HIV/AIDS MONITOR: Concept Document

The HIV/AIDS Monitor program aims to improve the ability of donor countries to respond effectively to one of the world’s most significant public health and development challenges: the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Through systematic research and analysis of major aid delivery mechanisms in three countries in Africa, coupled with complementary research and assessment at the global level, the HIV/AIDS Monitor undertakes targeted analyses and policy outreach to support strengthening the organization, management, and delivery of external assistance to HIV/AIDS programs. Rather than focusing directly on the efficacy of specific health interventions, we are concerned with the effectiveness of different donor strategies to support projects and programs on the ground.

BACKGROUND—THE CHANGING NATURE OF DONOR ASSISTANCE

In response to both public health imperative and unprecedented political pressures, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has resulted in massive increases in donor assistance in recent years, relative to other global health (and development) problems. According to UNAIDS, global funding to combat HIV/AIDS has more than quadrupled since 2001, from $2.1 billion to $8.9 billion in 2006.¹ The three most prominent new initiatives for this funding are the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund), the United States’ President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the World Bank programs, including primarily the Multi-country HIV/AIDS Program (MAP). The new global efforts to fight HIV/AIDS have brought substantially larger-scale funding to countries and governments for aggressive responses to the pandemic.

Although the increased funding is welcome, there is little doubt that current global funding is vastly insufficient to meet the needs for prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS in low-income countries, estimated at $15 billion in 2006 and rising each subsequent year.² In addition, debate rages about the most effective ways for donors to deliver and manage these increased aid flows: the three major initiatives noted above use distinct approaches to design and implement programs to fight HIV/AIDS. In effect, the donors are conducting a large-scale experiment using a range of methods to deliver and manage aid for HIV/AIDS programs. It is far from clear which of these approaches (or more likely, combinations of these approaches) will prove to be most effective in which circumstances. Without specific attention to the questions of relative effectiveness, and the corresponding tracking of relevant indicators, these important questions cannot be answered. While the HIV/AIDS Monitor program does not measure public health outcomes or the impact on individuals’ health status of donor-supported HIV/AIDS programming, we assess the policies, practices and decision-making of the donor institutions, as well as the consequences of those decisions at the country level. In doing so, we are able to draw inferences about the level and quality of the response of different aid mechanisms to the real-world challenges in countries heavily affected by HIV/AIDS.

Finding out what is working, fixing what is not, and making these three funding mechanisms work more effectively should be a high priority – as high as mobilizing more resources. Generating support for increased funding in the future and using that funding more effectively will require a combination of sound analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of current programs along with skilled advocacy. Existing programs must show large-scale achievements commensurate with both the need and the funding provided; the lessons of those programs must be clearly communicated to policymakers, legislators, and

the general public. Lessons learned from these initiatives are likely to have substantial impact for years to come on donor practices and aid modalities for HIV/AIDS programs and foreign aid programs more generally.

The Center for Global Development (CGD) is in the process of undertaking and disseminating comparative analyses of the three major sources of international funding for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care. We examine the programs’ characteristics and performance, both at the global level and in three sub-Saharan African countries; to the extent possible, information from a broader set of countries will be obtained for inclusion in the analyses. This work complements other recent and on-going work on global HIV/AIDS, and informs a broader set of questions about the effectiveness of distinct aid delivery strategies.

GOAL and OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the HIV/AIDS Monitor is to improve the performance of all three initiatives by examining key issues in their design and approach, and providing timely analyses to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of each initiative.

Objectives:

1) To conduct high quality research and analysis on topics that affect aid design, delivery and management for donor-funded HIV/AIDS programs.

2) To conduct effective outreach and dissemination of results to inspire and influence change in donor programs for HIV/AIDS.

3) To stimulate informed conversation among donors, implementers and advocates around these and other related issues.

The perspective taken is broad: we are concerned not only with the narrow aims of the programs, but how the programs approach major challenges of implementation and what are the broader impacts on the health system and national development strategies.

AUDIENCE

Given the objective of improving the performance of the three initiatives, our primary audience is officials within the funding mechanisms, including primarily those with authority to make decisions.

Secondary audiences include (but are not limited to):

- Policymakers within the US, Canada, Europe and other donor countries, including informing discussions about funding levels and future direction;
- Advocates within the US (and to a lesser extent Europe) who engage in conversations about these issues but often without complete and correct information;
- Governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders within recipient countries that might be empowered in their interactions with donors if provided access to more information;
- Journalists seeking comprehensive information about the three initiatives.

PROGRAM DESIGN

The program is designed to gain a clear understanding of the policies, procedures, methods of implementation and implications of the three funding mechanisms by capturing both global and country-level perspectives. This is accomplished by two interconnected branches of analysis: analysis of principal themes at the global and headquarters level and in-depth studies conducted in three African countries that receive funding from all three sources: Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia. Studies conducted by these two branches, both coordinated by CGD, feed into one another and benefit from lessons, data and information. Please see attached diagram for structure of the program.

Some issues to be looked at are central to the global aid effectiveness agenda, and some themes that are more specific to HIV/AIDS responses and considerations.
A) Global Analysis:
The global analysis piece of the project explores how the three funding initiatives address major challenges in HIV/AIDS program design, implementation and evaluation, and where and when these approaches are successful or less so. Lessons that can be drawn from these analyses provide key evidence to stakeholders and other audiences. By framing the questions as challenges that all three donors confront, we hope to avoid simplistic or overly-politicized interpretations. Data for analyses will be drawn from the initiatives’ policies, procedures and guidelines; consultations with stakeholders; published budget data; existing research; and other relevant sources.

Currently, the global-level research is focusing on five major areas of research:

1. **Disbursement**: What are the implications of disbursement policies and practices on the transfer of resources from donor to recipient countries?

2. **Procurement and Supply Chain Management**: How can donors ensure the most efficient, and cost-effective flow of commodities through the supply chain?

3. **Funding Decisions**: How are funding priorities established and program activities decided?

4. **Beneficiary Analysis of Vulnerable Groups**: How do donor programs address gender and the specific vulnerabilities of women, or orphans and vulnerable children?

5. **Monitoring and Evaluation**: How do donors monitor and evaluate their programs?

B) Country Level Analysis:
In preparing the country-level research questions, CGD conducted a series of assessments in six African countries (Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia) to determine the key challenges facing governments and in-country stakeholders as a result of the aid flowing from these three donors. With lessons learned from this process, we developed an initial framework of six questions which we will address through in-depth analyses by the local research partners (with assistance from a field director and CGD as necessary) in three specific countries – Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia. The local research institutions were identified by CGD during the initial assessment period and were selected for their competency in public health, economics and/or policy research.

Some issues we look at are central to the global aid effectiveness agenda, as laid out generally by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and some themes are more specific to HIV/AIDS responses and considerations. Each of the studies will implement a common methodology to permit cross-country comparisons and the extraction of generalizable lessons. Specific areas of research include:

1. **Tracking the funding**: How much money is being committed/disbursed and who are the recipients? Do recipients have the capacity to use the funding they are given?

2. **Beneficiary Analysis on Women and OVCs**: How are gender concerns reflected in donor programs? How does each program address the needs of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs)?

3. **Relationship between funding and performance**: How is each funding mechanism operationalizing the concept of performance-based funding? How are results measured?

4. **Relationship of HIV/AIDS and reproductive health programs**: How does the large volume of funds for HIV/AIDS programs affect other essential health interventions such as reproductive health?

5. **Effects of donor funds on the national health system**: Are donors using existing mechanisms within the national health system to implement their aid, or creating new and parallel systems? What combinations of approaches to systems work most effectively in what contexts?
6. Impact on labor market for health care workers and managerial talent: How have the donor programs affected the labor market?

OTHER ACTIVITIES
As a part of the HIV/AIDS Monitor initiative, CGD seeks out and capitalizes on opportunities to improve debate and decision-making in HIV/AIDS aid delivery and effectiveness realms. These opportunities include:

Events:
To date, we have held a number of timely events on topics directly relevant to our research, including:

- “Future Directions for the Global Fund,” held on December 14, 2006.

Working Group Report on Priorities for the New Executive Director of the Global Fund:
To mark the appointment of a new Executive Director of the Global Fund, CGD convened a working group of experts to formulate recommendations about key priorities for the Global Fund going forward. The working group represented many of the institution’s key constituencies and considered the best financial and strategic directions for the Global Fund. Released in late November, the report is entitled, “Challenges and Opportunities for the New Executive Director of the Global Fund: Seven Essential Tasks.” This work builds off recent successful reports by CGD on recommendations to the new leaders of several development institutions including the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the on-going work on the African Development Bank.

International HIV/AIDS Conferences:
CGD will participate actively in the International HIV/AIDS Conferences in order to disseminate results of analyses and engage in prevailing global discussions on pressing issues. We participated in the 2006 conference in Toronto; for this year’s conference in Mexico City, we envision more substantive involvement, including proposed sessions on issues of aid effectiveness for HIV/AIDS.

PRODUCTS AND OUTPUTS
The objective of this program is to produce several analytical papers timed at key windows of policy importance. We will not produce a volume or manuscript at the end of the program.

Specific outputs include:

- **Periodic Analytic Reports and Papers**: These papers on global and country-level analyses are released periodically. When possible, we time the release of papers with high-publicity events including World Bank meetings, US budget debates, International AIDS Conferences and World AIDS Days.

- **E-newsletters**: We issue a monthly e-newsletter to a broad distribution list. The newsletter, along with the public website, will serve as the primary tools for dissemination of up-to-date information about commitments and disbursements for major AIDS initiatives, as well as current analyses (produced both by the project and by others) of spending, practices and impact.
• **Website:** The CGD HIV/AIDS Monitor program has developed an interactive website to assist with the quality, speed and credibility of the analysis, to make sure key stakeholders are informed and engaged, and to facilitate dissemination of a variety of products to key audiences on an on-going basis. As it continues to develop, the website will serve as the access point to up-to-date information about commitments and disbursements for major AIDS initiatives, as well as current analyses (produced both by the project and by others) of spending, practices and impact. The website also links to and benefits from CGD’s Global Health blog which helps to facilitate comments and conversation with interested parties globally.

• **Major Conference:** At the conclusion of the project, CGD will host a major conference to discuss and debate key issues and findings among important policy and technical stakeholders. This conference is tentatively scheduled for the spring of 2009.

**PERSONNEL**
The HIV/AIDS Monitor is directed by Nandini Oomman. Other members of the team include Steve Radelet, Ruth Levine, Mead Over, Michael Bernstein, and Steve Rosenzweig.

For more information about CGD’s HIV/AIDS Monitor initiative, please see: http://www.cgdev.org/section/initiatives/_active/hivmonitor or contact Nandini Oomman, noomman@cgdev.org.

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