

World AIDS Day Communiqué on HIV/AIDS Sector Capacity Building

After nearly three decades of a global struggle to defeat AIDS, on World AIDS Day 2009 the reality is that there is no “silver bullet” on the horizon. The HIV pandemic will continue to shatter lives and devastate communities the world over for the foreseeable future. As organizations with more than 20 year’s collective experience fighting the effects of HIV/AIDS in over 100 countries, we strongly believe that donor countries can best succeed in their efforts by designing interventions that are **community-led and country-driven**.

In 2008, the Lantos-Hyde Act reauthorizing the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR II) emphasized capacity building initiatives to promote greater sustainability through country-driven efforts. Complementing PEPFAR II is the new five-year strategy of the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC), being released today. **One of the key pillars of this strategy is building the capacity of grass roots organizations, communities and government to move from an emergency to a more sustainable HIV/AIDS response.**

Pact recently convened a global summit on Capacity Building for HIV/AIDS that was attended by over one hundred practitioners from more than 50 organizations and representing over 15 different countries. Together we developed a vision for the next decade that will enable us to support the global response to HIV/AIDS through the strengthening of local communities, organizations and systems for sustainable, long-term impact. For full access to the presentations given and materials developed for the Summit, please visit our website (http://pactworld.org/cs/community_reach/hiv/aids_summit).

The following are the key elements of our **vision for capacity building for HIV/AIDS** for 2010 to 2020:

- Local communities will drive their own response to the challenges of HIV/AIDS; governments and civil societies will participate, and international actors will play a supporting role abroad and an advocacy role at home.
- Collaboration will be effective, based on flexibility and trust. It will be broadened to include those beyond the traditional HIV/AIDS sector, encouraging innovation, knowledge sharing and sustainability.
- Local HIV/AIDS responders will be empowered to actively address their own capacity needs.
- Capacity building efforts will be broadened from an individual focus on training and mentoring to a holistic approach that nurtures national systems and structures capable of managing the response to HIV/AIDS locally.
- Monitoring and evaluation will become a cornerstone to these efforts and will drive the global response to HIV/AIDS through the sharing of best practices to evidence based approaches.

We have laid the path toward realizing this vision with five essential stepping stones:

1. Capacity building needs to become institutionalized as a practice area within the HIV/AIDS response, and given the same attention as treatment, prevention and care.
2. Capacity building initiatives must move beyond “training” and take full advantage of technology to share learning and empower end users.
3. A culture of networking, collaboration, and coordination must be fostered to help us better prioritize and focus our capacity building efforts.
4. Better standards and clearer language for measurement must be developed that includes beneficiary input and recognizes the complexity of the systems in which we operate.
5. A multi-level advocacy agenda needs to be established to include components from the international down to the grassroots level, taking into consideration each institution or network where it can be most effective.

We, as HIV/AIDS practitioners, acknowledge that the HIV/AIDS sector presents opportunities and challenges at every turn. With our shared vision and practical pathway forward, we are committed to building on PEPFAR's progress so far and taking forward the goals of PEPFAR II. In addition, we will work creatively to overcome the inevitable constraints and "complete" the response as opposed to "compete" within the response.

On the occasion of World AIDS Day 2009, the undersigned members of the HIV/AIDS Capacity Building community are issuing this communiqué in recognition that to realize the emerging mandate in our sector and move from a state of emergency to long-term sustainability, **innovative and measurable capacity building will be critical and increased collaboration essential.**

Signed:



For more information, please contact:

Marshall Maher
Director of Communications, Pact
(202) 466-5666
mmaher@pactworld.org