

## PRESS RELEASE

### **UNAIDS calls on countries to accelerate progress towards global goal to eliminate new HIV infections amongst children**

*Countries with the highest rates of new HIV infections in children will meet in South Africa to assess opportunities for scaling up programmes.*

**Johannesburg, 28 September 2011**—The Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) announced today that with political will and focused resources—countries can meet the 2015 target to eliminate new HIV infections amongst children and ensure mothers living with HIV remain healthy through pregnancy, delivery and after the birth of their child.

UNAIDS estimates about 90% of new HIV infections amongst children are concentrated in 22 countries across sub-Saharan Africa and India. In June 2011, a global plan to eliminate new HIV infections among children by 2015 and keeping their mothers alive was launched at the United Nations High Level meeting on AIDS. The plan was developed by a Global Task Team Co-Chaired by UNAIDS and United States President’s Emergency Plan on AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

Speaking from the Zola clinic in Soweto, South Africa one of the 22 most affected countries with 14% of the global burden, Michel Sidibé said, “Mother by mother, clinic by clinic, and country by country we can reach pregnant women with HIV services, to ensure their babies are born free from HIV and to improve their own health.

During the country visit to South Africa, Mr Sidibe met with parents and healthcare workers to talk about what can be done to accelerate progress. Zola clinic sees about 15 pregnant women each day, the majority do not know their HIV status. South Africa has an ambitious HIV testing and counselling programme that has reached more than 13 million people from April 2010 to September 2011.

Representatives from the 22 high burden countries will meet in South Africa next week to assess country plans. The two-day meeting will focus on country gap analysis and creating momentum. Since the launch, global interest in supporting the elimination goal is high—with innovative fundraising organizations such as (RED) joining to promote and raise needed resources. The African Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank are also considering funding national plans in support of the Global Plan.

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#### **Contact**

UNAIDS | Sophie Barton-Knott | tel. +41 79 514 6896 | bartonknotts@unaids.org

#### **UNAIDS**

UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative United Nations partnership that leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Learn more at [unaids.org](http://unaids.org).

[Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths.](#)