

# The Node *... where a leaf arises from a stem*



The Node is a bilingual publication dedicated to global HIV/AIDS issues by Red Ribbon Centre, the UNAIDS Collaborating Centre for Technical Support

## PRESS RELEASE

# UNAIDS and Lancet to bring together political and health leaders to shape the debate on the future of global health

Commissioners announced ahead of first meeting of the UNAIDS and Lancet Commission: *From AIDS to Sustainable Health* to be held in Lilongwe, Malawi on 28-29 June

**Geneva/Lilongwe, 19 June 2013** — Ahead of the first meeting of the UNAIDS and Lancet Commission: *From AIDS to Sustainable Health*, the esteemed Commissioners who will be working together on HIV and global health in the post-2015 debate have been announced.

More than 30 Commissioners, including heads of state, policy makers, people living with HIV, development experts, scientists, young people, AIDS advocates and private sector leaders, will come together for the first time in Lilongwe, Malawi on 28-29 June to explore how the AIDS response can be used to shape the future of global health.

“This is the first time that such a diverse group of experts has been brought together for frank discussions about the future of global health,” said Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “We will be encouraging them to think about what will it take to reach the end of AIDS; how the AIDS response can serve as a transformative force in our approach to global health; and how to modernize the global AIDS architecture for a more equitable, effective and sustainable future for global health.”

The Commission is co-chaired by Malawi President Joyce Banda, African Union Commission Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine Director Peter Piot. Its aim is to catalyse expertise and political momentum to shape the debate on the future of health in the post-2015 development agenda and accelerate progress towards the end of AIDS.

Drawing from the pioneering experience of the global AIDS response, during the meeting in Malawi, the Commissioners will be encouraged to engage in informal and dynamic dialogue. By exchanging perspectives, exploring options and seeking consensus, Commissioners will begin extracting the lessons learnt from the AIDS response to be used in the transformation of global health and development in the post-2015 debate.

During the meeting a high-level roadmap for the continued work of the Commission will be developed. A preliminary version of the Commission report will be prepared by a team of expert writers who will work closely with the Commissioners and other key stakeholders over the coming months. A draft

of the report will be considered in the second and final meeting of the Commission at the beginning of 2014.

For more information on the *UNAIDS and Lancet Commission* and list of Commissioners go to: <http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/campaigns/post2015/>

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### UNAIDS and Lancet Commission: From AIDS to Sustainable Health

The UNAIDS and Lancet Commission: From AIDS to Sustainable Health was launched in May 2013 and is co-Chaired by President Joyce Banda, Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and Professor Peter Piot. Drawing from the pioneering experience of the global AIDS response, the Commission brings together heads of state, policy makers, people living with HIV, development experts, young people and private sector leaders. The Commission aims to catalyse expertise and political momentum to shape the debate on the future of health in the post-2015 development agenda and accelerate progress towards the end of AIDS.

Learn more at [unaids.org](http://unaids.org)

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## National HIV/AIDS and STI Programme Managers Meeting for Asian Countries in the Western Pacific Region, Kunming, China, 25-28 February 2013

**Dr. WONG Ka-hing (Consultant)**

**Special Preventive Programme, Department of Health**

The Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) of the World Health Organization (WHO) held a National HIV/AIDS and STI Programme Managers Meeting in February 2013 in Kunming, China to engage national programme managers, senior officials and focal persons of its member states to exchange, share and update progress and developments in the field. This meeting came along with substantial advances globally and within the Region in the last 1-2 years, including the 2011 Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) strategy towards reaching zero new HIV infections, zero AIDS-related deaths and zero discrimination, and the Sixty-fourth World Health Assembly endorsing the Global Health Sector Strategy on HIV/AIDS (2011–2015).

This meeting, as part of the WHO-UNAIDS operational plan, aimed to serve as a forum to update programme managers and partners on

national/regional progress, latest strategies and guidelines and to identify innovative strategic and programmatic approaches towards scaling up and sustaining implementation. The meeting also aimed at fostering and strengthening harmonization, linkages and programme coordination of HIV/STI and TB, Maternal & Child Health as well as hepatitis. This meeting was joined by some thirty-six participants from 11 member states/territories of the Western Pacific Region, together with temporary advisers, observers and WHO/UNAIDS Secretariat staff totaling some 90 participants.

The 4-day meeting was organised into plenary sessions, parallel sessions, individual country sessions and site visits. On Day 1 and 2, there were opening by WPRO, UNAIDS and local hosts, presentations on update of global and regional progress on HIV/TB/STI/MTCT prevention and control, sharing by

countries on their work progress, introduction on the latest scientific guidelines and strategies, targeted response for key populations, and drug resistance. Day 3 was featured by country participants break-out into 4 groups at parallel sessions, to discuss on four thematic topics: (i) scale-up HIV testing, (ii) scale up of 3 Is for TB-HIV, (iii) elimination of MTCT of HIV, syphilis and hepatitis B, and (iv) earlier initiation of ART and retention. The last day was local site visits, including voluntary counseling and testing clinics of Kunming Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, methadone maintenance clinic and antiretroviral treatment clinic.

The meeting noted that countries have made impressive progress in the Region in scaling up HIV response but at the same time identified several inefficiencies in the continuum of HIV testing, linkage to care, antiretroviral treatment and viral load suppression. Hence, it was recommended to sustain the momentum and political commitment in HIV response, and to address the inefficiencies in

HIV treatment and prevention which was a recurring theme. Moreover, there has been alarming rise in HIV among men who have sex with men and transgender persons which need concerted efforts to implement WHO guidelines. With more treatment rolled out in the Region, HIV drug resistance has become a growing concern and thus monitoring and evaluation of resistance by both surveillance and clinical management perspectives need to be established and integrated with existing systems in different countries. More resources need to be mobilized to strengthen programmes and services for key affected populations in HIV prevention, treatment and care and associated clinical interventions. This would be particularly challenging in view of the global economic shifts and phasing out of donor funding support, and demands diversified funding sources and increase in domestic input to country programmes. It is reassuring that WHO and UNAIDS are committed to provide continued support to countries to implement recommendations of the meeting.



## **Introduction of Oxfam Urban HIV/AIDS Intervention Programme -- Jiaozhou Project**

**Oxfam**

Sex workers constitute an important part of China's floating population as well as a high-risk group susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and HIV/AIDS. Sex workers' vulnerability to STD and HIV/AIDS is closely related to their socially and legally low status, inequality in gender relations, poverty and shortage of resources, discrimination and other social conditions. This is particularly true in respect of poverty, sex and gender inequality and the discriminative environment. As a result, exposure to HIV/AIDS can aggravate these social factors, forming a vicious cycle.

Sex workers are faced with a variety of social problems. In order to improve sex workers' living environment and occupational health, and reduce

their susceptibility to HIV/AIDS, Oxfam's China Programme worked with 10 grassroots organizations associated with sex workers in the adjacent areas of Beijing, Shandong and the Pearl River Delta from 2006 to 2012. The programme was aimed at encouraging more organizations "to improve sex workers' occupational safety and establish a system to provide assistance and mutual aid for low-income sex workers who are exposed to sexual violence as well as other adverse conditions, so as to make them better equipped to deal with HIV/AIDS threats."

The Oxfam Urban HIV/AIDS Intervention Programme is characterised by its grassroots, independent and social nature. The programme, with grassroots organizations involved as subjects,

is gradually initiating substantial work based on an amicable, trusted relationship with the target group, calling for respect for the rights of the group and seeking to enhance their conditions. In addition to addressing problems faced by sex workers, the programme also focuses on helping sex workers develop self-defence skills with greater engagement and sense of autonomy while identifying social factors relevant to the exposure of sex workers to HIV/AIDS and STD. Attention has been paid to the social factors behind the HIV/AIDS and STD risks incurred by sex workers as well as the severity of poverty, gender inequity (including disadvantaged female status, unequal power relationships between female sex workers and their customers, discrimination against male sex workers and unequal power relationships between men and men) and social discrimination, so that measures can be taken to deal with these unfavourable social conditions.

Qingdao Jiaozhou Compassion Health Information Centre has become a partner of the Oxfam Urban HIV/AIDS Intervention Programme since 2005. In May 2013, Oxfam supported the centre's organization of a seminar which introduced the collaboration work between the two parties. This Seminar brought together some 50 participants from governments, funds, social bodies and the community.

In the seminar, the centre staff stressed that HIV/AIDS prevention and health intervention for the low-income sex workers do not only rely on knowledge dissemination, and that living conditions of sex workers and community involvement have to be taken into account for effective results. The community representative gave an update on interaction between the centre and the community and interaction within the community.

With her thorough understanding of the centre, Huang Yingying, deputy director of Institute of Sexuality and Gender, Renmin University of China, said in the seminar that the centre has established a "health-focused" platform with an objective to achieve "occupational health" and has adopted the integrated "out-patient clinic, outreach and community activity" model. According to her report, Jiaozhou's comprehensive intervention

model incorporates prevention with treatment, social science with public health and medical care. It involves efforts of the staff, community and other supporting organizations, which brings the fresh new global concept into practice in China. Huang added that this innovative practice carries a special meaning for a grassroot organization like Qingdao Jiaozhou Compassion Health Information Centre, and that the model is not simply introduced through replication or promotion, which is confined by the difference in systems, programmes, individuals and other factors, but specific strategies and ideas adopted serve as reference for similar projects; It is important that some of the practices and ideas are proved feasible in China, and that the "comprehensive" and "effective" intervention can be applied on low-income female sex workers.

Since its collaboration with Oxfam, Qingdao Jiaozhou Compassion Health Information Centre has kept up its community work, serving thousands of low-income sex workers, providing HIV/AIDS prevention and occupational health intervention while increasing the community's readiness to respond to HIV/AIDS and STD threats. Moreover, the centre has leveraged its experience to offer training for government health departments and grassroot organizations in HIV/AIDS intervention area.



*Presentation on Jiaozhou's comprehensive intervention model*