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# Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention

## Information Note

International Technical Consultation on 'positive prevention' convened by the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+) and UNAIDS on 27-28 April 2009 in Tunisia.

### Why did we hold the technical consultation?

The LIVING 2008 Summit in Mexico in July 2008 generated debate on the role of people living with HIV (PLHIV) in HIV prevention. Participants agreed that HIV prevention should be a shared responsibility of all partners, irrespective of their HIV status. However, there is need to further deconstruct the term 'positive prevention' and to discuss its programmatic and policy implications.

### What were the objectives of the technical consultation?

GNP+ and UNAIDS convened a technical consultation to lay the ground for a common understanding on 'positive prevention' that guides the work of and partnerships between multilateral, bilateral, governmental and civil society organisations.

Specific objectives included:

- To gather experiences and knowledge of stakeholders, in particular PLHIV at regional, national and local levels, at the technical consultation; and to develop a strategy to gather broader views and experiences following the technical consultation;
- To develop a set of initial principles on positive prevention;
- To develop recommendations to facilitate the scale up of programmes and the development of policies.

### Who participated?

There were 50 participants representing PLHIV networks, civil society, government agencies, UN agencies and international development agencies. More than half of the participants were PLHIV who are leading programmes and driving policies aimed at achieving better HIV responses and higher health and quality of life standards for PLHIV.

### Some of the outcomes of the technical consultation include:

- A new working name and concept
- Treatment link to prevention
- Values and principles
- Initial recommendations

## **A new working name and concept**

- The group identified a new working name - 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention' – and agreed on the key elements of comprehensive Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention programmes:
  - Health promotion and access
  - Sexual and reproductive health and rights
  - Prevention of transmission
  - Human rights, including stigma and discrimination reduction
  - Gender equality
  - Social and economic support
  - Empowerment
  - Measuring impact

## **Treatment link to prevention**

- The group also discussed the integration of treatment and prevention and new perspectives on early ARV therapy as an element in prevention. The group recognized the continuing and persistent challenges in access to ARV. The group endorsed the ongoing need for treatment decision making to empower PLHIV, as well as the ongoing community empowerment, access and behavioural issues attached to ART rollout.

## **Values and principles**

- Participants developed a set of values and principles as well as programmatic content and recommendations to guide the national, regional and international efforts of diverse stakeholders. These are represented by four pillars: a supportive legal and policy environment; focusing on holistic health promotion, not only on transmission prevention; tailored to setting, key populations, and to the individual; defined by PLHIV. Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention is defined by PLHIV and guided by the following values and principles:
  - A human rights approach is the foundation of positive health, dignity and prevention.
  - PLHIV must be leaders in the design, programming, implementation, research, monitoring and evaluation of all programmes and policies affecting us.
  - Preventing HIV transmission is a shared responsibility of all individuals irrespective of HIV status.
  - Sexual and reproductive health and rights must be recognised and exercised by everyone regardless of HIV status.
  - Positive health, dignity and prevention:
    - requires a supportive and protective legal and policy environment free of stigma and discrimination.
    - should promote holistic health and wellness, including equitable access to voluntary HIV testing, treatment, care and support services.
    - must improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of PLHIV. This, in turn, contributes to the health and wellbeing of their partners, families and communities.
    - should include addressing psycho-social, economic, educational and socio-cultural vulnerabilities, gender and sexuality.
    - should be responsive to the needs of key populations and should respect and be tailored to specific contexts and the diversity among PLHIV.

## Initial recommendations

- Participants identified initial recommendations by stakeholder group:
  - PLHIV Networks
    - Develop an agenda through a consultative process for Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention;
    - Identify key partners supporting advocacy work; and develop regional and local advocacy plans;
    - Build evidence of good practice in Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention and identify key indicators to monitor and evaluate programme implementation and policy development.
  - Civil Society
    - Ensure inclusion of Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention in national strategic frameworks, resources, plans, policies, and monitoring and evaluation systems;
    - Adapt and integrate Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention into existing programmes and services, and organisational plans;
    - Advocate for funding to provide further services and resources for Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention.
  - Public Sector
    - Create and commit to multisectoral Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention programmes ensuring broad stakeholder involvement, including PLHIV;
    - Ensure that a national plan is in place that commits to funding and programming for Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention throughout the public sector;
    - Ensure fair allocation of funding for Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention programmes with full transparency, including monitoring and evaluation.
  - Donor Agencies
    - Develop and fund multisectoral Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention programmes with a focus on health promotion and shared responsibility for prevention;
    - Collaborate with PLHIV Networks, Civil Society and the Public Sector to ensure Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention is included in national, regional and local planning;
    - Create good practice guidelines through monitoring and evaluation to help build further evidence for Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention programmes.
  - Multilateral and UN Agencies
    - Continue to consult on Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention definition, principles and components to produce and endorse final guidance policy;
    - Ensure Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention is incorporated into national strategic plans and recommend inclusion in next round of Global Fund proposals;
    - Ensure Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention is included in UNGASS indicators, including monitoring of human rights, to guarantee implementation.

## What next?

The international technical consultation is part of an ongoing process of reinforcing the leadership role of PLHIV in Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention. Further consultations at regional and national levels and with different key populations are planned to establish a common understanding of Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention and provide guidance in developing policies and programmes globally. A meeting report and a full set of values, principles, programmatic content and recommendations will be made public in September 2009.