

AIDS

Mainstreaming AIDS: Helping Our Partners Build Effective, Multi-Sectoral Responses To AIDS

What does “mainstreaming AIDS” mean?

Mainstreaming AIDS is “a process that enables all development partners to address the causes and effects of AIDS in an effective and sustained manner, both through their usual work and within their workplaces.”

UNDP, UNAIDS and World Bank (2005)

Today, it is widely acknowledged that the HIV epidemic calls for a multi-sectoral response because it has devastating impacts on education, agriculture and many other sectors. At the same time, all of these sectors can make significant contributions to the prevention of HIV and to mitigating the harmful consequences of the epidemic. The front lines of AIDS are in the urban neighbourhoods, towns, villages, rural communities or camps for workers or refugees where people live and work. The local authorities, faith-based organisations, other non-governmental organisations (NGO), employers, or private providers who offer basic health, education and social services should be engaged as partners in an HIV response that is not only multi-sectoral but also multi-dimensional, extending to all levels of public and private institutions as well as their associations and networks. For GTZ, an effective and sustainable mainstreaming programme for any partner country or partner organisation is supported by two strong pillars:

- Internal mainstreaming, with a comprehensive workplace programme that provides HIV prevention, care, treatment and support to the organisation’s own employees and their families.

- External mainstreaming, through contributions to the AIDS response that are consistent with the organisation’s expertise and responsibilities in whichever sectors it does its work: From national capitals to remote villages and rural areas, most work presents opportunities to contribute to the AIDS response at very little cost.

GTZ’s Approaches and their results

AIDS mainstreaming with local government: In the Kingdom of Lesotho, GTZ has been supporting a national government programme to establish 10 district councils and 128 community councils. GTZ’s mainstreaming approach recognizes the community councils as the gateways to a comprehensive, country-wide response to AIDS. To make them effective gateways, GTZ has been supporting the establishment and training of council HIV and AIDS impact mitigation committees. Establishing the committees has involved providing their members with the knowledge and skills they need to address AIDS effectively and then supporting them as they develop community council action plans on AIDS. Time is of the essence, since councils can miss having their communities’ AIDS-related needs taken into account in the next national budget if they do not finish their plans in time. Together with its partner ministry in Lesotho, GTZ therefore developed a Quick and Smart planning methodology for community councils that is easy to understand, practical and can achieve results quickly.

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AIDS mainstreaming in basic education: No one is more deeply affected by AIDS than children and youths. They are vulnerable to infection and to the consequences of illness and death of their parents and other family members. At the same time, no one is more promising when it comes to change, development and a better future. In Chad, Guinea and Mali, GTZ is providing support for collaboration between the education and health sectors that puts schools at the centre of efforts to engage whole communities in addressing the AIDS-related needs, not just of children and youths, but also of adults. These collaborative efforts recognise that no children are too young to acquire age-appropriate knowledge and skills to protect themselves and each other from harm; at the same time, their parents and other adults must be involved in protecting children, youths and themselves from harm as well.

AIDS mainstreaming in technical and vocational training: With an HIV prevalence of 24% among adults 19 to 49 years old (UNAIDS, 2006), Botswana's economy is seriously threatened by the loss of healthy, productive workers in all sectors. GTZ has been supporting a programme to mainstream AIDS into Botswana's whole vocational training system. This involves providing AIDS-related knowledge and skills to teachers, trainers and learners. It helps to retain healthy teachers and trainers, prepares them to pass on their knowledge and skills to learners and provides all sectors of the economy with young workers well-prepared to preserve and protect their own health and that of their co-workers, partners and families.



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GTZ's service package

HIV/AIDS workplace programmes:

GTZ helps private and public sector organisations to develop and implement HIV and AIDS workplace programmes that include prevention at the workplace, the provision of medical care and treatment to employees and their family members and ways to establish a non-discriminatory and supportive environment for their HIV-positive employees. (See also the more detailed flyers on HIV and AIDS workplace programmes in this folder.)

AIDS Mainstreaming: Building multi-sectoral responses to AIDS:

GTZ has considerable expertise in helping public sector institutions to become AIDS-competent. Together with our clients and partner organisations, our experts will address the essential AIDS mainstreaming questions, i.e. how the epidemic affects the organisation's field of work, how it can avoid sector-specific risks of HIV infection and how it can contribute, through its particular mandate, to the overall national response to AIDS.

Developing and implementing sector-specific responses:

AIDS is much more than a health problem: In countries with generalised epidemics, its impacts are felt in the education and agriculture sectors, and whole economies are under threat as experts and skilled workers increasingly fall ill to the disease. GTZ, together with its partner organisations, has developed a range of sector-specific approaches through which different sectors can not only ward off such impacts, but effectively contribute to their country's national AIDS response.

Together with our partners, we have learned that mainstreaming AIDS is an effective, relatively low-cost strategy to respond to AIDS at the front lines of this epidemic.

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