



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

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## EDITORIAL

By Councillor Josiah Magut, ALGAK Chairman



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ALGAK Chairman

The Association of Local Government Authorities of Kenya (ALGAK) recently held a national workshop on HIV/AIDS. The workshop, held from May 13 to 15 2003, was attended by a majority of Kenya's local authority leaders, who included mayors from cities, municipalities and other levels of local authorities. Also in attendance were chief executives from the participating local authorities, and representatives from some NGOs. Other participants were development partners and officials from AMICAALL – Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Swaziland and the Alliance Secretariat in Namibia.

The main workshop objectives included sensitizing local authorities on HIV/AIDS; defining local authorities' role in response to the scourge and enhancing experience sharing from countries that were participating. A declaration, which was later on adopted by ALGAK's Annual General Meeting, marked the end of the two-day event.

From the workshop objectives and the declaration it is clear that local authorities in Kenya are committed to dealing with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which has already been declared a national disaster.

Experiences shared from other countries showed that for local authorities to successfully reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS, they need to form partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, media, faith-based organizations and other development stakeholders.

Local authorities, however, need to realise that they are the lead actors in any HIV/AIDS-related partnership. The urgency is reinforced by the fact that the President of the Republic of Kenya, Honourable Mwai Kibaki, has taken a leadership role in the fight against HIV/AIDS at the national level. Being the closest form of government local authorities should even be more actively involved than any other partner. They are the ones that daily bear

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## ALLIANCE PARTICIPATES AT US CONFERENCE OF MAYORS ANNUAL MEETING

The Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa was invited to participate in the US Conference of Mayors Annual Meeting and 2nd International Conference of Mayors. The Alliance was represented by African mayors from Namibia, Uganda and Swaziland, and the Deputy Coordinator of the Alliance. African mayors urged local government leaders to embrace the challenges of HIV/AIDS and to spearhead a global movement, based on solidarity amongst cities and towns, to ensure that increased capacity and resources are available at the local level. At the Conference US and African Mayors were able to share and exchange information, build trust and solidarity and strengthen ties for future collaboration. Through a partnership between the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the US Conference of Mayors and the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme (UN APP), city-to-city cooperation to

address HIV/AIDS is being promoted and facilitated between US and African cities within the framework of the Alliance of Mayors' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL).



Mayor of Otjiwarongo, Namibia, His Worship Otto Ipinge, Mayor of Jinja, Uganda, His Worship David Wakudumira, Mayor of Lavumisa, Swaziland, His Worship Victor Simelane, representing the Alliance at the Annual US Conference of Mayors.

## ALLIANCE PRESENTATION AT THE US CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

Thank you, Mayor Menino, President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors; our wonderful host the Mayor of Denver, Honorable Wellington Webb and Mrs. Webb; Honourable Mayors from the U.S.A. and other cities; Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen; and, last but not least, the residents of this wonderful City of Denver.

My fellow Mayors, it is an honor to address you here today on behalf of the citizens of Jinja and Uganda as well as

on behalf of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa. May I also introduce to you my Alliance colleagues:

- Mayor of Otjiwarongo, Namibia, His Worship Otto Ipinge
- His Worship Victor Simelane from Lavumisa, Swaziland
- Former Mayor of Lusaka, Zambia, Mr. Fisho Mwale, Deputy Coordinator and Co-founder of the Alliance.

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

We are particularly glad to be in Denver and see fellow mayors from around the world joining our American counterparts.

We further wish to pay tribute to our brother, the Mayor of Denver - the Honourable Wellington Webb. Deservedly so, numerous accolades will be showered on Mayor Webb during this conference but, for us, he holds a special place. He has been instrumental in forging strong strategic partnerships between the Alliance and the National Conference of Black Mayors as well as developing synergy between many U.S. cities and African cities during his tenure as Mayor of Denver and President of the National Conference of Black Mayors. Thank you, Mayor Webb.

Whether we come from a big city like Denver, New York, Paris, Barcelona, or a smaller city like mine, all of us as mayors share the same problems ranging from economic development issues to housing to education to HIV/AIDS and, yes, potholes. We are where the foot hits the pavement. Between policies and people. Another way of putting it is that we are between a rock and a hard place given the state of the world economy and the increasing demands on diminishing resources at this time.

Jinja is located at the Source of the Nile, the longest river in the world. It started as a fishing village on Lake Victoria in 1903. Today, Jinja is the second largest city in Uganda after the Capital of Kampala, with an estimated population of 100,000. It is the largest industrial center and the source of hydroelectric power for all of Uganda. It is also a major tourist destination. So, come visit us in Jinja. We will welcome you with great hospitality at all of our hotels including the 5-star Nile Resort Hotel along the Nile!

I am a businessman and because of my commitment to public service, I was elected to a four-year term as Mayor in March 2002.

My responsibilities include overseeing the city budget, city planning, recommending specific measures to our 26 elected city council members. I also supervise central government programmes that are implemented at the city level. Our annu-

al municipal budget is approximately US\$900,000. We receive an additional US\$1.1 million in the form of grants from our national government.

While Jinja is a beautiful place - like many cities and towns in Africa - it faces multiple challenges:

- an unemployment rate of 38%
- a poverty rate of 45%
- inadequate health and social services
- lack of infrastructure
- and an annual per capita income nationwide of US\$321 which is less than one month's rent here in Denver.

Today, 1 out of 10 adults in Jinja are living with HIV/AIDS. An estimated 4,000 children and young people have been left without parents. While these figures pertain to Jinja, they reflect a broader reality of Sub-Saharan Africa. It is the home of 70% of the estimated 42 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide - or 30 million people.

Yet, in reality these challenges are all inter-connected. As Africa strives for economic renewal and social and political progress, the direct and indirect costs associated with HIV/AIDS must be fully integrated into development policies and programmes from the local to the national levels of government.

HIV/AIDS is putting entire economies at risk. In the hardest hit countries of Africa, HIV/AIDS is directly responsible for an annual loss up to 1.2% GDP. It is estimated that when HIV prevalence reaches 8% of a population, the per capita growth decreases by 0.4% a year. This is the situation in 14 African countries.

11 million African children have lost one or both parents to AIDS. Some have had to care for and witness their parent's death, and others will never know or remember them. There are an estimated 2 million orphans in Uganda.

Let me introduce you to one of them named Kevina. When she was 14 years old she spoke at a symposium on HIV, Development and the Role of Local Government.

Here's what Kevina had to say:

*"AIDS killed both my mother and father in 1992. It killed all brothers and sisters of my father. It has killed many men and women in Uganda. My father and mother left me with four brothers and two sisters. I look after them. I also look after my grandfather who lives near us, because my grandmother died and nobody is there to look after him.*

*Sometimes, we don't have fire to cook. Some days we don't get food.*

*There is the problem of disease. We get sick and go to the dispensary. At the dispensary, they want money but we don't have the money. We don't have any one to call father or mother. We feel sad when we see other children laughing with their father and mother. In short, this is how I find life.*

*But other orphans have the same life. So orphans need help. We need to grow and to be proud and happy people."*

The impact of HIV/AIDS is being felt across all sectors. Education is crucial to national development. Teachers are falling ill and dying. In Namibia, it is predicted that 20% of the total teaching staff could be lost to AIDS by 2010.

In Swaziland, school enrollment has fallen by one third, with girls most affected. Young girls are leaving school to care for sick relatives and to help support their families. Health and social services are being over-stretched. Food security is being threatened. HIV/AIDS is generating new poverty as people lose their livelihoods and many households lack the assets to mitigate the impact of AIDS.

And yet, there are also glimmers of hope.

Uganda is among a small but growing number of countries (others being Senegal, Thailand and Brazil) that has seen a consistent decline in HIV prevalence - this is a great accomplishment, even though the present rate of 5% in Uganda is still unacceptable.

This progress is evidence that, through the collective responsibility of individuals, community groups, non-profits, and all levels of government, prevention efforts do work. These efforts must not only be maintained but also expanded.

- They must be expanded to respond to the needs for care, support and treatment of people living with HIV/AIDS.
- They must be expanded to provide support to the growing numbers of children and young people who have lost their parents.
- They must be expanded so that there is sustained capacity at the local level to more effectively respond to the needs of our citizens.

Africa is stretched beyond its capacity to cope with these multiple crises.

Stigma and discrimination still accompany HIV/AIDS and have further divided families and communities, leaving individuals traumatized, insecure and without support.

Given these harsh realities, what is important at this juncture is to identify innovative ways to rebuild our capacity and provide hope for our citizens, especially our children.

With this in mind, I and other African mayors realized that local leadership is critical. Local government represents the closest link between national government, its citizens and civil society. National plans cannot be fully implemented by the central government without reflecting local needs and realities and without involving local stakeholders.

We cannot tackle these complex issues alone. We need each other's support.

So we created an Alliance in 1998. We have developed a programme of action called AMICAALL, which stands for the Alliance of Mayors' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level. In fact, you can visit us at our website: [www.amicaall.org](http://www.amicaall.org).

Nine chapters of the Alliance have now been launched in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia and we continue to expand. Planning has begun and programmes started in cities and towns to reach the most vulnerable. (We are pleased to have the AMICAALL Coordinator from Swaziland - Rudolph Maziya - here with us today.)

We have a Secretariat hosted by the Government of Namibia and the City of Windhoek. We are working with a growing number of organisations such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USAID, the Government of the Netherlands, UNAIDS, UN agencies, Associations of Cities and Local Government in Africa, in the Netherlands and Canada, Sister Cities International, National Conference of Black Mayors and, most recently, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, not-for-profit groups, the private sector, foundations and other partners. We are particularly grateful for the ongoing support from the UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme headed by Mina Mauerstein-Bail.

A key priority is ensuring that orphans and vulnerable young people can access vocational/technical training and other support through youth development activities that will enable them to acquire skills and build self-esteem so that they can become self-sufficient and live happy and productive lives. We are calling this initiative - SOS - for Skills, Opportunities and Self-reliance.

We are becoming better informed about HIV/AIDS. We are speaking out to address fear and stigma. We are working with affected communities. We are building foundations for scaling up responses to HIV/AIDS in order to address the "implementation gap."

We are trying to make an art out of decentralized action on AIDS: A-R-T for Accountability, Responsibility and Trust.

- We must be *accountable* to our citizens.
- We must develop the capacity to take on growing *responsibilities*.
- We must work at developing *trust* between central and local government and between local government and citizens.

As the Coordinator of the Alliance, Mayor Ernest Mobio, of Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire has said: "*We must be humble enough to listen and understand, and courageous enough to guide and lead.*"

While all of these statistics I have shared so far are primarily focused on Africa, we

cannot forget that 1.5 million people live with HIV in industrialized countries. Improvements achieved in ARV therapy are shadowed by the fact that prevention efforts are stalling in many industrialized countries.

In some countries—like the United States—a new pattern is emerging: the epidemic is shifting towards poorer people especially ethnic minorities, who face disproportionate risks of infection and are more likely to be missed by prevention campaigns and deprived of access to treatment.

Honourable Mayors, the clock is ticking. I encourage all of us, as leaders, to embrace the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS: challenges to human development, human security and human rights. We need to spearhead a global effort, based on solidarity amongst cities and towns. Together, we must ensure that increased capacity and resources are available at the local level.

Many of our citizens are dying. Now is the time to get involved to prevent more from becoming infected; to provide orphans with opportunities to live productive lives; to provide support and care to people living with HIV/AIDS; to secure a future for our children that enables them to live healthy, happy lives.

Now is the time for collective engagement. I commend President George W. Bush and the U.S. Congress for making available US\$15 billion to combat AIDS in Africa and the Caribbean.

We are here to share and exchange information, build trust and solidarity, and strengthen our ties for future collaboration. We look forward to a constructive dialogue, and hope that the next steps we take from here will be ones we take together.

There is an African proverb: "*Whilst the best time to plant a tree was twenty years ago, the next best time is now.*"

On behalf of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa, I thank you very much for your concern, interest and solidarity.

## POLICY AND ADVOCACY DIALOGUE FORUM WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN KENYA

In May 2002, the Association of Local Government Authorities in Kenya (ALGAK) expressed interest in joining the Alliance and developing an AMICAALL Programme. It was agreed that an initial sensitization workshop with Mayors, Council Chairpersons and Town Clerks be held to initiate the process. May 2003 was chosen as an appropriate time to hold a forum because Municipal leaders would have just been elected and would have full terms of office ahead of them. Resources for the forum were made available by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the National AIDS Control Council (NACC), the Alliance Secretariat and the United Nations AMICAALL Partnership Programme (UN APP).

A Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from NACC (Chair), ALGAK, UNDP, Council of Non Governmental Organizations (KANGO), Ministry of Local Government, PLWHA Organization, Kenya Local Government Workers Union and UN APP, was formed to plan and organize the forum programme.

The forum commenced with the arrival and registration of a total of 350 delegates. The official opening statement was given by the Deputy Minister of State, Presidents Office, Hon. Stephen Tarus, the keynote address was given by the Deputy Minister of Local Government, Hon Ms Betty Tett.

Other speakers at the opening ceremony included the Chairman of ALGAK, Cllr Josiah Magut, the Secretary General of ALGAK, Mr. Augustine Odipo, the Deputy Coordinator of AMICAALL, Mr. Fisho Mwale, the Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP, the Chair of NACC and Edwin, who presented an advocacy message on behalf of PLWHA.

Most local authorities were represented by their Mayors/Chairpersons and Town Clerks and the larger municipalities were represented by senior officials with the responsibility for HIV/AIDS responses in their municipalities. In addition, representatives from the Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT) and the Uganda Local Authority Association (ULAA), were present. The Secretary General of the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities attended as an observer. The Alliance/AMICAALL were represented by the Deputy Coordinator, AMICAALL Uganda Coordinator, AMICAALL Swaziland Finance and Administrative Officer



Workshop facilitators and presenters at working session at Policy and Advocacy Dialogue Forum with Local Authorities in Kenya

and the Administrative Officer of the Alliance Secretariat/UNAPP Programme Officer.

The encouragement and backing given to ALGAK and local authorities by the range of speakers was particularly motivating. The government strongly supported the initiative, which provides a solid foundation for the development and implementation of an AMICAALL programme in Kenya.

The forum focused on the HIV/AIDS situation in Kenya and its impact; cultural and social issues and concerns; and the multi-sectoral response in Kenya. The forum addressed key issues of concern for local government, which included orphans and vulnerable children; workplace policy and industrial relations; the greater involvement of PLWHA; and the Millennium Development Goals. Presentations were given on the role of local authorities; community mobilization and resource mobilization; concepts and issues for policy and advocacy; linkages between NASCOP (Ministry of Health HIV/AIDS response) and local authorities health services.

A session was devoted to the Alliance and AMICAALL Programmes in the region. The session was chaired by Mayor Ssebaana Kizito of Kampala and included presentations on the Alliance and AMICAALL and sharing of experiences from the AMICAALL Programmes in Uganda, Tanzania, Swaziland and Namibia.

The delegates collectively expressed their enthusiasm in becoming more engaged in the local response to HIV/AIDS and agreed on a resolution, which was tabled at the ALGAK Annual General Meeting on Friday 16th May 2003 and passed unanimously. It was decided that each Council would consider the resolution, individually endorse the decision, and proceed to sign the national declaration at the Alliance Chapter launch. This is to ensure the full commitment of all local authorities before moving forward.

### KENYA DECLARATION

"We the local authority leaders, Mayors and Chairmen of Cities, Municipalities, Town Councils and County Councils in Kenya do resolve as follows:

- That having recognized that HIV/AIDS is a National Disaster;
- Having realized the negative impact of HIV/AIDS on the development of local authorities;
- Further realizing that HIV/AIDS impacts adversely in particular on women, youth, children and other vulnerable groups;
- Also recognize the importance of the greater involvement of people living with HIV/AIDS within the councils and amidst our communities;
- Acknowledging that HIV/AIDS impacts adversely on our own Councils/Organizations, in particular the personnel and the ability to effectively deliver services;
- Further realizing that HIV/AIDS adversely affects the communities we serve, who provide both the human capital and other resources to the Councils;
- Further acknowledging that HIV/AIDS weakens the local economy, households and has a negative impact on the quality of life of every individual.

**Therefore resolve individually and collectively that as members of ALGAK (Association of Local Government Authorities in Kenya) we are committed to addressing HIV/AIDS in our Councils by mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into all our programmes and activities.**

**We resolve to work in partnership with Government Departments/Ministries, civil societies, religious organizations, private sector, local communities, PLWHA's and development partners.**

**We further resolve to join with our fellow Mayors in Africa by joining the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and AMICAALL (Alliance of Mayors' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level)."**

## AMICAALL PROGRAMME PLANNING, TANZANIA

The Tanzania Chapter of the Alliance was launched in 1999 in Dodoma, however for various reasons the development of the AMICAALL Tanzania Plan of Action was delayed until April of this year. Under the leadership of Lord Mayor Kassim Kisauji, the Tanzania Chapter is actively moving forward with their preparations to launch an AMICAALL programme.

A programme planning mission was undertaken in March and April 2003 by a four person multidisciplinary team of Tanzanian consultants, including AMICAALL Tanzania's National Coordinator Martin Kitilla, and a UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme Associate, Mr. Terry Parker. A process of wide ranging consultations, research and analysis culminated in the development of a draft plan of action consistent with national policies and frameworks. Activities are intended to enhance institutional capacity at the local level to support the multi-sectoral response focus of the national policy. The plan of action is currently being reviewed by key stakeholders, after which it will be presented for review and adoption at a meeting of the Tanzanian Mayors Alliance.

## PREPARATORY MISSION TO MALAWI

Through the valiant efforts of Mrs. Sophie Kalimba, the Malawi Local Government Association (MALGA) is ready to launch an Alliance Chapter and AMICAALL programme in Malawi. Mayors and municipal leaders from Blantyre City and Zomba Municipality have expressed strong interest in becoming more engaged in the response to HIV/AIDS in their cities. In May 2003, the Blantyre City Assembly hosted a meeting that brought together representatives from Malawi Local Government Association (MALGA), National AIDS Council, Council of NGOs in Malawi (CONGOMA), UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme (UN APP), the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa, UN and other partners. About 40 people attended this meeting which initiated a process to develop a municipal HIV/AIDS program in Blantyre City and launch a National Chapter of the Alliance in Malawi. UNDP funding is supporting preparatory activities, such as: leadership for results training; city consultation activities, with support from the Urban Management Programme; and establishment of an HIV/AIDS information center in Blantyre, with technical support from SAFAIDS, an NGO based in Zimbabwe. A commitment was made to launch the Malawi Chapter of the Alliance, tentatively in August.

## UNAPP AND WORLD BANK FACILITATE AND SUPPORT ACTIONS ON HIV/AIDS IN CITIES AND TOWNS IN BENIN

The UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme (UN APP) and World Bank conducted a joint mission to Benin in May 2003 to identify ways and means of supporting mayors and municipal leaders to become more actively engaged in responding to HIV/AIDS in their cities and towns. UN APP and World Bank (Urban Programme) are working together to enhance capacities at the local government level to confront the growing challenges of HIV/AIDS. The mission team met with key stakeholders in the country. A workshop was held which brought together mayors and local leaders, UNAIDS and UN representatives, national and international agencies, and NGOs to share information on local government responses to HIV/AIDS in other countries, the work of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and AMICAALL. A follow-up plan of action is being developed.



Participants at a workshop organized by UN APP and World Bank in Benin

**PROFILE: FORMER MAYOR OF OTJIWARONGO, CLLR. SHADUKA**



Former Mayor of Otjiwarongo, Namibia, Cllr. Shaduka

I was born in Otjiwarongo, Namibia. I have been a teacher for 28 years. Working with children gave me an opportunity to know my students and the community. Due to the high rate of unemployment students drop out of school because their parents could not support them. I have seen them become street children roaming and begging for food. My heart is always bleeding for these kids because I love children. I decided to assist wherever I could, but having limited resources it was quite difficult. In 1992 when I was elected as a councillor it was a stepping-stone to realise my dream. In 1996, with the assistance of the Otjiwarongo municipality, a day-care centre became reality. The municipality donated two houses for this purpose and with the escalating number of orphans, due to AIDS, the intake of children became a high priority. It is this background that motivated me to start the Otjiwarongo Multi-Purpose Center, when I was elected Mayor.

The purpose of the Centre, is to provide services to the community in the form of temporary boarding for orphans, life-skills development for vulnerable children, home based care, health, food support and clothing for HIV affected and vulnerable households. The community will be educated on HIV/AIDS and HIV prevention. I believe strongly that through hard

work, we will decrease the numbers of HIV infections in the town. Ultimately, the Center will benefit the community as a whole but more specifically the AIDS orphans, vulnerable children, AIDS support groups, the youth and HIV affected households.

I was able to gather support for the Center by explaining the impact of HIV/AIDS on families, especially the children. I also invited donors to come and see the existing centre themselves: the shortcomings and the needs. AMI-CAALL played a very important role in the development of the Center by circulating our project proposal, approaching different donors and campaigning for funding for us.

Currently a lot of development is taking place. We received funding, for the Center, from VNG International/STOPAIDSNOW! in the Netherlands, and the construction of the centre is about to begin. A delegation of three council members, including myself, have been invited by VNG International to attend a municipal management training programme on HIV/AIDS. We are in negotiations with an organisation working with the Rotary clubs in the US, for a solar oven for the centre.

The Otjiwarongo City Council is committed to expanding services that will benefit more and more citizens in our country.

**OTJIWARONGO MUNICIPALITY PROFILE**



**PROFILE OF OTJIWARONGO**

**Location:** Otjiwarongo, which in the Otji-Herero language means “beautiful place”, is strategically located on the TransCaprivi Highway making it the major gateway to the northern regions in Namibia.

**Elected Council Members:** 7

**Municipal Services:** water supply, sewage and sanitation, electricity supply, waste collection and disposal, road and rail infrastructure, street lighting and cleansing, motor vehicle registration, traffic control, parks, gardens and recreation facilities, community services and social welfare.

Municipal Annual Budget (US\$ millions)	4**
Population	28,000**
Orphans	500**
HIV prevalence rate (%)	18 *
Employment rate (%)	45**
Unemployment rate (%)	17**
Not active rate (%)	37**
Poverty rate (%)	60+**

Data Source, unless otherwise indicated:  
 UN Human Development Report, 2002  
 \* UNAIDS  
 \*\* Otjiwarongo Municipal Council  
 \*\*\* UNDP  
 \*\*\*\* Assoc. for Local Authorities in Namibia (2001)

### IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS

Namibia ranks among the five countries in the world most heavily affected by HIV/AIDS, with an overall estimated adult prevalence rate of 23.3%. AIDS has become the leading cause of death in the country (National Development Plan, 2001) Namibia also has one of the highest proportions of orphans in the world. Life expectancy has fallen from 61 in 1995 to 52 in 1998. It is expected to further decrease to less than 40 years by 2010. The socio-economic impact of the epidemic in Namibia is profound and pervasive with further devastation predicted if effective action on a sufficient scale is not taken to mitigate the epidemic.

### TACKLING HIV/AIDS ON MULTIPLE FRONTS

#### Mayors and Municipal Leaders Engage

In November 2001, the Namibian Chapter of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa was launched. Under the auspices of the Association for Local Authorities in Namibia (ALAN), a public declaration was made recognizing the crisis and urging local action. This declaration was endorsed by all 44 local authorities. An AMICAALL action plan was then prepared and adopted. Programmes are underway in most local authorities, with Otjiwarongo being one of the champions.

Municipalities are feeling the impact of HIV/AIDS in many ways:

- Reduced life expectancy
- More sick people are further burdening already stretched health services
- Increased poverty and hunger
- Rapid rise in numbers of orphans, child-headed households and children living on the streets in need of care and support
- Threats to productivity, decreasing revenue and higher costs for businesses
- Drop in school attendance

The local authority institutions themselves are affected in many ways, such as:

- Capacity to deliver services is compromised
- Ability of people to pay property taxes, service charges, etc

- Increase in demand for burial spaces and cemeteries
- Change of focus in policy - housing, public health, social responsibility
- Challenges of ensuring equitable access to services
- Added responsibilities as an employer
- Managing changing community dynamics

How to cope with the extensive and painful losses of human life and how to manage the social and economic losses are critical questions now facing all too many societies in Africa.

A spectrum of actions is required: from prevention to care and support to treatment, to programs of assistance to those surviving the death of family members, through to policies and programmes which address the broader social and economic development implications of the epidemic.

Leadership, commitment and action are needed from all levels of government and civil society.

Community-based action is critical. The involvement of Local Government is essential because national HIV/AIDS policies cannot be fully implemented from the center.

#### OTJIWARONGO MUNICIPALITY: What are we doing?

##### Listening and Learning

The Municipality has embraced the responsibility to lead the town in the local response to HIV/AIDS. Wide ranging consultations have been carried out with communities, service providers, non-profit organizations, community based organizations, people living with HIV/AIDS and other key stakeholders to assess the needs, prioritize and plan based on the local realities. The challenges and needs identified by this process were:

- Support to extended family units, and other community support structures with the responsibility of caring for the increasing numbers of orphans and vulnerable youth in the town
- Support and care for those who are affected and infected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic

- Support to increase awareness and understanding of HIV/AIDS and to expand prevention efforts
- Support to growing number of orphans and vulnerable children/young people
- Greater access to care, support and treatment for people and families living with HIV/AIDS people in the Municipality

#### Responding to Community Needs and Realities

The municipality's strategic response to the challenges of HIV/AIDS is anchored in the establishment of a Multi-purpose Center in the town. The new Center will offer a range of services to vulnerable young people, HIV/AIDS affected households and the larger community, including:

- After school study, youth development and recreational activities
- Temporary boarding facilities for orphans who do not have any immediate family member support
- Training of community counsellors
- HIV/AIDS awareness and education for community at large
- Material support to affected families (food, clothing, school fees)
- Referral services

Funding for the new center was facilitated by the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme (UN APP) and the Dutch Foundation STOPAIDSNOW!

To address a gap in the current response to orphans and vulnerable young people, Otjiwarongo is one of three towns in Namibia that has developed an SOS program (Skills, Opportunities, Self-reliance) with support from UN APP and ORT IC, an international non-governmental organization specializing in vocational training and youth development. Under this program orphans and vulnerable youth will be able to access vocational training and other support to enable them to live better lives. Partnerships with the private sector are also being pursued to provide young people with internships, placements and mentors.

## SOUTH AFRICA AND THE ILGM CONFERENCE: LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS IMPRESSIONS

BY MAJOR RUBARAMIRA RURANGA



Major Rubaramira Ruranga

My association with the Alliance goes back to 1999 when Mina Mauerstein-Bail, the director of the UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme, invited me to join a delegation of African Mayors and Municipal leaders participating in the US Conference on HIV/AIDS in Denver, Colorado and other meetings in Washington D.C. The mission was one of my most exciting experiences to date, not because of the places I saw, but because of the amazing individuals I was travelling with. It was the first time that I had an opportunity to interact with a cross-section of African mayors and municipal leaders and to discuss the devastation that HIV/AIDS has caused on our continent. Their team comprised of mayors from four African countries: Tanzania, Swaziland, Côte d'Ivoire and Zambia. They were very open, friendly and extremely concerned with the state of their countries. Despite the fact that until this point they had been left out of the response to HIV/AIDS, their determination to join the effort against HIV/AIDS was admirable. When I reflect back on this trip I sometimes think that I have never witnessed in the Ugandan leadership the kind of compassion, concern and candour that these mayors displayed.

### THE PARADOX

As you land at the Johannesburg Airport from any sub-Saharan African country and see all the planes from the world's

numerous nations your first impression is that you are on another continent. Traveling on land, you find yourself on extraordinarily well-lit roads with four lanes of vehicles going in each direction. It is easy to become mesmerized by the way vehicles are moving, with some passing on top of others. How can people in this great country be facing the same problem of HIV/AIDS as in other poor countries in Africa? I learnt the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in South Africa was about 20.1%. Looking at all the wealth I was confused about the nature of South Africa's management. I realized then that Uganda was certainly ahead of many countries in the management of HIV/AIDS.

I was invited to go to South Africa to address the Annual Conference of the Institute for Local Government Management (ILGM) in Johannesburg which was scheduled for June 2nd 2003. I came to Johannesburg a few days earlier and had the opportunity to interact with many people informally, about HIV/AIDS. Almost all the people I talked to were not very knowledgeable on the subject; in fact, they were too scared to talk about it.

### MY HOPE

The time came when I was to address the people at the Conference. It was during dinner and the hall was full of people. Unlike people who had presented before me, I did not talk about science or medicine. No, I talked about my twenty-year long journey with HIV. I talked about overcoming stigma and about what had helped me to live up to this time. I pointed out the importance of being open about one's HIV status, and how important it is to seek help. I implored them not to judge the disease at face value as one can be infected for years with no visible signs. In fact few people in the room looked healthier

or smarter than me. I was concerned for those who had not tested. They were the greatest enemies of the fight against HIV/AIDS. "keeping quiet is like ignoring your burning house when you are alone. You cannot put this fire out by yourself. You may fail to rescue your property because you are alone." As I talked I looked around to see the reactions. People's meals had become cold as they listened to the things I was sharing, some were wiping tears from their eyes. I concluded my presentation by saying that any mature person who has had sex during the last twenty years without a condom is eligible to be HIV positive. Everybody who has not been checked was allowing themselves to burn in deception. They cannot handle the fire alone. HIV testing is about self protection and the protection of our society.

I think there is hope because people are looking for knowledge and knowledge is power. After my presentation, people asked questions ranging from the Uganda experience, the demystification of cultural issues, behavioral and social change, the best ways of communicating, the role of Government, the best ways to maintain the momentum, the importance of nutrition and the use and effectiveness of ART (Accountability, Responsibility and Trust). There were also questions about bearing children while HIV positive. I happen to have two toddlers who are 37 months and 18 months. Both their mother and I are HIV positive but they are not infected. I am 56 years old and their mother is in her mid-thirties. Before we had our children she told me she did not see the value of life without a child. Her having children, despite being HIV positive, is what has made a difference for her and is the inspiration for her to continue. We have value for life, and we intend to live until our children grow up because this is our responsibility and they are our reason for living.

## INSTITUTE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA CONFERENCE

The Institute of Local Government Management of South Africa (ILGM) holds an annual conference, for local authority Chief Executives, high ranking government officials and private sector representatives from all over South Africa, to deliberate on topical issues of local government. The theme of the 2003 Johannesburg Conference, which was held on June 2nd, was "think globally, act locally for service excellence". Present at the Conference were the Presidents and members of ILGM sister organisations from Australia and Great Britain.

The Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa, with support from the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme (UN APP), sponsored a presentation by Major Rubaramira Ruranga, at the plenary session of the Conference on the topic 'Living Positively with HIV/AIDS'. Major Ruranga, who serves in the Ugandan Army, has been living with HIV for 20 years. His presentation was provocative and at times controversial, however the message was clear - with the right treatment, care and lifestyle, you can live with HIV, and much more attention needs to be given to

actions that will prolong the life of people living with HIV. He stressed that municipal managers should be provided with information about HIV/AIDS to help them fulfil their important role in responding to HIV/AIDS in their local authorities. He stressed the important contribution that local government can make by ensuring that more services are made available to people and families affected by HIV/AIDS. He also stressed the importance of eliminating fear, stigma and shame.

## AMICAALL SWAZILAND: SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGH PARTNERSHIP



Rudolph Maziya, National Coordinator of AMICAALL Swaziland programme

The Commonwealth Local Government Conference on service partnerships, which was opened by His Excellency, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, was held in Pretoria on March 2003. Rudolph Maziya, the National Coordinator of AMICAALL Swaziland, presented a paper on the AMICAALL Swaziland Programme as an example of service delivery through partnerships. In the presentation,

Mr. Maziya indicated that HIV/AIDS response is a new area of work for municipalities. The mayors in Swaziland lack expertise and capacity within municipalities to adequately address the epidemic but have managed to form a not-for-profit organization (AMICAALL) which operates primarily through a wide array of partnerships including AIDS service organisations, the private sector, government, community based organisations and civil society. This initiative was launched with the full support of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

Mr. Maziya noted that although working through partnerships has proved to be challenging, in the case of AMICAALL Swaziland it has yielded positive results. In his presentation, Mr. Maziya observed that working through partnership has also created an enabling environment for AMICAALL to mobilize resources and to initiate the development of HIV/AIDS related services at municipal level, while at the same time building the capacity of

mayors and local leaders to institutionalize HIV/AIDS into the municipal agendas.

The presentation was so well received by the conference that it was cited by different speakers on several occasions during the plenary sessions as a good example of how partnerships can better address a specific social problem. The presentation also generated a lot of interest in the breakaway session at which it was presented. There is therefore no doubt that recognition of the work of AMICAALL Swaziland by such a meeting spoke very well for the efforts and determination of the country and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development to find innovative solutions to the challenges of HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Maziya attended the conference as part of a delegation of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development that comprised of the Minister, Honourable Albert Shabangu, the Principal Secretary, Mbuso Dlamini, and the Director of Urban Government, Patrick Dlamini.

## EU FUNDING FOR VCT SERVICES IN SWAZILAND

The EU has agreed to fund the provision of Voluntary Counseling & Testing (VCT) services in two towns: Siteki and Piggs Peak. Funding for the Piggs Peak VCT center will be managed directly by a consortium which includes: AIDS Information Support Center, AMICAALL Swaziland and the Piggs Peak Town Board. The VCT Service in Siteki will be managed by Population Services International. There is potential funding for VCT centers in three more towns. UNDP will be funding a workshop for Councillors on HIV/AIDS. UNAIDS is considering funding the urban HIV and behaviour survey.

## UN APP PARTICIPATES IN USAID TRAINING

In March 2003, the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme (UN APP) participated in a three-day training for United States Agency for International Development (USAID) staff entitled "Development and Cities: Urban 101". It was organised by the Urban Institute and held at their offices in Washington, DC. About 25 Washington and country mission programme officers, from across many disciplines, attended the training. The course objectives were to educate these programme officers on the role and importance of cities in USAID development efforts, the major challenges facing cities and urban centers and provide them with tools and resources to support development of urban programmes.

While the course highlighted the issues of urban poverty, food security and environmental health concerns, for the first time, it also included the topic of HIV/AIDS. UN APP Associate, Margo Kelly, gave a presentation on the HIV/AIDS epidemic, urban development and local governance. She outlined challenges facing local governments in developing and scaling up an effective response to HIV/AIDS and how some local governments are attempting to do this. During the discussion period, participants were especially interested in learning more about specific activities undertaken by Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa and in the application of the Alliance of Mayors' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL) country programmes.

## CITY TO CITY COOPERATION

During a seminar entitled "Municipal Responses to HIV/AIDS", held in the Netherlands in May 2003 within the framework of a city to city cooperation initiative in collaboration with the Alliance/AMICAALL and the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG), an agreement was signed with the City of Mbabane in Swaziland. Under this agreement and through funding provided by STOPAIDSNOW! Foundation, the VNG will work with the Mbabane City Council to support "peer education training" on HIV prevention targeting young people. Although the focus of this activity is on Mbabane, it will be carried out via south-south cooperation and include trainers and participants from Namibia, Swaziland and South Africa.

"I feel like heaven and cannot wait to go home and start the work" said Sebenzile Ginindza, the project manager of the youth programme, from Swaziland, after the contract was signed.



Charles Ndeh, Dumisa Kalolo, Sebenzile Ginindza, Ingrid Frank, Frederik Ueitele, Jabulile Madondo, Ismael Howoseb, Solomon Legodi, Paulus Haipare, Weziwe Tikana, Erwin Murangi, Moderatha Shaduka, Nxumalo Jabulani, Renu Gajee, Dumisani Shoba, Frieda Shimakeleui, Agnes Nthangula, Sindiswa Gomba, Irma Jurrius, Anna Joseph, Shaun Petzer, Barbera Dordregter at the "Municipal Responses to HIV/AIDS" seminar.

## IDASA GOVERNANCE AND AIDS FORUM

The UNAMICAALL Partnership Programme (UNAPP) was invited to participate in the SADC Regional Governance and AIDS Forum in Cape Town from 2 to 4 April 2003.

The forum was designed to provide countries from SADC with an opportunity to discuss the imperatives of good governance in relation to regional and national responses to HIV/AIDS. The forum sought to strengthen political commitment for prioritising HIV and AIDS on the development agenda as well as to provide a platform for study and the exchange of successes, failures and challenges.

Following the official opening by the Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa and Chairperson of the SA National AIDS Council, Mr Jacob Zuma, Prof Alan Whiteside from the University of Natal (HEARD) made a presentation on the challenges in the areas of prevention, care and impact mitigation. UNAPP was invited to share lessons on how local government is addressing the challenges of service delivery associated with the HIV/AIDS epidemic within the framework of the Alliance of Mayors' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL). Other presentations focussed on the impact of HIV and AIDS on various sectors; SADC Parliamentary Forum HIV/AIDS Programme; civil society as a governance actor; public sector accountability; health sector response in Botswana; local government and decentralisation; UNGASS commitments; human rights; and SADC regional coordination.

The Forum was attended by some eighty delegates representing national parliaments, governments, SADC, UN Agencies, development partners, academic and research institutions, Foundations and civil society organisations.

### NOTE BOOK

## HIV/AIDS AND FOOD SECURITY: URBAN FOOD GARDENS

HIV/AIDS has long been recognized as posing a major threat to food and nutrition security in sub-Saharan Africa. HIV/AIDS affects food security by reducing: food availability through decreased production and loss of labour; food access through declining income for food purchasers; the stability and quality of food supplies due to shifts to less labour-intensive production of foods of lower nutritional content. Can urban food gardens address the nutritional needs of poor communities affected by HIV/AIDS? This is a question that the Msunduzi Municipality (formerly Pietermaritzburg) and the Children in Distress (CINDI) Network in South Africa are exploring through their "African Roots" initiative. For more information on this initiative contact: Dr. Julie Dyer, Medical Officer, Msunduzi Municipality. E mail: [Dyerj@pmbcc.gov.za](mailto:Dyerj@pmbcc.gov.za) or Fax: (27) 33-3951505

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**UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

**The 13th International Conference on AIDS & STIs in Africa**

21-26 September 2003  
 Nairobi, Kenya  
<http://www.icasanairobi2003.org/>

**Africities 2003**

December 2 to 6, 2003  
 Yaounde, Cameroon

**6th HCC for people living with HIV/AIDS**

8 to 11 December 2003  
 Dakar, Senegal  
[cipeccvihdak@sentoo.sn](mailto:cipeccvihdak@sentoo.sn)  
<http://www.dakarvih2003.sn>

**HOW TO JOIN THE ALLIANCE**

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City: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

(continued from p. 1)

the burdens of their communities' suffering. Almost daily, they are expected to offer maximum support to their residents, who are either infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. A major consequence is lack of local development because attention and resources are focused on the wrong things. To resolve that it is necessary to study each partner's actual or potential strength and marshal it into community action plans against HIV/AIDS. Local authorities, even in an initiative like that, should still take a lead role because the matter can no longer be left as "any other business". Time is overdue for them to put their knowledge of the epidemic into practice. They must, in line with what was resolved during ALGAK's workshop, mainstream HIV/AIDS into all programmes and activities.

As Kenya's local authorities look forward to the launch of Alliance/AMICAALL -Kenya Chapter, they will continue to seek good practices from partners who are already involved in activities against the global epidemic.