Enhancing Canadian Business Involvement in the Global Response to HIV/AIDS

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1. Introduction

The International Affairs Directorate, Health Policy and Communications Branch, Health Canada prepared this background paper to help stimulate discussion and involvement of Canadian businesses in the response to the global HIV/AIDS epidemic. The paper makes a case for such involvement, within the larger context of international corporate social responsibility; documents experience in various countries and regions; and provides an overview of tools and resources for further action.

HIV/AIDS is a serious health threat in almost all parts of the world. In the most affected areas, it is having a profound impact on economic growth, incomes and poverty. In some countries the epidemic threatens economic and political stability. It is increasingly apparent that an effective response can occur only through partnerships involving the public sector, civil society and the business sector. Business interest and involvement is growing, as evidenced by the high profile of HIV/AIDS at the February 2002 World Economic Forum in New York and the involvement of business leaders at the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in June 2001. That session, known as UNGASS on HIV/AIDS, resulted in a Declaration of Commitment unanimously endorsed by all countries, that clearly identifies the role of business as a key partner – along with governments and civil society – in concerted efforts to address HIV/AIDS through strategies and financing plans at the local, national, regional and global levels.

This paper provides information that should be of interest to business leaders, because HIV/AIDS is a growing threat to the highly complex and interdependent world economy in which most businesses operate. Resource-rich and export-oriented countries like Canada count on the sustained vibrancy of world markets and the emergence of new ones for their own economic growth and stability. Understanding the actual and potential business impact of HIV/AIDS, and learning more about effective responses, is clearly in the best interests of the business community. The paper should also be helpful to those in the public sector and civil society who want to work in partnership with the business sector on a more effective global response to HIV/AIDS.

> *"There is no more time for half-measures. In terms of life lost, children orphaned and the destruction of the social and economic fabric of whole societies and whole countries, AIDS is an unparalleled nightmare. What is more, its impact continues to grow. In the worst affected countries, where more than one in five adults are infected, infrastructure, services and productive capacity are facing total collapse. The challenge is enormous, but we are not powerless to face it."*
> **Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary General**

2. The Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic

HIV/AIDS has become the most devastating disease humankind has ever faced.[1] Since the epidemic began more than 20 years ago, 60 million people have been infected with the virus. HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa and the fourth biggest killer worldwide. At the end of 2001, an estimated 40 million people were living with HIV/AIDS.

Different regions of the globe have been affected differently. Approximately 95% of people with HIV/AIDS live in developing countries.

- The hardest hit area is sub-Saharan Africa. AIDS killed 2.3 million Africans in 2001 alone, and 28.1 million are now living with HIV/AIDS. Most of them will not survive the next decade.

- The Caribbean is the second most affected region in terms of prevalence and deaths.

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[1] A comprehensive overview of the global HIV/AIDS situation is provided in *AIDS Epidemic Update December 2001,* UNAIDS and World Health Organization, Geneva. Information presented in this section is drawn from that document. For a complete lilst of references, see Annex A.

- The areas with the fastest growing epidemics are eastern Europe and central Asia. In the Asia-Pacific region, an estimated 7.1 million people are infected, and there is a serious threat of major, generalized epidemics in some countries.

- In the Middle East and North Africa, HIV prevalence continues to be low in most countries, with the fastest growth of the epidemic in countries experiencing complex emergencies, such as Somalia and Sudan.

The burden of illness and death and the ruthless cycle of impoverishment caused by the epidemic result in untold suffering. In Botswana, for example, where adult prevalence rates are over 35%, one-quarter of households can expect to lose an income earner in the next 10 years, and every income earner can expect to take on four more dependants as a result of HIV/AIDS. Households cope by cutting food consumption and other basic expenditures, and many sell assets to cover health care and funeral costs. In Rwanda, households with a family member who has HIV/AIDS spend, on average, 20 times more on health care annually than households without one, resulting in impoverishment for many families.

"Business can often act faster and more efficiently than anyone else. In many countries workplace awareness and prevention programs will be the only source of accurate information employees will have about HIV/AIDS. Company leadership in distributing condoms, providing voluntary counseling and testing and access to care and treatment sends a strong message to governments and other sectors." **Richard C. Holbrooke, President and CEO, Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS.**

Educational enrolment falls as children, most often girls, leave school to care for family members or assume other family responsibilities, jeopardizing education and future prospects. The epidemic is also claiming huge numbers of teachers, doctors, extension workers and other human resources; in some countries, health care systems are losing up to a quarter of their personnel. In 1999 alone, an estimated 860,000 children in sub-Saharan Africa lost their teachers to HIV/AIDS. In Zambia, 40% of teachers are infected, and their death rate is higher than the rate of teacher graduations.

Since 1985, seven million farm workers worldwide have died from AIDS-related causes, and 16 million more will die in the next 10 years. Agricultural output

in the hardest hit areas cannot be sustained in such circumstances, and the prospect of widespread food shortages and hunger is real. As a result of these and many other factors, the macroeconomic impact of the epidemic is profound. Per capita growth in half the countries of sub-Saharan Africa is falling by an estimated 0.5 to 1.2% annually as a direct result of HIV/AIDS. Heavily affected countries could lose more than 20% of GDP by 2020.

3. The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Business

Experience with HIV/AIDS in the workplace over the last 20 years has yielded compelling reasons why this epidemic should be a concern of businesses large and small. It has affected the business climate, the workforce and productivity, making it a bottom line issue.

Workforce. In most developing countries, about half those who become infected with HIV do so before they are 25 and die of AIDS or a related illness before they are 35. This has a significant impact on the workforce. Companies of all types face higher costs for training, insurance and benefits and as a result of illness and absenteeism. The impact is most evident in countries where HIV/AIDS has been present longest and where the epidemic is most pervasive. In the most affected areas, HIV/AIDS is severely constraining the ability of some businesses to operate and be competitive. But there are significant risks for companies in both high-prevalence and lower-prevalence regions.

Business Climate. Social and political stability and national security are significantly affected in the countries hardest hit by HIV/AIDS. This creates a very risky business climate. If left unchecked, the disease will

affect governance and leadership and will undermine governments' ability to deal with civil strife, refugee flows, rapid urbanization and poverty. In many African countries, the ranks of the civil service, often the most educated and experienced workers, have been thinned, leaving a substantial administrative void. Loss of personnel to HIV/AIDS is also weakening the ability of the military and police in these countries to ensure national security and maintain civil order. As more and more public resources are required to respond to the epidemic, investment in basic infrastructure and other public services is starved, and pressure for higher taxation increases.

The impact on business at the macroeconomic and individual company levels is well documented in *The Business Response to HIV/AIDS: Impact and Lessons Learned* and in a key publication focusing on the mining sector.[2] The following is a summary of key points from these reports.

Macroeconomic Impact

HIV/AIDS affects people in their most productive years. The impact includes lower earnings due to illness care demands, higher expenditures on health care, and premature death – resulting in lower disposable income and reduced savings rates. In the longer term this shrinks the market size for business – especially in markets outside the basic necessities of food, housing and energy – and reduces the total resources available for production and investment. The ultimate effect is reduced economic growth. The World Bank estimates that HIV/AIDS could reduce national income growth by up to one-third in countries with adult prevalence rates of 10%.[3]

"It is more than basic humanitarian concern that should drive the private sector to get involved in the global fight against AIDS. It is in the enlightened self-interest of any company that operates in affected countries, that sells its goods to overseas markets or imports goods from those markets. AIDS is increasingly a threat to the global market economy." Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director, UNAIDS

One of the most important lessons from the HIV/AIDS epidemic concerns the consequences of inaction. Denying the risks of an emerging epidemic for current and future economic development and the potential harm to business interests has serious ramifications. Relatively low prevalence rates, if left unchecked, rapidly become high rates of infection with high social and economic costs.

No sector of the economy is immune. Reduced availability of skilled labour and investment increases service and production costs, particularly through the effect on essential sectors such as transport and utilities. Business also depends on the education sector for skilled labour. As previously mentioned, this sector is acutely affected by HIV/AIDS through reduced numbers of teachers and lower numbers of children attending school.

Businesses do not work in isolation. HIV/AIDS affects all productive sectors, business supply chains, and the supply of labour and intellectual capital – all of which can significantly affect a company's capacity to operate. These impacts can lead to a reduction in direct foreign investment, which further harms the macroeconomic environment.

Individual Company Impact

HIV/AIDS has been shown to affect individual business operations in two broad areas: productivity and costs. Basic business principles combined with extensive experience provide the direct link between HIV/AIDS, declining productivity, rising production costs and

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[2] *The Business Response to HIV/AIDS* (a seminal document, published in 2000 by UNAIDS, The Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, and the Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum) was drawn on extensively in preparing this paper. *HIV/AIDS, the Mining and Minerals Sector and Sustainable Development in Southern Africa*, a project of the International Institute for Environment and Development, commissioned by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2000.

[3] The HIV prevalence rate now exceeds 10% in 16 African countries, and several areas of southern Africa have rates exceeding 30%. The average prevalence rate in the Caribbean region is 2.3% and rising steadily, but the worst affected Caribbean countries have rates over 4%. Global experience shows that once the rate reaches 4-5%, it escalates rapidly. By comparison, the average rate in North America is 0.6%, although rates are considerably higher in some populations.

declining profits. The causal relationship between HIV/AIDS and declining profitability is multifaceted. A model explaining this interaction is presented in *The Business Response to HIV/AIDS: Impact and Lessons Learned.* Briefly, the key factors are as follows.

Declining Productivity. Declining and fluctuating productivity reduces ability to meet demand from consumers and buyers, which affects present and future reputation and profitability.

- Increased absenteeism results from employees becoming ill, the demands of caring for ill family members, and the need to attend funerals.

- Increased organizational and workforce disruption results from rising staff turnover, loss of skills, loss of tacit knowledge about the work and company environment, and declining morale.

Increased Costs Rising operating costs affect current profit margins and future profits by reducing investment capacity for increased productivity, expansion, research and development, and workforce training and support.

- Recruitment and training demands rise as a result of increased staff turnover and loss of skills.

- Company life insurance premiums and pension fund commitments rise as a result of early retirement or death.

- Where the company provides or insures health care, these costs can rise significantly with rising HIV/AIDS rates.

- Considerable costs can be added where businesses provide for the funeral costs of employees.

The impact on individual companies varies with the nature of the company/sector, the nature of the labour market, the interaction between the epidemic and the workforce (e.g., prevalence rates, modes of transmission), and the company's related policies and benefits.

4. The Global Business Response to HIV/AIDS

The growing business response to the spread of HIV/AIDS includes actions to protect workforces, community outreach and philanthropy. Successful efforts have occurred through the development of partnerships for HIV/AIDS prevention, education and care between business, the public sector and non-government organizations (NGOs), including community HIV/AIDS organizations.

In developing countries, especially where the HIV/AIDS epidemic is well advanced and the resources of the public sector and civil society are limited, business involvement is absolutely crucial for a successful response to HIV/AIDS. Where many or all segments of the population, including professionals and skilled workers, are affected, no player acting alone can mount a successful response. Governments, businesses, NGOs and multilateral organizations have found they must work together. Moreover, mounting an early and vigorous response has proved effective in slowing the epidemic. In Senegal, for instance, early and comprehensive education and prevention have resulted in one of the lowest infection rates in sub-Saharan Africa.

> *"There can no longer be any debate about whether business should address the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The business sector has unique skills to respond in creative and innovative ways that can support and enhance the combined responses of other partners, such as governments or community based organizations."*
> **William H. Roedy, President, MTV Networks International**

The Context

Increasing business involvement is occurring in a context of market globalization and the trend to greater corporate social responsibility.

Globalization. Businesses worldwide are feeling the pressures of increasingly integrated and competitive national and international markets, driven by globalization and economic liberalization combined with demands from investors and consumers for greater productivity, efficiency, innovation, and quality of products and services.

Corporate Social Responsibility Pressures are mounting for businesses to be more responsible and accountable to their wider stakeholders: workforces, suppliers, communities, governments and the general public. The growing global corporate social responsibility (CSR) movement focuses on business decision making linked to ethical values, compliance with legal requirements, and respect for people, communities and the environment. It is rooted in the overall relationship between the company and all its stakeholders. Elements of social responsibility include community outreach, respect for human rights, labour rights, employee relations, creation and maintenance of employment, environmental stewardship, and ethical operations and financial performance.

The CSR movement is closely related to and grew out of concerns about environmental protection and sustainable development. Companies concerned about CSR and environmental sustainability focus on the triple bottom line of financial results, environmental performance and social contribution.

Growing interest and concern about community sustainability in the face of rapid globalization is reflected in public and political expectations that corporate investment activities should make a positive contribution to the economic development and stability of the countries in which they operate. The corporate sector is increasingly aware that good corporate citizenship is good business for many reasons, including greater social and economic stability in countries where they operate, reduced litigation and environmental costs, increased consumer loyalty, reduced volatility of stock values, and better employee morale and loyalty.

CSR business practices can be formalized through company codes of conduct and statements of business ethics and by adopting international guidelines such as the *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*. The guidelines are multilaterally agreed principles and standards for responsible business conduct. All OECD countries, including Canada, have endorsed them.

Reporting on CSR performance (also known as social auditing) is also becoming more common and can be structured through mechanisms such as the *Sustainability Reporting Guidelines on Economic, Environmental and Social Performance*, developed by the Global Reporting Initiative.

According to the 1999 Millennium Poll on Corporate Social Responsibility, the public has high expectations for corporate social responsibility.[4] CSR was seen as the most important factor contributing to corporate reputation. Respondents put protecting the health and safety of employees at the top of the list of corporate responsibilities, followed by treating employees equally. This applied to both domestic operations and any offshore operations.

Overview of Business Initiatives to Fight HIV/AIDS

Given the impact of HIV/AIDS on business and its stakeholders, there is a clear onus on business to respond. The response has been diverse and is strengthening globally as the HIV/AIDS epidemic advances.

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[4] A survey of 25,000 people in 23 countries conducted by Environics International.

At the international organization level, several high-profile partnerships reflect the increasing involvement of business. For example:

- The World Economic Forum, funded by contributions from 1,000 of the world's foremost corporations, has established the Global Health Initiative (GHI). Involving companies from a wide range of sectors, the GHI fosters greater private sector engagement in the global fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. At the February 2002 World Economic Forum meeting in New York, the GHI issued an Executive Statement calling on business leaders to make the fight against HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria a priority and outlining how the private sector can make a difference.

> *A partnership between Coca Cola and UNAIDS is tackling AIDS in five African countries. The initiative focuses on building community infrastructure for prevention, education and treatment programs; providing marketing expertise for public awareness and information campaigns; and development of workplace programs and practices at Coca Cola's work sites.*

- Corporate donations to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria are rising steadily. Administered as part of the UN Foundation, the Fund is an independent public/private partnership that receives most of its money from governments but also seeks contributions from foundations, corporations and individuals.

- There is increasing business participation in UNAIDS, which promotes and establishes joint initiatives with business, reflecting in part the clear emphasis on business involvement in the Declaration of Commitment that concluded the June 2001 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on HIV/AIDS.

At the individual company level, the emphasis in the early stages of action on HIV/AIDS tends to be on safeguarding core business activities by protecting and supporting the workforce. However, as businesses become aware of the significance of other stakeholders in influencing the impact of HIV/AIDS on their operations, they have begun to extend their responses to wider prevention, education and community involvement initiatives.

Motivations for initiating an HIV/AIDS response include recognition of actual or potential negative impacts on productivity, production costs and/or market positioning; response to anti-discrimination legislation; and opportunities to enhance market share and image with target markets. Some responses are motivated by core business interests (e.g., the pharmaceutical and insurance industries) or the need to protect markets under direct threat (e.g., the travel and tourism sectors).

Business responses have occurred in four main areas: core business operations, initiatives with business partners, community involvement, and advocacy and leadership. A review of worldwide initiatives in these four areas, including profiles of 16 individual company responses, is presented in *The Business Response to HIV/AIDS*, cited earlier. The report on HIV/AIDS in the mining sector, also referred to earlier, contains a chapter on key stakeholder approaches and responses. The following is a summary of main points from those two documents.

Core Business Operations. Internally focused initiatives, intended mainly to protect and support the company's workforce and their families, include the following:

- development of company HIV/AIDS policies and practices on matters such as non-discrimination, HIV screening, health and pension benefits, confidentiality, and continuation of employment;

- workplace supports to help retain and recruit employees with HIV/AIDS;

• HIV/AIDS education and prevention programs for employees (e.g., peer education and condom distribution); and

• HIV/AIDS care for infected employees (e.g., access to antiretroviral drugs).

Working with Business Partners. Businesses have found they need to protect their business partners against the impact of HIV/AIDS in order to remain responsive and competitive and to maintain their reputations. Large enterprises generally have a greater ability to undertake an HIV/AIDS response (e.g., because of higher capital availability and access to skills and information), whereas their suppliers tend to be small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with less capacity. In the developing world, SMEs make up the majority of business operations and sources of employment. Customers are the lifeblood of a business and are thus key partners as well.

• ***Supplier and service networks.*** Partnerships between large enterprises and their smaller suppliers and service enterprises have taken two forms. In direct partnership initiatives, the larger company, often a multinational, may extend its HIV/AIDS programs (e.g., education and prevention) to its suppliers or help suppliers set up their own policies and programs. The second approach is collective collaboration and resource sharing (e.g., leadership, training, advice, finance) between large and smaller enterprises through such mechanisms as HIV/AIDS business coalitions, small business associations or chambers of commerce.

• ***Educating customers.*** In some areas, HIV/AIDS threatens present consumer markets. In others, future markets are threatened if HIV/AIDS education and prevention campaigns are not extended to the widest possible audience. A number of companies have used

Placer Dome, a Canadian mining company, has partnered since 1999 with a South African NGO in the Community AIDS Response (CARE) project. A new initiative of the project, the AIDS Campaign Team Mining (ACT) project, will facilitate home-based care, prevention, economic opportunity and other supports for tens of thousands of people affected by AIDS in five African countries. The 2002 World Bank Development Marketplace Innovation Competition awarded $100,000 to assist with the ACT project.

their public communications capacities to reach millions of people with education and prevention messages. Companies have also used their customer outlets and distribution networks to provide information materials and condoms. In developing countries, these distribution networks may be the most effective, or the only, way of reaching large parts of the population. These responses have occurred mostly in the soft drink, beverage alcohol, and entertainment and media sectors.

Community Involvement.

Businesses are becoming involved in the wider community response to HIV/AIDS because they realize that their ability to protect their employees is limited if education and prevention are not occurring in the larger community. They are also aware that the disease adds greatly to the cost of public services, thus increasing taxes. In hard-hit areas, some are supporting wider initiatives because of the threat to national economies posed by HIV/AIDS and the realization that business must be part of the national response. These business responses generally fall into two categories.

• ***Social Investment and Outreach.*** Some companies have made a long-term commitment to work with communities (often in partnership with other companies, governments and NGOs) on HIV/AIDS and related issues (poverty, housing, access to education and health services) and are looking to see a real return to both the company and the community. These initiatives involve active participation of company officials and employees in various initiatives, along with such supports as information, company facilities and infrastructure, and finances. Potential benefits to the company include reduced risk to employees, a more stable community operating environment, and enhancement of the company's reputation for social responsibility with public officials, customers and other community members.

- *Philanthropy.* Many companies make philanthropic grants to HIV/AIDS education and care projects. These actions could be of indirect benefit to the business, but they are directed mainly at building a reputation as a good corporate citizen. Corporate philanthropy is also undergoing a shift from providing general grants to also providing more targeted needs-based assistance, for example, focusing on the most vulnerable groups.

Advocacy and Leadership. Many companies that have joined the HIV/AIDS response take a lead in advocating for greater business involvement. Executives of such companies have played an important part in encouraging their colleagues to become involved. On the international and national level, companies have begun to collaborate through business coalitions to raise levels of awareness and involvement through dialogue and action. Central to the work of these coalitions is partnership with NGOs, the public sector and intergovernmental organizations to facilitate advocacy.

The Importance of Partnerships

A resounding theme in most business responses is the emphasis on working in partnership. Through joint action, participants can undertake HIV/AIDS initiatives that meet their individual agendas while creating more effective collective responses through better coordination and pooling of resources.

> *"Disease reduction is a critical factor for business success in developing countries, and it is important to recognize that we can maximize the impact of our interventions when we work in partnership with other stakeholders."* **Goran Lindahl, Chairman, Anglo-American Coal, and private sector representative on the board of Directors of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.**

Key Lessons from the Business Response

The 16 businesses profiled in *The Business Response to HIV/AIDS: Impact and Lessons Learned* consistently identified several key lessons and success factors for developing an effective HIV/AIDS response.

1. Ensure a committed leadership (CEO, board and management) and understanding at all levels of the workforce, particularly through demonstrating the business case for addressing HIV/AIDS.

2. Develop initiatives that match the company's core business skills and technical expertise with the needs of the target audience.

3. Engage in a multi-pronged approach to ensure real effectiveness, that goes beyond the workplace and address issues within the local community.

4. Demonstrate the business costs and benefits and human resource implications of HIV/AIDS initiatives.

5. Undertake a consultative approach with all stakeholders, particularly in involving people living with HIV/AIDS, to ensure that initiatives are appropriately directed and to allow for priority setting.

6. Enter into partnerships with NGOs and governmental and intergovernmental organizations to provide the necessary expertise and knowledge of HIV/AIDS issues and to enable the scaling-up of responses.

7. Involve peer educators/leaders from the target groups in disseminating education and prevention information.

8. Use low-cost creative tools to ensure sustainability and replicability.

9. Undertake continual monitoring and review the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS initiatives, with a willingness to adapt programs accordingly.

- **Businesses** can offer three main types of resources to such partnerships: material assets (premises, financial aid, products and services); a skills base (organization and communications, monitoring and measurement capacities, information technology skills, employee volunteers); and networks of contacts (access to company workforce, links to suppliers and customers, links to other businesses).

- **Public sector partners** such as national and local governments can bring knowledge about and access to physical and social infrastructure (health care, public health, education, transport, communications); technical expertise; public funding; regulatory authority; and political processes and priorities. Intergovernmental and multilateral agencies such as UNAIDS, the International Labour Organization and the World Bank can offer specialized knowledge, financial assistance, and linkages with other international bodies.

- **Non-governmental and community-based organizations** bring the credibility that comes from working closely with those most affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic and can offer knowledge about the needs and resources of the local community, specialized knowledge of HIV/AIDS, and experience in developing and exercising social and political influence.

Assessing Results

Many business initiatives are in their early stages, making it difficult for companies to assess effectiveness and impact. A few companies have mechanisms in place to monitor progress, but there is still little hard information on results or cost-effectiveness. As well,

Volkswagen do Brasil implemented a coordinated HIV/AIDS care and treatment program for its HIV-employees with HIV/AIDS. This included access to infectious disease specialists, social workers, nutritionists, psychologists, referrals to specialized hospitals, home care, antiretroviral drug treatment and clinical tests. The program resulted in a 90% reduction in hospitalizations and a 40% reduction in treatments and care costs. 90% of employees in the program were active and without symptoms, and significant savings were realized from reduced absenteeism and loss of experienced employees.

companies may be reluctant to share monitoring information if it relates to core business operations.

However, considerable anecdotal evidence indicates that initiatives are having positive effects. Several of the companies profiled in *The Business Response to HIV/AIDS* have reported a reduced incidence of HIV infection among employees, greater willingness of employees to discuss HIV/AIDS and participate in prevention programs, and reduction of workplace prejudice and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS. One of the profiled companies, Eskom, a South African utility company, stated that the benefits of HIV/AIDS prevention strategies outweigh the costs of an unchecked spread of HIV/AIDS in the workplace and the community.

Although a few of the companies (e.g., Volkswagen do Brasil) have conducted quantitative studies of outcomes, further work is needed to build the evidence base on costs and effectiveness. This information is important for businesses making decisions about investments in such initiatives.

Dilemmas for Business

Multinational companies may face difficult dilemmas in establishing and maintaining HIV/AIDS community outreach and support initiatives in developing countries.

One of the greatest challenges is building capacity without creating dependency. Companies often become involved in community health issues such as HIV/AIDS because public health infrastructure or services are lacking as a result of social disorganization, government priorities that lie elsewhere, and/or lack of resources. In

some cases, companies that get involved in health and social issues have been criticized by the international community for usurping government functions, making it too easy for governments to avoid their social responsibilities. In addition, if the business closes, the community is left without services. The solution is to find ways to contribute to building sustainable capacity, through partnerships with other businesses, international organizations, NGOs and governments.

The process of consulting and working with local communities – with their diverse and sometimes competing interests and needs – is also challenging. Companies need to be able to identify key community leaders, find out who knows how to get things done, then develop effective ways of working with them. Many resources are available to help companies with this process of community involvement, collaboration and partnership. CSR organizations such as Business for Social Responsibility and the Canadian Centre for Business in the Community, along with HIV/AIDS business organizations such as the Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, can offer tools and advice.

Another difficult issue is the tendency for the 'community' served by company initiatives to expand, with demands on services becoming greater and greater. This can make companies reluctant to do anything at all. It is often a problem for smaller companies with limited financial and staff capacity. The mining sector finds this a particular difficulty, since mining companies are often quite small (as compared to oil companies and some other multinationals) and the sector is economically under siege. Yet expectations and demands are growing. Again, the solution is to find ways to work in partnership with other businesses, governments, international organizations and NGOs – companies are not expected to meet all needs on their own.

5. Resources and Tools for Business

A growing pool of resources and tools are available to help companies find out how HIV/AIDS could affect their business and how to develop and sustain appropriate and effective responses.

Organizations

Several key organizations are good sources of information and assistance. Annex B includes a list of organizations that could be helpful.

- The Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS is a membership-based organization that supports its members with advice, peer support, tools and materials, and networking opportunities. Its goals are to promote implementation of workplace policies and programs; harness the skills and resources of companies in initiatives beyond the workplace; support advocacy and leadership of member companies with associates, suppliers and customers; and foster partnerships with government, international and civil society organizations. The Coalition has a program of national and regional summits of business, government and civil society leaders to promote these partnerships. The web site includes links to a wide range of resources and organizations (www.businessfightsaids.org).

- The Asian Business Coalition on AIDS (ABC on AIDS) is a coalition of national business organizations in 10 countries (Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Bangladesh and the Philippines). Some of these national organizations are HIV/AIDS-specific councils or coalitions, while others are more general business or CSR organizations that include a focus on HIV/AIDS. Coalition partners share information,

assess mutual requirements, develop joint strategies and resources to support best practices, and collaborate on information management, training programs and conferences. The web site includes tools, resources and case histories (www.abconaids.org).

- UNAIDS (United Nations Joint Program on HIV/AIDS) produces useful publications on the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS, as well as publications related to the business response. The Partnership Unit focuses on building and supporting partnerships with business (www.unaids.org).

- The Global Compact is a network-oriented organization that promotes corporate leadership around sustainable growth. It brings companies together with UN organizations, labour organizations and other civil society groups to contribute to shared values and principles, including support for HIV/AIDS activities of members (www.globalcompact.org).

Tools and Information Resources

- A "Tool for Managers" is included in *The Business Response to HIV/AIDS*, cited earlier. This tool includes guiding principles, basic elements of the planning process, and options for policies and programs. Guidance on establishing and maintaining successful partnerships is also provided.

- UNAIDS and the World Economic Forum have developed a *Partnership Menu* to help the private sector find innovative HIV/AIDS partnership opportunities. It offers potential donors a list of projects they can sponsor at the country level.

- The International Labour Organization (ILO) has published *An ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work*, offering practical guidance to policy makers, employers, workers' organizations, and other social partners on designing and implementing workplace policies, prevention and care programs, and strategies to address workers in the informal labour sector.

- The Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS has a package for chief executives and senior company directors entitled *Employees and HIV: Action for Business Leaders*. This resource presents short, easily understandable principles, backed up by examples of concrete programs already adopted by businesses worldwide.

- Family Health International has published *Private Sector AIDS Policy: Businesses Managing AIDS, A Guide for Managers*. It includes examples of successful workplace programs and advice and tools for planning and implementation.

- The Global Reporting Initiative, which focuses on voluntary corporate social responsibility reporting, is developing a protocol for use by companies in disclosing information on HIV/AIDS policies, practices and programs.

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Introduction to Corporate Social Responsibility. December 2001. Document from the Business for Social Responsibility web site (www.bsr.org).

Promoting Global Corporate Responsibility. December 2001. Document from the National Policy Association web site (www.npa1.org).

Reporting on Corporate Social Responsibility Performance: Results of a Survey of Canadian Companies. March 2001. Prepared for Industry Canada by David Greenall and Ron Yachnin, Canadian Centre for Business in the Community and The Conference Board of Canada.

Stepping Forward: Corporate Sustainability Reporting in Canada. November 2001. Stratos Inc. in collaboration with Alan Willis & Associates and SustainAbility.

Sustainability Reporting Guidelines. June 2000. Global Reporting Initiative.

The Business Case for Sustainable Development. September 2001. World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

The Five Generations of Corporate Codes of Conduct and Their Impact on Corporate Social Responsibility. 1996. E.P. Mendes and J.A. Clark, Human Rights Research and Education Centre, Carleton University.

The Millennium Poll on Corporate Social Responsibility: Executive Briefing. 1999. Environics International Ltd. in cooperation with The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum and The Conference Board.

The Mining Sector and Community Health: An Assessment of Activity, Engagement and Perception. Draft, January 2002. Prepared for Natural Resources Canada by Black and White Communications.

The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and Global Instruments for Corporate Responsibility. April 2001. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Directorate for Financial, Fiscal and Enterprise Affairs.

Annex B:
Web Sites

Business, HIV/AIDS and Corporate Social Responsibility

The following organizational web sites contain a wealth of information that could be of use to businesses interested in becoming involved in the global response to HIV/AIDS or in strengthening existing HIV/AIDS policies and programs.

Asian Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS
www.ABConAIDS.org

Business Exchange on AIDS and Development
www.cdc.gov

Business for Social Responsibility
www.bsr.org

Canadian Business for Social Responsibility
www.cbsr.bc.ca

Canadian Centre for Business in the Community
www2.conferenceboard.ca/ccbc

Canadian Centre for Innovation in Corporate Responsibility
www.cicr.net

Corporate Council on Africa
www.africacncl.org

Forum Empresa (focus on corporate social responsibility in the Americas)
www.empresa.org

Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS
www.businessfightsaids.org

Global Reporting Initiative
www.globalreporting.org

International Chamber of Commerce Group on Business in Society
www.iccwbo.org

International Institute for Sustainable Development
www.iied.org

National Policy Association (U.S.), Corporate Social Responsibility Project
www.npa1.org

North-South Institute
www.nsi-ins.ca

Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum
www.pwblf.org.uk

Social Investment Organization
www.socialinvestment.org

United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
www.unaids.org

United Nations Global Compact
www.unglobalcompact.org

World Alliance for Community Health
www.wacommunityhealth.org

World Business Council for Sustainable Development
www.wbcsd.org

World Economic Forum Global Health Initiative
www.weforum.org