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2007 ZAMBIA

Human Development Report

Enhancing household capacity to respond to HIV and AIDS

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Lusaka, 10101
Zambia

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Printed by Mission Press. Ndola, Zambia.

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Message from the Government

HIV and AIDS is one of the major development challenges facing Zambia. The epidemic has affected every fabric of human existence. It has become the major cause of illness and death among the young and middle aged Zambians, who are the most productive age group. Consequently, it has deprived households and society of a critical human resource base. Further, it is reversing the social and economic gains the country is striving to attain. It has also continued to diminish the chances of alleviating poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, reducing child and maternal mortality and ensuring environmental sustainability. In effect, HIV and AIDS is among the factors limiting the achievement of the MDGs.

In view of the foregoing, the Zambian Government has declared HIV and AIDS as a national disaster and emergency requiring concerted efforts for all relevant stakeholders. While there have been major advancement in HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment and care in Zambia, efforts to significantly scale up responses to HIV and AIDS have been inadequate.

In view of the above, it is clear that HIV and AIDS is a huge challenge to development and therefore, there should be no business as usual. In trying to respond to this challenge, I urge all our cooperating partners to consider coming up with strategies that will help to prevent new infections; designing programmes that address specific problems brought about by HIV and AIDS such as taking care of children orphaned by the disease; and mitigating the effects of HIV and AIDS on poverty.

Furthermore, a more systematic approach is needed to build local capacity to manage a comprehensive response to the epidemic. To this end, the focus of the Report on enhancing household capacity to respond to HIV and AIDS is very appropriate and timely. Therefore, I would like to encourage all our development partners to read this Report and consider how they can adopt some of the ideas in the Report.



Ng'andu P. Magande, M.P.
Minister of Finance and National Planning

Foreword

The

2007 Zambia Human Development Report (ZHDR) focuses on the sixth Millennium Development Goal (MDG), which is combating HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases. It particularly emphasises enhancing household capacity to respond to HIV and AIDS. It is the fifth in a series of bi-annual Reports that have been produced since 1997. The topics addressed since then have included poverty, provision of basic social services, employment and sustainable livelihoods, and eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.

The Report places households at the centre of Zambia's efforts to respond to HIV and AIDS because the immediate impact is felt at the household level. The effects are felt through various ways, which by aggregation adversely affect socio-economic sectors in varying degrees at the macro level. Focusing on the households gives a better opportunity to understand the many facets of HIV and AIDS and how the epidemic can be holistically addressed.

The Report pursues the theme of the household's capacity to respond to HIV and AIDS from three key inter-related and mutually reinforcing aspects. Firstly, the relationship between HIV and AIDS and human development. The Report shows that HIV and AIDS undermines all the tenets that constitute human development as can be seen in falling life expectancy, low educational attainment and standards of living. Secondly, the impact of HIV and AIDS on achievement of the MDGs. The 2007 MDG Progress Report states that Zambia is on track to achieving all the MDGs, except for maternal mortality and environmental sustainability. However, there is a real danger that this progress will be undone if the response to HIV and AIDS is not intensified and won. Thirdly, enhancing household capacity to respond to HIV and AIDS. The household where the negative impacts of the epidemic are first felt needs to be recognised as the first and central line of action against HIV and AIDS.

The Report recommends that for households to be effectively involved in responding to HIV and AIDS, the development process should be made more supportive to HIV affected households. Macro-level institutions should be strengthened so that HIV and AIDS do not unravel their capacity to deliver on their mandates. Adaptive structures at the district level, which are closer to households and communities, should be allowed to flourish. HIV-affected households should be helped to rebuild capital asset base.

This Report was formulated through a consultative and participatory process, which involved all the relevant national stakeholders and external reviewers from the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy and other Country Offices. The preparation process was guided by the NHDR National Advisory Committee. I hope that it will be a useful policy tool for the Government and its development partners in the collective fight against HIV and AIDS in Zambia. I commend the analysis and recommendations contained therein to a wide readership and welcome any comments on how to improve its value.



Aeneas C. Chuma
UNDP Resident Representative

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