

The road towards universal access



Scaling up access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support

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2006

Building on experience to scale up HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

Regional consultation on scaling up towards universal access in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Moscow, Russian Federation – 1-2 March 2006



“I know some of you doubt whether we will even reach 60% coverage.... but in the gap between 60% and 100% is my life, and the lives of thousands of people living with HIV...”

A community activist living with HIV from one of the countries of the Commonwealth Independent States.

Broad participation

More than 100 representatives from 10 countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), including members of the CIS Executive Committee, along with representatives of the international community, took part in the CIS regional consultation on scaling up HIV prevention, treatment, care and support with the aim of coming as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all those who need it by 2010.

The consultation was hosted by the Russian Government with support from UNAIDS. The meeting brought together government representatives, including 5 Deputy Ministers from throughout the region, and leaders from civil society, as well as people living with HIV, members of the newly established Eastern European and Central Asian Union of

the Organizations of People Living with HIV, and several members of the Global Steering Committee on scaling up towards universal access who are based in the region.

In his remarks opening the consultation, the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation, Dr. Ruslan A. Khalfin, said: “It is a truly unique meeting not only for the country but the region as a whole. The need to provide universal access to services emphasizes the importance of improved coordination and harmonization of our efforts. That is why the Three Ones principles on coordination are so essential for that to happen in our region.”

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, more than 270 000 people were newly infected with HIV in 2005. A total of 1.6 million people



Dr. Ruslan A. Khalfin, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation, and Michel Sidibe, UNAIDS Director of Country and Regional Support Department and Co-chair of the Global Steering Committee on scaling up towards Universal Access, at the opening session of the CIS regional consultation – Moscow, 1 March 2006

were living with HIV in the region by the end of the last year. Over 62 000 of these people died from AIDS in 2005. In this region and in the vast majority of the countries of CIS, the epidemic is mainly driven by injecting drug use and unprotected sex among young people. In the coming years there will be a massive increase in the number of people requiring access to treatment. The epidemic is also increasingly affecting women and children. This growing feminization occurs while stigma and discrimination keep it underground and out of control in many parts of the CIS.

The reasons behind such trends noted at the consultation include not only resource and capacity deficits, but also the lack of broad leadership and partnership for AIDS, including at the highest levels of governments and communities, which would link more closely decision makers with those who have first-hand experience of AIDS realities.

Sustain quality and result based funding

The participants called upon governments and donors to consider the following actions at national level to close the funding gap:

- effective financial management and strategic budget planning according to the actual needs in the countries and cost effective approaches
- mobilization of resources at sub-national and local levels
- establishing national AIDS accounts for better monitoring and evaluation of financial flows and spending
- creating incentive systems for the engagement of the private sector
- making donor funding responsive to priorities, including those related to most at-risk adult and youth populations



The CIS consultation on scaling up towards universal access was characterized by high-level and broadly inclusive participation.

Meet increasing need in human resources and technical capacity

The participants called for human resources needs assessment and mapping, and subsequent implementation of training programmes not only for health care but also social and other services providers within both governmental and non-governmental sectors, including those representing people living with HIV.

Ensure efficient supply of low-cost and high-quality commodities

The delegates recommended all of the countries of the CIS to:

- enhance systems for the registration of medications, including generic drugs for antiretroviral therapy (ART) and the treatment of opportunistic infections and viral hepatitis
- accelerate the implementation of substitution therapy as a means to prevent HIV and sustain adherence to ART among injecting drug users

Address the issues of stigma, discrimination and human rights

The meeting participants made a strong case for:

- law and policy reform to reduce and ultimately eliminate discrimination against people living with HIV and risk behaviors associated with HIV infection
- establishment of an independent system for monitoring human rights protection efforts
- creating a working group or a committee under a national coordination body that would specifically deal with human rights, and stigma and discrimination
- active involvement of people living with HIV in decision making at all levels

Create a regional AIDS watch body

Creating a regional AIDS watch body that would oversee and monitor progress in fulfilling commitments of the governments, civil society, private sector, international communities, and intergovernmental collaboration was a central recommendation made by the discussants.

Regional and global level recommendations

The meeting participants called for:

- mobilization of additional funds to supplement the resources available through the extension of existing grants and loans provided by the Global Fund, the World Bank and other donors
- development of a new regional training platform and improved utilization of the existing regional training centres (Knowledge Hubs) to enhance technical capacity in the countries
- development of a regional policy to enable proactive price negotiations for medical and laboratory commodities
- take measures to ensure availability of regional practical guidelines and strategic, information, education, communication and other documents on HIV and AIDS
- promotion of information sharing and horizontal collaboration between the countries, including those related to the protection of human rights, as well as promotion of effective programmatic approaches and regionally relevant best practices
- development of a special regional programme to tackle AIDS among migrants and the preparation of the joint CIS proposal to the Global Fund
- development of a new Joint CIS Programme on AIDS based on the regional consultation outcomes and horizontal collaboration between the CIS countries

An extensive regional report is being prepared based on the individual country reports and the results and recommendations from the CIS regional meeting in Moscow to inform the discussions of the third meeting of the Global Steering Committee scheduled on 14-15 March 2006 in Geneva.

The CIS consultation is the fourth of a series of seven regional consultations dedicated to identifying regional obstacles to scaling up HIV prevention, treatment, care and support with the aim of coming as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all those who need it by 2010. Drawing upon the results of national, regional and global consultations, UNAIDS will submit an assessment, including an analysis of obstacles and actions to overcome them to the United Nations AIDS review 2006 as requested in the resolution adopted on 23 December.