



How to use this toolkit...

This toolkit aims to assist Government Ministries or Departments to develop a sector-specific response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The toolkit is intended to facilitate the incorporation of HIV/AIDS issues into existing planning processes.

The following general issues should be considered when using the toolkit:

Active commitment by leadership

- Active commitment by leadership is essential to support the process of planning and implementing an effective response to HIV/AIDS. Whoever uses this toolkit should place the commitment of leadership high on their agenda (the Minister, Permanent Secretary and/or Directors).

Prioritisation of activities

- Activities must be prioritised because of the complexity of the impacts of HIV/AIDS. Responses must not be delayed unnecessarily while full details of all impacts are obtained. Data collection should be prioritised to provide the information that is most important and feasible to collect within immediate constraints. For example, to enlist leadership commitment and allow for initial planning, ballpark figures and readily available data may be appropriate. However, for more detailed planning, more detailed data collection may be required. Responses will need to be prioritised according to expected impact, and the consequences of not responding.

This document is one in a series of pamphlets targeted at Government Ministries.

The aims are:

- to assist priority sectors to identify areas where they are vulnerable to the impacts of HIV/AIDS.
- to suggest specific steps that can be taken.

Expert assistance

- Expert assistance of people with specialist knowledge of HIV/AIDS and planning skills is essential to ensure adequate understanding of HIV/AIDS impacts and effective response planning.

Generic issues

- Some of the issues covered by the toolkit need to be considered by all Government Ministries.
- The four accompanying documents are generic, and apply to all Ministries. These are:
 - 1) *Understanding HIV/AIDS*
 - 2) *Why HIV/AIDS is a Government Issue*
 - 3) *HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees*
 - 4) *Planning Tools*.
- These should be used by the Ministry of Agriculture in conjunction with this document as indicated in the steps that follow on page 2.

The full Toolkit range:

Generic:

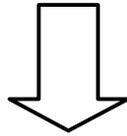
- Understanding HIV/AIDS
- Why HIV/AIDS is a Government Issue
- HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees
- Planning Tools

Ministry and/or Department:

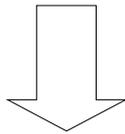
- HIV/AIDS and Agriculture
- HIV/AIDS and Education
- HIV/AIDS and Finance
- HIV/AIDS and Health
- HIV/AIDS and Housing and Public Works
- HIV/AIDS and Labour
- HIV/AIDS and Welfare

*Below is a diagrammatic chart
of the steps described in this toolkit.*

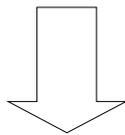
Step 1:
Understanding HIV/AIDS impacts in wider society,
and the role of Government Ministries



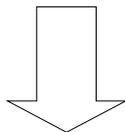
Step 2:
Identify internal impacts within
the Ministry or Department



Step 3:
Identify external impacts that
influence Ministry functions



Step 4:
Identify appropriate action responses



Combined result:
A sector-specific impact assessment
and response to HIV/AIDS

Step 1: Understanding HIV/AIDS impacts in wider society, and the role of Government Ministries

The HIV/AIDS epidemic presents a major challenge to developing countries. A first step in formulating a response to the epidemic is to understand the basic facts about HIV/AIDS and the role of Government Ministries. There are several features of HIV/AIDS which make it different from other diseases, and which need to be understood in order to formulate appropriate responses. Most transmission of HIV is preventable. Although 'technical solutions' such as making blood supply safe and treating other STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) are important to reduce the risk of transmission, it is also important to address social and economic factors that predispose to high risk situations. While there is no cure for AIDS once a person is infected with HIV, some of the impacts of the disease can be mitigated with prompt treatment.

Information contained in the accompanying document *Why HIV/AIDS is a Government Issue*, includes the following:

- Why HIV/AIDS is a critical issue for any organisation.
- Reasons for government involvement.
- How can governments respond?

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is more than just a health issue. Social and economic impacts within Government Ministries and in wider society necessitate government involvement both internally and externally. Typical HIV/AIDS impacts on organisations that will affect the functioning of Government Ministries include increased absenteeism, lower productivity, higher costs of labour, and skills shortages. Externally, appropriate responses within a Ministry's spheres of influence and responsibility are critical to slow the rate of new infections and to help manage the impact of existing infections. In many areas, legal and policy responses by Government Ministries are able to play a pivotal role in managing the epidemic.

The accompanying document *Understanding HIV/AIDS* includes the following information:

- What is HIV/AIDS?
- How is HIV transmitted?
- What are some of the important features of the HIV/AIDS epidemic?
- Is there any evidence that prevention programmes work?
- Is there prospect of a cure for HIV/AIDS?
- Is HIV/AIDS a manageable condition?
- Useful Internet resources.

Step 2: Identify internal impacts within the Ministry or Department

Identifying internal impacts involves understanding the extent and consequences of infections among Ministry or Departmental employees. These may severely compromise the ability of any organisation to deliver, but the effect may be particularly pronounced in Government if it lacks flexibility to respond to new pressures. The impact of employee infections will be particularly severe for Ministries in the social sector, such as Education, or Health, because of the multiplier effect of personnel infections. For example, for every teacher infected, the education of some 20-50

learners will be affected. However, the loss of key personnel in any Ministry may adversely affect the functioning of that Ministry, with a ripple effect in wider society.

Experience and research show that a Ministry's vulnerability to employee infections depends on several key areas. Step 2 of this toolkit has been designed to help guide collection of data for identifying the extent and nature of impacts of employee infections in these key areas.

Areas to consider by Ministries include the following:

- Numbers of HIV infected employees
- Absenteeism and productivity
- Recruitment and training
- Morale
- Benefits
- Gender
- Capacity to respond

Some of these areas of vulnerability may be the ultimate responsibility of a central body, such as the Ministry of Public Service Administration, and individual sectors should liaise with this Ministry.

The accompanying document *HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees* provides an overview of areas of vulnerability to employee infections and flags data that may be needed fully to appreciate impacts.

The types of assessment needed depend on the purpose for which the data are to be used.

In the accompanying document *Planning Tools*, Chart 1 provides examples of assessments that may be appropriate, as well as suggested indicators.

Step 3: Identify external impacts that influence Ministry functions

Step 3 invites you to consider external impacts of HIV/AIDS on the Ministry of Agriculture. These are ways in which HIV/AIDS in the wider community, including farm workers, farmers and rural dwellers, may impact on key goals and activities of the Ministry, and how the Ministry may play a critical role in stemming the spread of the epidemic. Some external impacts may already be experienced, but many will be felt fully only in the medium- to long-term.

The type of impact assessments and responses that are appropriate will depend on the context, in particular the stage of the epidemic and the extent to which resources have already been mobilised around HIV/AIDS.

For example:

- Is there a high rate of new HIV infection?
- Are there already substantial numbers of people ill with AIDS? What is the current size of the AIDS epidemic?
- What priority policy areas have been identified where resources may be used most effectively, and what further data or analysis are needed to enhance the effectiveness of these?
- Are appropriate and regularly up-dated HIV/AIDS workplace policies in place in the sector?
- To what extent are the Ministry of Agriculture, employer organisations and trade union bodies already mobilised and committed to dealing with the epidemic?
- What is the contribution of the private sector to AIDS care, and to what extent are appropriate policies and treatment strategies already in place?

- Have sector-specific strategies to respond to HIV/AIDS been prepared?

Defining the core functions and priorities of the Ministry will be essential to prioritising areas of concern. These are the issues that are expressed in strategic plans and senior management discussions. The challenge of HIV/AIDS should be assessed, guided by the following key questions for each Ministry function and priority:

Key questions for Ministry priorities:

- How does this function or service impact on the spread of HIV?
- How will HIV/AIDS in wider society impact on this function or service?

All relevant stakeholders should be involved in planning impact assessments and identifying appropriate responses. The items in the next section provide a general idea of the scope of the impact on typical Ministry of Agriculture functions:

- Promotion of rural development, including poverty alleviation, ensuring food security and promoting empowerment of rural women
- Creation of conditions favourable for small-holder farmers, tenant farmers and commercial agriculture
- Financial assistance & settlement of farmers on state land
- Occupational health and safety strategies
- Rights of agricultural workers and rural dwellers
- Other projects, schemes and services
- Agricultural training
- Policy and legislation

Review the examples of the type of assessment you may need fully to appreciate impacts in these areas.

Suggested indicators are given in Chart 2 in the document *Planning Tools*.

- Complete a similar chart for areas that are relevant to your Ministry.
- Tick those areas where data may be useful for motivation or planning within your Ministry.

Promotion of rural development, including poverty alleviation, ensuring food security and promoting empowerment of rural women

Rural poverty, labour migration and low status of women may increase susceptibility to HIV. For example, men who have to migrate or travel frequently are more likely to change sexual partners, and women in poverty may be compelled to trade sexual favours for cash or other support. These factors also make it more difficult for communities and individuals to cope with the impact of existing infections. AIDS may impact on the rural environment through increasing demands for poverty relief, through making some forms of cropping and subsistence agriculture unviable because of labour shortages, and caring for sick family members may increase rural women and children's work burden, leaving them little time for skills development.

- Are there significant levels of HIV infection and AIDS deaths in rural areas?
- What are the expected levels of infection and AIDS deaths in future years?
- What kinds of rural households and communities are most susceptible to HIV infection?
- What is the current and expected impact of increased illness and death on the nutritional status of pregnant and lactating women, children under five and the elderly in rural areas?
- Are there any regions whose viability will be particularly adversely affected by large numbers of deaths in productive age adults?
- Are there HIV prevention programmes linked to current rural development initiatives? Has their coverage and effectiveness been evaluated? Have they been strengthened where appropriate?

- How may AIDS illness and death in the household affect rural women's access to health services, education, and other resources and support?
- What are the special problems faced by female-headed households in rural areas?
- Do rural women face different problems in dealing with illness and death in families from those faced by men?
- What is the effect of HIV/AIDS on migration patterns? For example, will ill workers return to rural areas? What are the likely effects on rural communities?
- What is the role of employers and the state in supporting ill workers in rural areas?

Creation of conditions favourable for small-holder farmers, tenant farmers and commercial agriculture

Ministry programmes and policies relating to small-holder farmers, tenant farmers and commercial agriculture may impact on HIV spread. Further, HIV/AIDS may present overwhelming direct and indirect costs to farmers and vulnerable organisations. Absenteeism and recruitment and training are likely to form the bulk of costs to organisations.

- Are there any best practice partnerships or initiatives to reduce HIV spread in rural areas or mitigate impacts in this or other countries, which can be modified or replicated?
- What are current and potential governmental and NGO points of entry for HIV prevention and mitigation in rural areas? Are these points of entry being fully exploited?
- Can farming systems or areas be classified according to how vulnerable these systems will be to increased illness and death? For example, labour intensive farming practices, low food or credit surpluses and insecure land tenure make a system more vulnerable.
- What is the need and feasibility for expanding credit availability for the poorest farmers?
- What are the numbers of orphans on farms and agricultural enterprises?
- How many children on farms and agricultural enterprises will be orphaned in future years?
- What are current policies and practices for orphaned children or widows on farms? How will increased numbers of orphans and widows be supported?

Financial assistance & settlement of farmers on state land

HIV/AIDS-illness and mortality among recipients of loans may increase the number of defaulters on loan agreements.

- What are HIV/AIDS impacts on current and future loan portfolios likely to be?

Occupational health and safety strategies

Migrant labourers, seasonal labourers and immigrants may be at particular risk and have few employee benefits. Low status of women and limited economic independence reduce women's ability to protect themselves from HIV infection.

- What enterprises, geographic areas and occupations are at high risk of HIV/AIDS?
- What are the patterns and extent of migrant labour in the Agriculture sector?
- Are there any policies and programmes that inadvertently encourage single-sex living arrangements that predispose to high-risk situations?
- What is the feasibility and appropriateness of enlarging the scope of activities undertaken by agricultural extension workers to include HIV/AIDS activities?

Rights of agricultural workers and rural dwellers

Surviving children or widows may have problems retaining family land, housing or livestock.

- Do policies and legislation support gender equality and protect the occupancy and inheritance rights of widows and orphaned children? How can implementation of these policies and legislation be monitored and strengthened where appropriate?

Other projects, schemes and services

Large concentrations of workers moving into an area for a defined project may spread HIV to that area.

- Monitor projects that require movement of many workers; assess the risk of HIV transmission.

Agricultural training

- What is the knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS in training recipients? What is the size of the need for prevention messages and condom distribution?

Policy and legislation

Do any current or planned policies and legislation related to the sector:

- Increase or decrease the rate of spread of HIV infection?
- Provide adequate protection against discrimination for the increasing numbers of people infected or affected by HIV/AIDS?
- Require adaptation to meet new challenges to implementation because of HIV/AIDS?

Step 4:

Identify appropriate action responses

Responses in areas of internal impact

Responses to internal impacts involve preventing new infections among employees and reducing impacts of existing infections.

Key questions for Ministries are:

- How can employee infections be prevented?
- What can be done about the impacts of existing employee infections, and future infections that are not avoided?

Actions that can be taken by Ministries include those related to:

- Prevention of new infections
- Absenteeism and productivity
- Recruitment and training

- Morale
- Benefits
- Gender
- Capacity to respond

Where actions are the ultimate responsibility of a central agency, such as a Department or Ministry of Public Service and Administration, the Ministry of Agriculture should liaise with this agency.

The accompanying document *HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees* provides an overview of some possible responses.

All key stakeholders must be encouraged to identify and plan projects related to particular action responses. It is important to prioritise responses that are most critical and feasible in your specific situation.

Examples of types of responses or projects that may be undertaken are provided in Chart 3 of the accompanying document *Planning Tools*.

Responses in areas of external impact

Responses to external impacts include those aimed at assisting the Ministry to continue to achieve goals and fulfil its functions in the context of changed needs in society. It also shows how the Ministry can take action to reduce HIV spread.

As for the impact assessments described in Step 3, the type of responses needed will be guided by the Ministry's core functions and priorities at a particular time. The challenge of HIV/AIDS should be assessed, guided by the following key questions for each Ministry function and priority:

Key questions for Ministry priorities:

- How can these services impact on HIV spread in the wider community?
- What can be done about the impacts of HIV/AIDS on these sector functions?

The items in the next section provide a general idea of the scope of possible responses by Ministries of Agriculture. Some responses may actively address impacts, while others may include more detailed research and planning of specific issues. It is important to prioritise responses that are most critical and feasible in your specific situation. Appropriate participation of key stakeholders is likely to be important for effective prioritisation and buy-in.

Review each of these areas of action and consider which may be relevant to your Ministry.

Suggested indicators are given in Chart 2 in the document *Planning Tools*.

- Complete a similar chart for areas that are relevant to your Ministry.
- Tick those areas where data may be useful for motivation or planning within your Ministry.

Promotion of rural development, including poverty alleviation, ensuring food security, and promoting the empowerment of rural women

- Consider using area-specific levels of HIV infection and expected AIDS deaths to inform planning and targeting appropriate rural development programmes.

- Mobilise all rural development initiatives, whether public or private, to include HIV prevention programmes e.g. through including HIV prevention in tender documents.
- Support appropriately targeted nutrition programmes for rural children, pregnant and lactating women and the elderly.
- Support access to labour-saving technologies and piped water.
- Set up partnerships with other Departments or Ministries and employers to find appropriate cost-effective ways to assist ill migrants and their families.
- Ensure that rural programmes and initiatives take into account the vulnerability of farming systems and areas to increased illness and death in working age adults.
- Integrate HIV education and condom distribution into agricultural support programmes and activities.
- Integrate information on potential economic effects of HIV/AIDS on farming systems into support programmes and activities.
- Support initiatives to increase locally generated incomes and reduce need for migration.
- Consider encouraging labour-economising crop varieties and labour-saving technologies or cultivation practices in areas of high HIV prevalence.
- Support initiatives that will reduce rural women's work burden, e.g. access to fuel and water supply.
- Develop and disseminate sustainable policies to secure tenure of widows and orphaned children.
- Consider compiling a directory of best practice case-studies and international examples and making this available to farmer organisations and community groups.

Creation of conditions favourable for small-holder farmers, tenant farmers and commercial agriculture

- Institute HIV/AIDS awareness programmes targeting commercial agriculture; these should include advice on how to mitigate the impact of HIV on the organisation, and to ensure employee benefits are sustainable.
- Expand credit availability for the poorest farmers.
- Support labour-saving projects.
- Liaise with the same Ministry and sector in other countries to share sector-specific lessons.
- Encourage commercial farmer organisations to develop a response to HIV/AIDS.
- Support inter-country co-operation to develop responses.

Financial assistance & settlement of farmers on state land

- Include HIV/AIDS awareness messages with loan materials.

Occupational health and safety strategies

- Identify enterprises, geographic areas and occupations at high risk of HIV infection and AIDS deaths and liaise with appropriate Government Departments and NGOs to undertake prevention programmes.
- Actively discourage single-sex living arrangements that predispose high-risk behaviour.
- Develop policies for farm worker illness benefits together with stakeholders.
- Review tasks and beneficiaries of extension workers; consider training frontline staff in HIV/AIDS prevention and referrals to care.

Rights of farmers, agricultural workers and rural dwellers

- Develop policies and monitoring systems to ensure the support of rural orphans, widows and the destitute elderly.
- Assess policies and legislation to ensure these support gender equality and protect the occupancy and inheritance rights of widows and orphaned children.

Other projects, schemes and services

- Include HIV in environmental impact assessments and include HIV prevention in the planning stage of all projects.
- Motivate for inclusion of HIV/AIDS-related prevention activities in training and job description of agricultural extension officers.
- Include health measures in tender documents.

Agricultural training

- Include HIV/AIDS in curriculum of training colleges.

Is it appropriate for the Agriculture Ministry to mobilise the Agriculture sector in any of the above areas of response?

Appendix 1:

Examples of data that may be useful to drive sectoral AIDS responses

- In one study, it was demonstrated that firms took, on average, 8 times longer to replace a deceased professional than a skilled worker.
- A survey in the Department of Agriculture, Malawi in 1999 found that 60% of respondents had lost a family member or close relative suspected of dying of HIV/AIDS, 76% had lost a work colleague and at least 16% of Ministry staff were themselves living with HIV/AIDS.
- Costs of HIV/AIDS in commercial agriculture have been estimated to range from 1.1% of total company expenditure or 3.4% of profits in a Malawian tea producer in 1996, to a potential 65% of total labour costs of a Kenyan sugar estate by 2013. (Jones C, What HIV cost a tea estate in Malawi, *AIDS Analysis Africa*, 8(4) Dec 1997).
- Several best practice examples of HIV prevention and management responses relevant to

Agriculture have been described in: *Best practices. Company actions on HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa*, Loewenson R with Michael K, Whiteside A, Hunter L and Khan N. OATUU, supported by UNAIDS, February 1999. These include:

- An initiative to support orphans on farms supported by the Commercial Farmers Union and the government in Zimbabwe.
- A primary health care project that includes HIV prevention and early appropriate treatment of HIV-related diseases in employees and their families, supported by a forestry company in Mpumalanga province of South Africa.
- A monitoring and response system to productivity losses and absenteeism among employees of a forestry company, Mpumalanga province, South Africa.

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