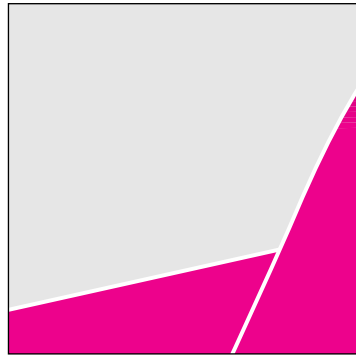


UNAIDS and nongovernmental organizations



Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNAIDS

UNICEF • UNDP • UNFPA • UNDCP
UNESCO • WHO • WORLD BANK

UNAIDS Best Practice Collection
KEY MATERIAL

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UNAIDS and nongovernmental organizations



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UNAIDS and nongovernmental organizations

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Partnership and collaboration with civil society

Introduction

Since its creation on 1 January 1996, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has borne the main responsibility within the United Nations (UN) system to:

- help countries strengthen their long-term ability to cope with HIV/AIDS
- provide leadership and a better coordinated and more systematic assistance on HIV/AIDS to countries from the UN agencies.

UNAIDS mission statement declares: *“As the main advocate for global action in HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS leads, strengthens and supports an expanded response aimed at preventing the transmission of HIV, providing care and support, reducing the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS, and alleviating the impact of the epidemic”.*

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UNAIDS brings together the experience of seven UN agencies—UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNDCP, UNESCO, WHO and World Bank—known as the ‘Cosponsors’, so as to create a broader-based and expanded response to the epidemic.

UNAIDS main office is located in Geneva, Switzerland. In addition to its Geneva-based staff, UNAIDS has Country Programme Advisers (CPAs) in approximately 50 countries and Intercountry Teams in selected locations.

The multinational, multicultural professional staff of UNAIDS, 37% of whom are women, come from all major regions of the world. Many disciplines are represented, including health economics, human rights, clinical management, social science, communications and epidemiology.

UNAIDS is governed by a Programme Coordinating Board (PCB), with representatives of 22 governments from all regions of the world. Government membership rotates. The seven Cosponsoring Organizations are also represented. Five people from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including associations of people living with HIV/AIDS, have places on this board. The PCB, which meets at least once a year, has the ultimate responsibility for all policy and budgetary matters.

The seven Cosponsors also meet as a separate committee two to four times a year. The Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations gives input into policy and programme development and helps ensure that policies and guidelines developed in partnership with UNAIDS are fed back into their own work.

The *strategic focus* of UNAIDS involves:

- strengthening the UN system, and especially the ability of Cosponsor agencies to help governments and civil society respond to HIV/AIDS
- building world-wide political support to respond to HIV/AIDS
- improving access to information and developing the body of knowledge needed to accelerate the global response to HIV/AIDS.

A central function of UNAIDS programme is *support*, so that there can be an 'expanded response' to HIV/AIDS through the UN system. An expanded response means getting more people and organizations to join in and to do more. This requires the participation of the many groups, networks and individuals in civil society, whose ability to deal with the epidemic is key to achieving the goals of UNAIDS. UNAIDS needs to draw on their experience and resources in order to develop good policies and planning. UNAIDS role is to facilitate the response by seeking partnerships with those who share its vision, and involving those who are not yet involved.

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UNAIDS vision

UNAIDS overall vision is a world in which the transmission of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases is significantly reduced, and adequate treatment, care and support are provided; and where vulnerability to the epidemic and its adverse impact on individuals and communities are substantially diminished.

How can we expand the response?

UNAIDS seeks to bring about an expanded response to the epidemic through three principal functions: those of **facilitation**, **best practice** and **advocacy**. In each of these the role of civil society and the way in which UNAIDS builds relationships with civil society are vital elements for success.

Facilitation

UNAIDS role of facilitation—enabling others to become involved in work related to HIV and AIDS—is primarily directed at its seven Cosponsors, as well as other UN organizations. UNAIDS wants to ensure that its Cosponsors' experience of civil society partnerships *in other fields* is taken and woven into an expanded response to the HIV epidemic. Through its facilitating role, UNAIDS works with its Cosponsors and other UN agencies to find ways to build on their existing relationships with civil society, and to create new relationships. By these means, the role of civil society in the expanded response to HIV/AIDS can be increased.

Best practices

UNAIDS is committed to identifying and developing a set of knowledge on best practices relating to HIV/AIDS. In doing so, it recognizes that in many areas relating to HIV/AIDS — particularly in work with vulnerable populations — the best practices have been developed by nongovernmental organizations, AIDS service organizations (ASOs), groups of people living with HIV/AIDS, and other sections of civil society. The work done by these groups is now being used extensively to build up a body of best practices. The collection and dissemination of best practices is part of the exchange of learning experiences taking place between civil society and UNAIDS and its Cosponsors.

UNAIDS has limited capacity to disseminate all the information gathered and produced, and needs, therefore, to develop partnerships with its Cosponsors and NGOs to make this information as widely available as possible.

Advocacy

UNAIDS role in advocacy in relation to civil society is aimed at building committed and supportive international and national communities. This includes influencing civil society organizations and working through the Cosponsors.

UNAIDS is in a position to help organizations share their experiences. Such organizations include development agencies — particularly those specializing in health issues — ASOs, groups of people with HIV/AIDS, NGOs, governments, the Cosponsors, and other UN and international agencies. Such sharing of experiences enables NGOs and others to have an influence on the work and policy development of UNAIDS — as well as on public agendas.

UNAIDS advocates approaches and activities that are appropriate and effective. Such approaches and activities should address the factors that exacerbate people's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS — such as poverty, discrimination and gender inequality. Furthermore, UNAIDS advocates the involvement of those infected and those affected by HIV in policy development and decision-making.

What is civil society, and why is it important?

In the context of UNAIDS work — and for the purposes of this paper — civil society refers to people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, and the organizations of these people; NGOs currently or potentially working on HIV/AIDS issues; religious organizations; and international NGOs in fields such as development, human rights, education and health, that are contributing — or could contribute — to preventing HIV infection and reducing the impact of the epidemic on individuals, families and communities.

The importance of working with civil society in order to achieve the aims of the UN system is being increasingly recognized within the UN as a whole. Much effort is being put in by the UN to achieve an effective collaboration with NGOs. The importance of the response and involvement of civil society has been summarized by Gustave Speth, administrator of UNDP: "Popular demands for democratization have swept the globe over the last decades. Their most dramatic manifestation has been in the crowds of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people who have gathered in many different countries to claim their right to participate in their own governance. The 'people power' has helped bring political change and representative rule to many lands". At the same time as this mobilization of people power, NGOs are increasingly participating in the normative and policy-creating work of the UN. Various UN agencies have set up formal and informal links in a number of ways with NGOs and coalitions of NGOs — to the benefit of both. The participation and influence of NGOs in international and global conferences, such as the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994) and the World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), have been notable milestones in this process.

Civil society has often been seen as a ‘force for democratization’. And the term ‘civil society’ has often been understood to encompass a set of political values which ‘constitute the fundamental pillars of real democracy’. These political values include transparency, accountability, pluralism, participation and good governance. There is a close link here with effective HIV prevention and care, which are made much easier to carry out in societies that embrace these values.

Civil society has also been understood to refer to sections of society other than government — including nongovernmental and voluntary organizations, and commercial and private enterprises — ‘an intermediary level of organization between the family/individual and the state’. Agencies within the UN system differ as to whether the commercial sector should be included in the definition of civil society. UNAIDS itself works with private and commercial organizations at a number of levels, and therefore includes them in its own definition of civil society, together with all non-state organizations with which it interacts.

UNAIDS seeks partnerships with organizations that themselves work with the less formally organized sections of society, but with whom it cannot work directly itself — such as for example, clans, village communities, and tribes.

UNAIDS also has a role in facilitating links between NGOs and other sections of civil society, such as the for-profit sector, the educational system and the media.

The involvement of civil society has been of particular importance in dealing with HIV/AIDS. People living with HIV/AIDS have, in many different settings, been active in influencing their own treatment and their access to health-care services. And NGOs and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS have helped shape ideas on human rights in connection with the epidemic. An effective response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic requires a partnership approach in which governmental agencies, communities, NGOs and groups affected by HIV/AIDS — especially people with HIV/AIDS — are involved. Partnership is a two-way commitment — and also a process in which both partners go through a learning experience.

UNAIDS has, from its inception, shown its commitment to the involvement of civil society, and is among the first UN bodies to include participation of civil society on its Programme Coordinating Board. Five seats on the PCB are reserved for NGO delegates. The PCB also has an open policy of allowing observers from other NGOs to attend meetings. All observers have the right to make interventions. These measures bring an NGO perspective to the discussions — something that is essential in responding to HIV/AIDS — and illustrate UNAIDS commitment to including HIV-positive people and NGOs in policy- and decision-making. Through this system of observers, the five NGO delegates to the PCB are able to have a direct interaction

with other NGOs during the sessions. UNAIDS is committed to continuing its policy of including NGO delegates to the PCB.

Expertise from civil society is also developed within UNAIDS through a policy of ensuring a broad base for staff recruitment. Currently around 20% of UNAIDS staff in Geneva and in the field have significant NGO experience.

Implementing the expanded response: partnerships with civil society

Working with civil society organizations

UNAIDS continually emphasizes the importance of its interaction with NGOs, people living with HIV/AIDS, and organizations and networks of HIV-positive people at the country, regional and global levels. These organizations and networks are key partners in the development of an expanded response, through their experience, their examples of best practice and their ability to implement programmes and to disseminate information. In many countries and regions there is good collaboration between UNAIDS and the NGO sector. Where this has not yet happened, UNAIDS actively encourages the establishment of such collaboration.

UNAIDS involves competent and relevant organizations and people in all aspects of its work. The list of people with whom it meets and consults includes those from international NGOs and networks, people with HIV or AIDS, and academics.

In particular, UNAIDS works with organizations working in the field of development, youth organizations, women's groups, community groups, sex workers' organizations, gay men's groups, and networks concerned with reducing harm from injecting drug use. From all these, UNAIDS learns valuable lessons, as it seeks to collaborate with them on AIDS-related work.

At country level, Theme Groups are expected to consult NGOs, groups of people living with HIV and AIDS, and ASOs — to discuss policy development, ensure regular interaction and build partnerships.

Enabling civil society partners to carry out best practices

UNAIDS has a key role to fill in identifying and disseminating examples of best practices. Many such examples come from the innovative work done by NGOs in a wide range of fields — and NGOs are therefore essential partners in identifying best practices. They are also potential partners in documenting these examples and in finding ways to reproduce and adapt good practices.

UNAIDS is in a position at country, regional and international levels to assemble relevant information on key players, projects and policies. By making this information available to agencies already working with HIV/AIDS — and to those not yet doing so — UNAIDS helps to develop an expanded response. In certain circumstances, UNAIDS may be able to offer guidance and information directly. However, it is more likely to refer NGOs and other groups to bodies in their own regions that can provide the relevant assistance. UNAIDS is not a replacement for existing resources, but will work in collaboration with others to facilitate exchange of expertise and experience.

UNAIDS plays a leading role in helping the Cosponsors develop guidelines and other relevant printed materials. This in turn enables other agencies to respond to HIV/AIDS and implement best practices. In order to do this, information must be made accessible and existing communication channels used effectively. This may also mean assistance in establishing new communication channels, such as regional e-mail networks.

Best practices within UNAIDS

UNAIDS implements best practice policies within its own organization. This includes policies which make for transparency, accountability and openness for participation. UNAIDS is currently implementing the following elements of best practice within its own organization, as a first step in advocating good practice for other organizations and agencies:

- *Staff awareness training*
A key element in effective HIV prevention is educational programmes that enable individuals to understand the way in which HIV might affect them, both personally and professionally. Such programmes help people to internalize issues around HIV/AIDS. Processes of internalization — as well as personally knowing someone living with HIV/AIDS — help people reduce their own risk and understand better the situation of those living with HIV/AIDS. UNAIDS trains its staff to understand and internalize issues around HIV/AIDS, and it particularly ensures that all new staff undergo such training.
- *Recruitment of staff from civil society*
UNAIDS is committed to continuing recruitment of appropriate staff who have relevant experience of NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs) or groups of people with HIV/AIDS.
- *Criteria for partnerships*
Criteria for partnerships and collaboration on projects, include requirements for accountability, relevance and a commitment to collaborate with others, an undertaking to respect the rights and needs of people with HIV/AIDS, and a commitment to include HIV-positive people in decision-making wherever possible.

Why should we involve people with HIV/AIDS?

The reasons for involving people with HIV/AIDS

Involving people with HIV/AIDS in policy, planning and the implementation of AIDS-related work is considered to: increase the relevance of such work; reduce discrimination; help the needs of people with HIV or AIDS to be recognized; assist in the process of normalization of HIV/AIDS; enable a greater understanding of the impact of HIV/AIDS; and present a human face to AIDS. People living with HIV or AIDS also have a key role to play in education and prevention. Discrimination against such people is widespread in the world, and involving them is a vital element in changing attitudes.

The principle of involving people with HIV and AIDS has been a part of the response to HIV since the early years of the epidemic. It was articulated in the Denver Declaration of 1983, and endorsed at the Paris AIDS Summit in December 1994 as the 'greater involvement of people with HIV/AIDS'. UNAIDS remains wholly committed to this principle. Within its own structures and in its relations with others, UNAIDS promotes the meaningful involvement of people with HIV/AIDS, whenever possible, in developing policy development and implementing programmes. UNAIDS has openly HIV-positive people on its staff and promotes supportive and fair employment policies.

Involving people living with HIV within UNAIDS

In order effectively to involve people living with HIV or AIDS within its own systems, it is necessary for UNAIDS to:

- train staff so as to understand the importance of involving people living with HIV or AIDS as well as the obstacles that are likely to arise in doing so, and to know how to put into practice such involvement. Where possible, people with HIV or AIDS are involved as trainers or advisers in this exercise.
- develop guidelines in areas including confidentiality, relations with the media in cases where people living with HIV or AIDS are given public exposure, sensitivity of language, and recognition of the special needs of HIV-infected individuals
- include people living with HIV or AIDS in key events involving UNAIDS
- actively promote networks of people living with HIV and AIDS, and other organizations that do skills-building and undertake training among those infected and affected.

Encouraging

involvement of people living with HIV or AIDS in other organizations

The principle of involving people living with HIV or AIDS extends to other organizations working with — or considering working with — issues around HIV/AIDS. By means of its strategies of facilitating, disseminating examples of best practices and advocacy, UNAIDS encourages Cosponsors and civil society partners — as well as national AIDS programmes, other governmental AIDS organizations and the private business sector — to involve people living with HIV or AIDS. Ways of achieving this include:

- developing guidelines for the involvement of people with HIV/AIDS
- disseminating these guidelines, together with examples of best practices in involving people with living HIV/AIDS
- collaborating with people living with HIV or AIDS, and other relevant networks and organizations.

Cosponsors and their expanded response through civil society

As already mentioned, the experience of the Cosponsors in their work with individual NGOs and coalitions of NGOs provides a basis for the development of UNAIDS own work in this area. UNAIDS is in a position to create opportunities for bringing together NGO liaison sections and HIV/AIDS specialists within cosponsoring and other UN agencies. Such collaboration will also further implement the involvement of civil society throughout the UN system.

The involvement of civil society will also be increased by:

- doing ongoing work with Cosponsors to analyse their partnerships with civil society through NGO liaison staff and the office of the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service. Cosponsors' experience of work with civil society provides models of good practice which can be shared between agencies (including UNAIDS) in developing their response to HIV/AIDS
- enabling the experience of some of the Cosponsors working on HIV/AIDS — for example UNDP's work in awareness training and capacity development — to be used as a model of best practice for other organizations, and also possibly for implementation within UNAIDS itself

- building on existing experiences to provide technical assistance to Cosponsors and their NGO partners in HIV/AIDS training. UNAIDS own experience of awareness training, for personal and professional purposes, can provide the basis for both Cosponsors and other organizations carrying out staff training. UNAIDS, with the collaboration of the Cosponsors, aims to facilitate training throughout the UN system.

Theme Groups and their expanded response through civil society

The UN ‘Theme Groups’ on HIV/AIDS are part of the UN system. In a particular country, the Cosponsors are members of these groups, and other UN bodies present in the country may also be members. Theme Groups play an important role in persuading national AIDS coordinating bodies to include NGOs, people living with HIV or AIDS, and networks of people with HIV/AIDS, in the national response. The Theme Groups are responsible for ensuring that NGOs and people with HIV are included, where appropriate, in consultations, technical working groups, and other opportunities for the exchange of information and experiences. The Theme Groups must keep themselves informed about actual and potential NGO activity within their country, and seek to promote greater NGO activity and collaboration around HIV/AIDS issues.

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This will mean that Theme Groups should:

- act as a central contact point for enquiries about HIV/AIDS at country level, including UN and NGO activities
- engage with existing NGO and networks of people living with HIV/AIDS
- reach out to organizations that are not part of existing networks, but that should also be involved
- develop a mechanism for organizations to gain access to the Theme Group structure — at least in countries where active and experienced NGOs exist
- facilitate the sharing of experiences among people with HIV or AIDS, NGOs, governments and UN agencies
- encourage new NGOs and groups of people with HIV to collaborate with the Theme Group

- involving NGOs and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS, by means of presentations at meetings and other events
- urge funding agencies, Cosponsors and national governments to fund and assist deserving NGO projects and programmes on HIV/AIDS, as well as those operated by HIV-positive people.

In many countries, existing technical working groups provide the mechanism for including NGOs and HIV-infected people in the Theme Group structure. Such technical working groups are often formed to address specific issues or events — such as human rights, gender, care and support, World AIDS Day, resource mobilization, integration of sexually transmitted disease (STD) services with mother and child health and family planning services, and AIDS education in schools. Technical working groups usually have a broad-based membership including NGOs and national institutions.

Success at enabling an expanded response through the involvement of civil society at country level will be used as an indicator in evaluating Theme Group activities.

Chapter 2

Examples of UNAIDS partnerships with NGOs

Partnerships with civil society have been developed in a number of ways in the three years since UNAIDS was set up. Guidelines are currently being prepared to explain how partnerships work at all levels, what UNAIDS has to offer to civil society organizations, and how civil society can enhance the expanded response to the epidemic.

An important part of the process is *communication*. In Geneva, the UNAIDS NGO Liaison Office is establishing a pool of *key partners* at the global level so that information paths to civil society organizations can be developed and sustained. News of this pool will be included in the monthly UNAIDS newsletter, *The Action Brief*.

Many partnerships have already been set up between UNAIDS and NGOs, at global, regional and country levels. The following are some examples.

At the global level

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the Liga Colombiana de Lucha Contra el SIDA, in partnership with UNAIDS, organized a consultation to find ways of better meeting the needs of men who have sex with men (MSM). While a large proportion of HIV-infected people in this region are men who have sex with men, their needs have not been adequately recognized and discrimination is commonplace. The consultation brought together representatives of national AIDS programmes, NGOs and UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS. At the consultation, UNAIDS agreed to support the publication of a technical document *Strategies and guidelines for action: HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support programmes for MSM in Latin America and the Caribbean*. The collaboration has led to the integration of MSM-related issues in the region and to efforts to attract greater national, regional and international funding for MSM projects. A similar consultation has also recently taken place in Asia.

In Europe, UNAIDS has worked in partnership with the British NGO, AHRTAG (now HealthLink Worldwide), and the Network of Sexwork Projects to produce a manual entitled *Making sex work safe*, for distribution in developing countries. UNAIDS has also collaborated with the Network of Sexwork Projects on their programme documents and in helping the network find funds for its activities.

In North America, UNAIDS has helped the Global Health Council bring AIDS-related topics to the attention of the mainstream media. And in partnership with the Canadian NGO, Street Kids International, UNAIDS

supported the production of a video for street children, helping youth-related NGOs at country level reach out to street children. Local-language versions of this video are also being developed.

Groups for people with HIV or AIDS are a vital link in public health strategies through their work in prevention, and UNAIDS welcomes partnerships with groups that work towards this goal. To this end, UNAIDS sponsored nine women with HIV to attend the 6th International Conference on Women and AIDS in Africa in December 1996. This active participation of HIV-positive women was hailed as an important step, and led to the election of one of the women as a vice-president of the Society for Women and AIDS in Africa.

In May 1998, UNAIDS collaborated with UNDP's 'HIV and Development Regional Project' in West Africa and GTZ's regional AIDS programme to enable twelve regional networks on HIV/AIDS and STDs to hold a meeting in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Through this gathering, a wide range of networks started to share experiences and to develop ways of working together.

In partnership with the UK NGO AIDS Consortium, UNAIDS brought together, in February 1998, 27 global-level development agencies for a consultation on how to expand HIV work among development agencies working in developing countries. A report was produced from this meeting, entitled 'Pathways to collaboration'. A meeting with the Spanish organization FASE identified ways UNAIDS could work in partnership with Spanish NGOs to make Spanish language materials available in Latin America. And Caritas Internationalis and UNAIDS have agreed to form a partnership focusing on human rights around HIV/AIDS, ethical issues and care.

At the regional level

The Intercountry Teams in East and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa and Asia-Pacific all work with civil society. Their priorities are to provide technical support to governments and UNAIDS Cosponsors, and to promote the involvement of civil society. The Intercountry Teams focus mainly on issues crossing national boundaries — such as drug use, refugees and migration. The Intercountry Teams have set up partnerships with civil society organizations to disseminate information and share experiences and information. An example is the partnership with SAfAIDS in Zimbabwe, where a 'UNAIDS Focus' page is included in the organization's quarterly newsletter.

The West and Central African Intercountry Team has joined up with the International Planned Parenthood Federation to carry out and monitor a large-scale project integrating HIV/AIDS into reproductive health services in francophone Africa. It has also supported other activities, including a

regional symposium on women and HIV/AIDS, and research on gender issues with the African AIDS Research Network.

The team has also collaborated with other NGOs, such as Enda-Santé in Dakar, Senegal, that has particular skills in doing translations and documentation, and in mobilizing human resources in the region.

The East and Southern Africa Intercountry Team has — among other activities — provided technical assistance on strategic planning, and financial support to the Southern Africa Network of AIDS Service Organizations (SANASO), in partnership with the regional programme of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The team also helped them organize their regional meeting in Swaziland.

In the Asia-Pacific region, UNAIDS has worked with the Asia Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organizations (APCASO) to provide capacity-building and technical support for its strategic planning meeting. This support included work on the facilitators' workshop for the Community Forum held in Manila in 1997 during the International Conference on HIV/AIDS in Asia and the Pacific. This Community Forum has helped community groups from across the region identify priorities, and will followed up by APCASO over the next three years.

Also in the Asia-Pacific region, a successful project involving partnerships has been the establishment of the (free) subscription-based computer information exchange, SEA-AIDS. This was financed by the World Bank and supported by the Asia-Pacific Intercountry Team. More than 1200 people and organizations now subscribe to this discussion group, with access to archive documents through the system. SEA-AIDS has proved of great value for NGOs, as well as for government and UN agencies. It has also led to the compiling of a *Directory of HIV/AIDS information sources in the Asia Pacific region*, for which the information was submitted through the e-mail network.

Regarding partnerships on specific issues at regional level, UNAIDS collaborated with the Macfarlane Burnett Centre in Australia to promote harm reduction activities in the Asia Pacific region. This collaboration included support for a meeting of the Asian Harm Reduction Network (AHRN) and a situation assessment of drug use in South-East and East Asia in the context of vulnerability to HIV. As a result, AHRN published a report entitled *The hidden epidemic*.

At country level

At country level, UNAIDS works within the UN's Resident Coordinator System. In a particular country, the UNDP Resident Coordinator usually also takes on the role of UN coordinator. Most countries now have a UN Theme

Group on HIV/AIDS, convened by the Resident Coordinator. The core membership of a Theme Group consists of the agency heads of those UNAIDS Cosponsors and other UN agencies who are present in the country. The host government is invited to participate. At country level, UNAIDS can be seen as the sum of the AIDS-related activities carried out by the seven Cosponsors with the backing of UNAIDS staff, technical guidance and other resources.

In many developing countries there is now a UNAIDS Country Programme Adviser (CPA), supervised by the Theme Group chairperson in that country and reporting to UNAIDS Director of Country Planning and Programme Development in Geneva. The CPA is the normal point of contact for civil society organizations in UNAIDS at the country level. In their work on HIV/AIDS at country level, civil society organizations can also seek partnerships with UN Cosponsors, who have long-standing experience of work with NGOs. In countries where there is no CPA, the usual contact is through one of the Cosponsors.

There are, however, wide variations in the development of relations with civil society at country level. CPAs and Theme Groups have different levels of experience of working with civil society, and the development of civil society organizations varies in different countries and regions. The involvement of civil society in Theme Group work can be enhanced by:

- expanding the Theme Group to include representatives of different interest groups
- expanding the Theme Group's Technical Working Group to include civil society representatives
- organizing a standing consultative forum to enable regular contact between the Theme Group and interested parties
- holding ad hoc meetings with particular individuals or organizations on specific topics.

Networking at country level

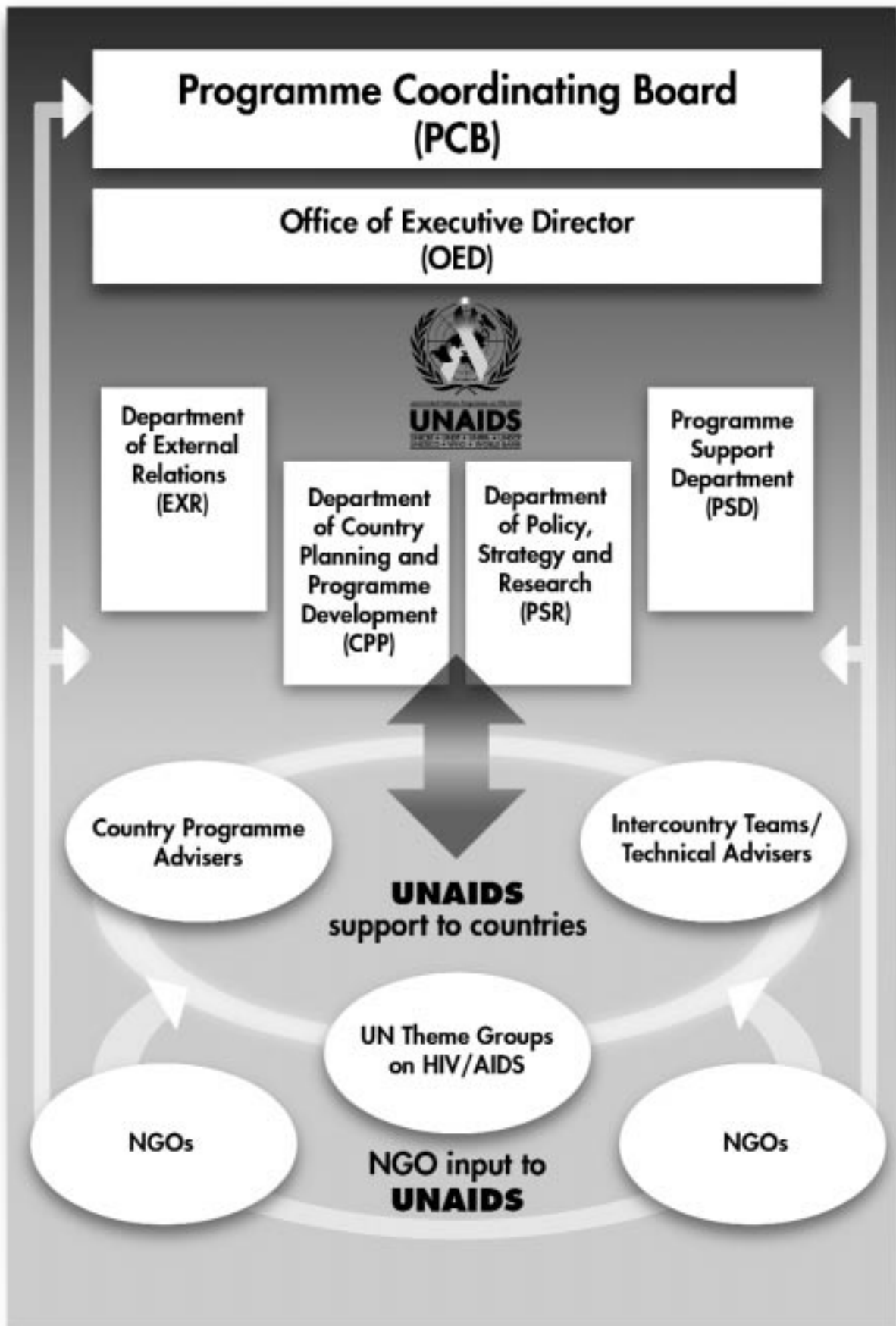
In Africa, with the support of CPAs, a number of Theme Groups have been successful in working with networks within civil society. For example, the Zimbabwean AIDS Network has collaborated with the local Theme Group and CPA to help NGOs in the country work more closely together. Joint field trips have helped solidify this partnership. Namibia's Theme Group on HIV/AIDS has also started on a project to bring together NGOs and other organizations working on HIV/AIDS who had previously been working in isolation.

In late 1997, after nearly two years of collaboration with UNAIDS and the AIDS Task Force in Fiji, APCASO was able to establish a network of NGOs stretching across the Pacific Island countries.

In Mozambique, UNAIDS has set up a technical and financial partnership with a group of eight NGOs, including a pioneering project to prevent the spread of HIV among military personnel. And the Mauritius Family Planning Association has worked with UNAIDS to establish a peer education project for women who, having left school early to work in factories, had had no sex education. ■

Appendix I
UNAIDS core functions

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UNAIDS Secretariat
core functions in Geneva

- Overall policy and political guidance
- Support in strategic planning to governments and Theme Groups
- Support to Cosponsors and Country Programme Advisers (CPAs), to help the UN system function in an integrated fashion
- Identification, development and dissemination of best practices globally, and the provision of policy advice at global, regional and national levels
- Development of technical resource networks which should identify, generate and disseminate best practices and provide technical assistance
- Advocacy at the global and regional levels, and support for Theme Groups and CPAs, to enable them to carry out advocacy and resource mobilization at national level
- Tracking the epidemic and the response to the epidemic, and monitoring and evaluating UNAIDS
- Management of CPAs and Inter-country Teams
- Provision of programme and administrative support

Core functions of the
NGO Liaison Office in Geneva

- Collaboration and partnership with global and regional NGOs already working with HIV/AIDS, in order to exchange information and examples of best practice, and identify new areas of intervention
- Identification of global and regional NGOs that do not work with HIV/AIDS, to explore possibilities for their involvement in HIV/AIDS work — often in collaboration with NGOs with a track record in this type of work
- Assistance to the NGO delegates to the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB)
- Resource centre for UNAIDS staff in Geneva, for Inter-country Team staff and for Country Programme Advisers (CPAs), so as to facilitate their partnership with NGOs

Appendix II
The NGO Delegation
to the Programme Coordinating Board

The NGO Delegation to the Programme Coordinating Board

UNAIDS is governed by a body called the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB). This board has representatives from 22 member states, elected from among the member states of the cosponsoring organizations, and with the following regional distribution as laid down by the UN Economic and Social Council:

- Western European and other states 7 seats
- Africa 5 seats
- Asia 5 seats
- Latin America and the Caribbean 3 seats
- Eastern Europe 2 seats

The six Cosponsors (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank) — seven, with the inclusion of UNDCP, since April 1999 — are also all represented on the PCB.

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In addition, there are five PCB members from nongovernmental organizations (three from developing countries and two from developed countries), with each of them having an alternate as back-up. The NGO Delegation — also known as the NGO Liaison Committee — has participated in the work of the PCB since its first meeting in July 1995. Under its original mandate, the NGO Delegation was asked to review and modify the terms of reference for its work. It was also periodically to assess the continued usefulness of the delegation on the PCB and to determine the method of appointing new individuals when seats are vacated.

1. Consensus on the functions of the NGO Delegation

A UNAIDS and NGO Delegation workshop was held in Geneva in April 1998, the objectives of which were to clarify NGO participation in the PCB and to create a mechanism for the NGO Delegation to operate. The NGO Delegation reached the following consensus about the functions of NGO delegates to the PCB, after holding a private session on the subject during the workshop.

A. The task of NGO delegates

NGO delegates to the PCB should:

- participate fully in all meetings of the PCB
- advocate for the participation of people with HIV/AIDS and the NGO community in the development of policies and programmes
- bring emerging critical issues to the PCB from the perspective of the communities of NGOs and people living with HIV and AIDS
- provide input into the equitable and appropriate allocation of available resources
- advocate with the Cosponsors and governments to respond to emerging critical issues
- bring transnational issues to the PCB
- advocate for a realistic evaluation of UNAIDS at all levels
- maintain a specific focus on groups of HIV-positive people, NGOs, CBOs, and individually affected and infected people, especially concerning their human rights, access to drugs, treatment and care, and harm reduction, as well as other emerging critical issues.

B. Strategy of the NGO Delegation

The strategy of the NGO Delegation should be:

- to ensure full attendance and participation at each PCB meeting
- to study all relevant documents in order to actively participate in the process of reviewing and deciding upon the plans and the execution of the programme
- to seek input from the community on key issues related to relevant documents
- to consult with and report to the communities of NGOs, CBOs and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS before and after PCB meetings, in a timely manner
- to ensure community participation in all ad hoc committees and all informal meetings of the PCB
- to find ways to ensure that the entire NGO Delegation (that is, the five NGO delegates and the five NGO alternates) are fully involved in the work of the PCB
- to establish good working relationships with other PCB delegations.

C. Qualifications for membership of the NGO Delegation

Nominations to serve on the PCB can be forwarded to the current NGO Liaison Committee by any group or NGO that has significant activities in HIV/AIDS. This includes people living with HIV/AIDS, AIDS services organizations, other community-based organizations and development NGOs. The five NGO delegates and the five NGO alternates for the NGO Delegation will be selected by the NGO Liaison Committee on the basis of their attributes — affiliation of NGOs, CBOs and organizations of people with HIV/AIDS; geographical representation; gender; and HIV status.

Nominated candidates should possess the following qualifications:

- a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of HIV/AIDS and of the political consequences of the pandemic
- experience and understanding of international policy-making and advocacy
- knowledge of HIV/AIDS issues that transcend the country level
- involvement in the AIDS response in their country or region of residence
- the ability to work as part of a team with other PCB delegates and with the broader communities of NGOs, CBOs and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS
- the ability to communicate and liaise effectively with networks of NGOs, CBOs and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS and key contacts (including the capability to communicate by telephone, fax and e-mail)
- links to an organization that can facilitate communication and liaison and provide ongoing advice, consultation and support
- the ability to operate in written and spoken English
- the ability to think and work strategically.

D. Preparation for PCB meetings

The NGO delegates should meet two days before the regular meeting of the PCB to discuss the agenda, meeting's objectives and its expected outcomes. This meeting should be open to other PCB observers from NGOs, CBOs and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS, so that they can be consulted. The NGO delegates will also meet for one day after the PCB meeting to discuss that meeting, and prepare a common report, to be printed and distributed by the UNAIDS Secretariat. Areas for future work and items for the next agenda should also be discussed.

E. The selection process

A nominee for election to the NGO Delegation must be resident in a country of the region that he or she is to represent. Nominations will be accepted from all communities of NGOs, CBOs and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS.

After the close of the nomination period, the current NGO Delegation should finalize the selection of a nominee to the NGO Delegation as soon as possible.

The name of the successful nominee or nominees will be presented to the full PCB for approval. The nomination process will normally begin nine months before the term of the current NGO delegate or alternate is to expire.

UNAIDS will serve as a 'mail box' for the nomination and selection process and will forward replies to the current NGO delegation who will make the selection.

Terms that delegates serve have been staggered, and will continue to be so, to ensure the development and maintenance of 'institutional memory' among the NGO Delegation. The following terms will apply for the following seats:

for the period 1/1/1998 to 31/12/1999:

- Europe
- Latin America and the Caribbean

for the period 1/1/1998 to 31/12/2000:

- Asia-Pacific
- Africa
- North America

Subsequently, the period of service of NGO delegates will be for three calendar years. A two-year extension is possible. Therefore, a member's maximum period of service is for a possible five years.

F. Alternates

The same periods of service apply as those for a delegate — that is, three years with a possible extension of a further two years.

If a delegate ceases to be a member of the PCB, the NGO Delegation may recommend their alternate to serve in their place for the remainder of the period of service. The communities of NGOs, CBOs and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS will be informed by the NGO Delegation that they intend to nominate the alternate unless objections are raised. Once endorsed by the community, this name will then be put forward as the primary delegate for approval by the full PCB.

This information will be circulated through global communications networks, although it will be made clear that the position in question is a regional one, so that the appointment must be appropriate to the region.

G. Cessation of appointment

A member of the NGO Delegation will cease to be a member if:

- he or she resigns
- he or she leaves the principal HIV/AIDS work that secured his or her nomination or selection to the PCB
- a conflict of interests is declared.

2. Duties and responsibilities of NGO delegates

NGO delegates are nominated and endorsed in the first place by NGOs. Members of the NGO Delegation are foremost representing the NGO perspective. It is in this capacity that they acquire skills, knowledge and information. These are invaluable to the PCB in that the delegates: bring the community perspective to the PCB; and, most importantly, can alert the PCB to emerging crises and changes in the epidemiology of the pandemic and in public health responses to it. Since NGOs are in close contact with the day-to-day impact of the epidemic, their ability to provide early warning makes it likely that what NGO delegates say will be heard and acted upon.

The NGO delegates' role on the PCB has been defined by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). According to ECOSOC's ruling, NGO delegates have the right to speak at PCB meetings, but not to take part in formal votes — something reserved solely for the representatives of governments. They also lack any negotiating role.

The practice of selecting five alternate delegates, one from each of the five regions, is there to ensure a full participation by the NGO Delegation. These alternates are not NGO delegates except in the event that an alternate is called upon to fill the role in the delegate's absence.

The position of NGO delegates on the PCB is contingent on their continuing to carry out their primary work, which secured their nomination and selection to the NGO Delegation in the first place. However, when attending the PCB, NGO delegates should resist narrow sectional interests and instead respond to the overall imperatives of the pandemic and community concerns in the broad sense of the word. Furthermore, when the PCB is sitting, the NGO Delegate's first responsibility is to the UNAIDS PCB, and not the NGO to which he or she belongs. This should not normally lead to any conflicts of interests.

Any PCB member, including an NGO delegate, can be invited by UNAIDS to visit particular countries or areas for a better understanding of the UNAIDS work. Such visits are normally initiated by UNAIDS in Geneva. PCB members are given the necessary information before any such visit to ensure that the purpose of the visit is clear, and that the roles and responsibilities of all concerned are understood. It is also decided before the visit whether a report will be expected from the NGO delegate, either to UNAIDS or to the NGO delegates' organization.

3. The role of NGO delegates in the community

NGO delegates have a double role: as members of an NGO and as NGO delegates of the PCB. These roles may in fact be overlapping in some instances; in this case the individual should make a clear distinction between the duties he or she undertakes as an NGO delegate or as a representative of a community organization or NGO at the same time.

In between PCB meetings, the role of NGO delegates of the PCB remains latent. NGO delegates do not return to their community or organization primarily as NGO delegates of the PCB, but in their positions as members or employees of NGOs or community groups.

However, during this time, NGO delegates still have certain duties with respect to the PCB, even if they have no official role. These duties include using their position at the community level to gather information and experiences relevant to PCB discussions and decisions, and helping to contribute to a better understanding of UNAIDS role and priorities.

4. On whose behalf does the NGO Delegation speak?

NGO delegates are not permitted to speak on behalf of UNAIDS, nor should they do so. Their roles, as we have seen, are either as NGO delegates of the PCB, during meetings — or as members or employees of NGOs when they are back in the community.

Furthermore, NGO delegates should actively seek to dispel any misconceptions or raised expectations that may arise in the community over their roles. It seems that there has in the past been widespread misunderstanding amongst NGOs as to the role of the NGO delegates — including the idea that these delegates in some way represent UNAIDS.

In brief, NGO delegates must not go out in the community using their title of 'NGO delegate'. While this may lessen their sense of prestige, it is ultimately to their own benefit, since they can retain their identity as NGO members rather than having to act and be identified as UNAIDS spokespeople.

5. UNAIDS contractual relations with NGOs represented on the PCB

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If individual delegates of the NGO Delegation contract with UNAIDS to perform work, this has to be either in that person's capacity as a member or employee of the particular NGO, or in his or her individual capacity. UNAIDS will not contract with delegates of the NGO Delegation in their capacity as PCB delegates. This would be incompatible with their role as delegates of the governing body of UNAIDS, inasmuch as members of the board cannot be paid. It would also constitute an improper relationship between the PCB and UNAIDS, and create real or potential conflicts, damaging the concept of transparency within the organization, and the integrity of the contracting process.

Furthermore, all contractual proposals which involve UNAIDS entering into an agreement with an NGO or an individual who is a member or an alternate member of an NGO represented on the PCB, regardless of the amount of the contract, must be submitted to UNAIDS Programme Review Committee (PRC) for approval. The PRC is a body which exists to ensure that proposed projects and undertakings by UNAIDS departments are in line with the aims, objectives and strategic intentions of the overall programme. Towards this end, the PRC reviews and monitors specific proposals, whether initiated internally or externally, according to established criteria.

Appendix III
***The Cosponsors of UNAIDS
and their activities***

The Cosponsors of UNAIDS and their activities

The range of activities in which the Cosponsors are engaged include the following.

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund)

preventing HIV transmission among young people; protecting of children from sexual exploitation; developing community-based approaches to address the needs of children orphaned by AIDS and of families affected by the epidemic.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)

strengthening national capacities to learn, analyse, plan and evaluate multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional responses; undertaking research so as to understand better the socio-economic, legal, ethical and human rights dimensions of the epidemic.

UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund)

supplying condoms; training reproductive health information and service providers around HIV/AIDS; creating awareness of HIV/AIDS as part of reproductive health information, education and communication programmes; in-school and out-of-school education activities.

UNDCP (United Nations International Drug Control Programme)

supporting HIV/AIDS prevention programmes and including such components in its own programmes to reduce the demand for illicit drugs; targeting in particular young people and other groups at high risk.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

encouraging, at global and regional levels, the development of effective educational strategies adapted to various socio-cultural contexts; supporting national capacity-building in basic research in developing countries.

WHO (World Health Organization)

preventing sexually transmitted infections, particularly for those vulnerable and/or at increased risk, and care; ensuring safe blood supplies; surveillance; developing health policies and standards and strengthening the capacity of health systems.

World Bank

lending programmes to developing countries; analysis of the economic impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic; analysis of the cost-effectiveness of various interventions; the provision of funding to experts from around the world, as well as to its own staff and consultants, for a variety of research projects.

Web sites

The web sites for the Cosponsors and the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) are as follows:

- **UNAIDS** www.unaids.org
- **UNICEF** www.unicef.org
- **UNDP** www.undp.org
- **UNFPA** www.unfpa.org
- **UNDCP** www.undcp.org
- **UNESCO** www.unesco.org
- **WHO** www.who.org
- **World Bank** www.worldbank.org

The United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) is a jointly financed, interagency unit supported by 16 UN system agencies, programmes, funds and departments and a number of bilateral donors. Its aim is to foster and promote greater mutual understanding, dialogue and cooperation between the UN system and NGOs on development and related issues under review and negotiation within the UN system.

- <http://ngls.tad.ch/>

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is the leading advocate for global action on HIV/AIDS. It brings together seven UN agencies in a common effort to fight the epidemic: the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank.

UNAIDS both mobilizes the responses to the epidemic of its seven cosponsoring organizations and supplements these efforts with special initiatives. Its purpose is to lead and assist an expansion of the international response to HIV on all fronts: medical, public health, social, economic, cultural, political and human rights. UNAIDS works with a broad range of partners – governmental and NGO, business, scientific and lay – to share knowledge, skills and best practice across boundaries.



Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNAIDS

UNICEF • UNDP • UNFPA • UNDCP
UNESCO • WHO • WORLD BANK

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