together. Mayor Traore thanked the outgoing President and expressed appreciation for the confidence vested in her. She hopes to bring woman's perspective to the fight against HIV and AIDS. Mayor Dlamini also appreciated the faith shown in him and Swaziland. As a team player, he is committed to strengthen The Alliance, to set high standards and serve the people.

The meeting concluded with a farewell gathering in honor of Fisho Mwale on the occasion of his stepping down from official office after thirteen years of service.



**THE ALLIANCE OF MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL
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