

STOPAIDS.

A Stocktake Review of DFID's Work
on HIV and AIDS



Global HIV Response





Incredible progress has been made in the HIV response: paving the way for an ambitious target within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. But progress is beginning to slow. New infections remain stubbornly high and in 2016 1.8 million people became newly infected with HIV¹. AIDS-related deaths have decreased as treatment has improved but amongst some age groups, notably adolescents, AIDS-related deaths are actually increasing². Many countries continue to impose discriminatory legal frameworks on people living with HIV and people most affected by HIV. At this critical time support from donors for the HIV response is also diminishing, and in 2016 donor government funding declined for the second consecutive year, this time by \$500 million³.

Department for International Development (DFID)'s Position and Calls for a Review




Despite a legacy of UK Government financial leadership within the HIV response, civil society and the UK Parliament have raised concerns that DFID's commitment to HIV is fading. DFID has closed the majority of its bilateral programmes specifically focussed on HIV and no longer has a position or strategy on HIV. In September 2016, both Youth Stop AIDS campaigners and the International Development Committee (IDC) called on the UK government to conduct a stocktake review of its work on HIV and AIDS. A stocktake review would facilitate DFID to articulate its priorities within the global HIV response and ensure its spending and approaches are sufficient to deliver, and are coherent with, its priorities. However, DFID indicated it would not undertake a review of its work, perhaps in large part because of the deprioritisation of HIV that we have been seeing. So in the spirit of collaboration and support STOPAIDS have undertaken a civil society review of DFID's work. We hope it will help DFID to effectively target its capacity and resources to have the most impact on the global HIV response and ensure the UK does its part to realise the end of AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

Our Findings




Financial Prioritisation

	Rating	Summary
Overall Funding		The UK remains the second largest government donor for the global HIV response. However, overall HIV funding from DFID declined from £416 million in 2012 to £324 million in 2015, representing a 22% decrease at a time when UNAIDS is calling for all stakeholders to increase funding by one third.
Country Office Programmes		DFID's bilateral funding for HIV and AIDS specific programmes declined from a peak of £221 million in 2009 to just £23 million in 2015.
Multilateral Organisations		The UK has committed to maintaining funding to UNAIDS and UNITAID and increasing funding for the Global Fund. Funding for multilaterals focussed on HIV rose from £106 million in 2012 to £185 million in 2015.
Civil Society		Bilateral funding for civil society working on HIV and AIDS declined from £30 million in 2011 to just £8 million in 2015.

Programmatic Prioritisation

	Rating	Summary
A published HIV strategy		DFID's position on HIV expired in 2015 and there are currently no plans to develop a new HIV position or strategy.
Clear priorities		Through reviewing DFID's public communications, particularly its statement to the United Nation's (UN) High Level Meeting (HLM) on ending AIDS in 2016, STOPAIDS has approximated DFID's strategic priorities within the HIV response. But releasing a few sentences at a time in response to parliamentary questions is not a substitute for a formal strategy. To maintain leadership within the global HIV response and ensure maximum impact of the UK's investment DFID should formalise and make public its approach to HIV.
Measurable Impact		DFID has not cumulatively assessed its impact within the HIV response since 2013. The HIV policy marker (which now accounts for 88% of DFID's bilateral spend on HIV) is not a sufficient mechanism to monitor impact. DFID has no mechanism to assess integration of HIV into wider programmes.

Political Prioritisation

	Rating	Summary
Inclusion of HIV and AIDS in DFID strategies and public communications		HIV and AIDS is absent from DFID's current aid strategy, DFID's <i>Strategic Vision on Women and Girls</i> , and DFID's <i>Youth Agenda</i> . However, in its <i>Bilateral Development Review</i> (BDR) there is a clear statement that 'the UK remains firmly committed to ending the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030', suggesting the UK government may give new emphasis to the global HIV response.
UK government attendance at international HIV conferences		No DFID minister or civil servant attended either the 2014 or 2016 International AIDS Conferences. At the 2016 UN High Level Meeting on HIV and AIDS, DFID made a strong statement that clearly articulated DFID's priorities, but sent only one civil servant. Most recently, DFID sent a senior civil servant to the 2017 Scientific International AIDS Conference.
Support from the UK parliament		Parliamentarians from across all parties have demonstrated strong support for UK leadership within the global HIV response. The International Development Committee (IDC) has recently undertaken an inquiry into DFID's work on HIV and AIDS.

Recommendations

Financial

- Increase overall levels of UK funding for the global HIV response, in line with UNAIDS recommendations, by:
 - » continuing to make ambitious funding contributions to multilateral institutions working on HIV and ensuring that the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund), UNITAID and UNAIDS are fully funded and able to make the critical interventions needed to end AIDS by 2030,
 - » increasing funding for civil society's global response to HIV and AIDS, particularly for key populations, youth and women and girls, through the Robert Carr Network Fund (RCNF) and through new DFID funding mechanisms for civil society including UK Aid Connect.
- Ensure that country office programmes focussed on HIV, when closed, are shut down in a way that ensures investment is not wasted and development gains are sustained.

Programmatic

- Formalise and publish a position or strategy on HIV with clear priorities and targets.
- Introduce minimum requirements for using the HIV policy marker, for example requiring HIV is included in project documentation and that HIV relevant indicators are included and monitored.
- Allow for greater specificity in attributing spend to HIV with the HIV policy marker, beginning by removing the automatic 50% attribution.
- Publish structured guidance for DFID programme managers on how to integrate HIV into wider programmes and on how to use the HIV policy marker.

Political

- Use the upcoming meetings on tuberculosis (TB) and the International AIDS Society Conference in 2018 (AIDS 2018) to showcase DFID's high level leadership and support for HIV and AIDS.
- Include HIV in further iterations of DFID's Strategic Vision on Women and Girls and the operationalisation of DFID's Youth Agenda.
- Promote DFID's work on HIV and AIDS in DFID's public communications including social media, the DFID website and all relevant Ministerial speeches.

1 UNAIDS (2017) Factsheet July 2017.
http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/UNAIDS_FactSheet_en.pdf

2 Avert (2017) Young People, HIV & AIDS.
https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-social-issues/key-affected-populations/young-people#footnote3_xyljyce

3 Ibid (1).