Moving Forward: Pathfinder International’s Contribution to the Global HIV and AIDS Response

2009
An estimated 33 million people around the world

Though Africa remains the most seriously affected region, the epidemic is generalized in many South, Central, and South-East Asian countries, as well as Eastern Europe, and affects vulnerable groups in Latin America. HIV and AIDS have devastated health, social, and economic systems in the developing world. Response to this crisis requires a massive, multi-faceted, and coordinated global effort, based on a commitment to applying state-of-the-art approaches and advancing social justice and human rights.

Pathfinder’s HIV and AIDS work benefits from our unique background in community-based, sexual and reproductive health, and gender-focused programming. We prioritize expanding...
An estimated 33 million people around the world are infected with HIV. Evidence-based prevention, access to testing and treatment, and high-quality comprehensive services. Over decades, Pathfinder has become a leader in strengthening community and facility services through local capacity building, partnerships, and collaboration with public sector stakeholders. We implement projects in the eight priority areas described in this paper: community home-based care, HIV counseling and testing, treatment and adherence support, integration of family planning and HIV, prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission, youth-friendly HIV services, prevention and treatment for vulnerable groups, and care and support for orphans and vulnerable children.
Coordinating Comprehensive Services through Community Home-Based Care

TANZANIA

Now in its fifth year, Pathfinder/Tanzania’s community home-based care project, Tutunzane (meaning “Let’s take care of one another”), offers a wide range of health and social services to clients and families infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. The project works with the Ministry of Health to train and support volunteer community health workers who collaborate with household caregivers to provide safe, compassionate care. In response to community needs, Tutunzane recently integrated home-based counseling and testing and care and support for orphans and vulnerable children into its package of services. As of December 2008, Tutunzane had served more than 30,500 clients through 1,624 community health workers.

Other countries with active community home-based care projects: Ethiopia, Kenya, India, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda

Photo: TANZANIA Sarah Day

Pathfinder’s community home-based care projects address the health, social, and economic consequences of HIV and AIDS for individuals and communities. We strengthen the capacities of local organizations, community health workers, community health and development committees, health facility providers, and other partners, such as microcredit and nutrition organizations. Pathfinder helps families and communities address their diverse needs, such as basic household nursing care and linkages with facilities and social support groups. Key components of our community home-based care projects include:

- Community health worker and household caregiver training, including treatment adherence support;
- Community mobilization for stigma reduction and HIV prevention;
- Two-way referral linkages between facilities and community resources for health, social, and economic services, including family planning and voluntary counseling and testing; and
- Strengthening facility treatment and referral services, including opportunistic infection prevention and treatment.

RELEVANT PATHFINDER PUBLICATIONS:*

- The Integrated AIDS Program: Decreasing Stigma through Quality Services, 2008
- Community Home-Based Care for People and Communities Affected by HIV/AIDS: A Comprehensive Training Course and Handbook for Community Health Workers, 2006
- Mapping of Community Home-Based Care Services in Five Regions of the Tanzania Mainland, 2006

* All publications cited in this document are available on the Pathfinder website at www.pathfind.org.
Expanding, Improving, and Leveraging HIV Counseling and Testing

Early identification of HIV infection helps prevent transmission, build awareness, decrease stigma, and facilitate timely access to care, support, and treatment. Pathfinder collaborates with national programs that expand access to HIV counseling and testing through facility and community care services using routine opt-out, provider- and client-initiated, and outreach models, such as home-based and mobile testing. HIV testing is most effective for prevention and access to treatment and care when offered with support for risk reduction, disclosure, and positive living. Therefore, we build widespread access to testing and appropriate counseling through:

- Referral support for comprehensive health and social services, including family planning services and support groups;
- Counselor training in informed consent, stigma reduction, and testing procedures;
- Integration of HIV counseling and testing in antenatal care, maternal and child health, family planning, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, in- and out-patient care, and youth-friendly services; and
- Development of national and local HIV counseling and testing policies that respond to local needs and international best practices.

**NIGERIA**

In 2008 Pathfinder/Nigeria launched a project to improve HIV counseling and testing services in six primary health care centers and two general hospitals in Edo State. These facilities separate HIV counseling and testing services for the general population from those for pregnant women and their partners. Improved confidentiality significantly improves access to testing for women, and special services strengthen referral systems for prevention of mother-to-child transmission.

**Other countries with active HIV counseling and testing projects:**

Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania

Photo: NIGERIA Amy Coughlin/Pathfinder International

More than 80% of people living with HIV in low and middle-income countries do not know that they are infected.
The increased availability of effective antibiotics and antiretroviral therapy globally has enabled persons living with HIV to live longer, more productive lives. Pathfinder supports access to comprehensive care and treatment, including antiretroviral therapy, opportunistic infection prevention and treatment (including tuberculosis), referral networks, and adherence support. We also provide specialized support for the unique treatment needs of children and youth. Pathfinder meets these needs by:

- Training health facility and community service providers in comprehensive service delivery, including treatment adherence and referrals for socio-economic support;
- Facility and community support for youth-friendly services, referrals, and early infant diagnosis for entry to treatment; and
- Facility management and infrastructure support.

**RELEVANT PATHFINDER PUBLICATIONS:**

- The Essentials of Antiretroviral Therapy for Health Care and Program Managers, 2007
Integrating Family Planning and HIV and AIDS Services to Address Clients’ Reproductive Goals

Pathfinder integrates family planning information and services into its community home-based care, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, treatment, and HIV counseling and testing projects. Likewise, HIV and AIDS services and referrals are mainstreamed into our sexual and reproductive health and family planning counseling and service delivery work. Our integration work includes:

- Policy development and implementation support;
- Infrastructure support and assistance procuring family planning commodities; and
- Training of health facility and community providers in integrated service delivery, including referrals for both family planning and HIV and AIDS services.

RELEVANT PATHFINDER PUBLICATIONS:

- Integrating Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS Services: Pathfinder International’s Experience Synergizing Health Initiatives, 2005

ETHIOPIA

Currently in its fourth year, Pathfinder/Ethiopia’s Integrated Family Health Project is implemented in seven regions of Ethiopia. The project has trained more than 10,000 community health workers to provide family planning information and contraceptive methods, improve HIV and sexually transmitted infection prevention, and community level support for care and treatment for persons living with HIV. Since 2005, Pathfinder/Ethiopia has reached more than 35 million people with educational messages about HIV and AIDS.

Other countries with active integration projects: Kenya, India, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Viet Nam

Photo: ETHIOPIA Pathfinder/Ethiopia staff
Pathfinder offers HIV-positive pregnant women an expanded package of mother-to-child prevention services that ensures access to basic antiretroviral medication and support for optimal breastfeeding. Our package also address broader needs in family planning, high-quality reproductive health and maternal and child health care, HIV prevention, opportunistic infection prevention and treatment, and economic development linkages. Key activities include:

- Community mobilization for HIV prevention, family planning, HIV counseling and testing, and breastfeeding support;
- Facility training and support for:
  - Integrated antenatal care (prevention and treatment of sexually-transmitted infections including HIV, opportunistic infections, tetanus, and malaria, as well as antiretroviral drugs and nutrition);
  - Safe delivery (routine HIV testing, infection prevention, antiretroviral drugs for infants); and
  - Postnatal support (family planning, emergency care, home-based care, early infant diagnosis, antiretroviral therapy, and optimal breastfeeding).

**BOTSWANA**

Since 2005, Pathfinder/Botswana has improved the health and psychosocial wellbeing of HIV-positive pregnant women, mothers, and their families through peer education and group psychosocial support. Through local organizations, Pathfinder offers peer counseling services that address myths and common challenges, promote safe infant feeding and testing, and engage men. To date, peer educators have made over 34,000 visits to pregnant women and male peers.

**Other countries with active prevention of mother-to-child transmission projects:** Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa

Photo: BOTSWANA Pathfinder/Botswana staff

Without intervention, 25-35% of HIV-positive pregnant mothers transmit HIV to their babies during pregnancy, labor and delivery, or through breastfeeding.

Packaging Prevention of Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission Services for Mothers, Infants, and Families

**RELEVANT PATHFINDER PUBLICATIONS:**

Targeting Youth to Expand Access and Improve Quality of Services

To empower youth to make informed decisions about their health, Pathfinder promotes access to comprehensive information about HIV and AIDS, improves life skills, and provides access to youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services. Pathfinder also offers care and support for HIV-positive youth in several countries. Pathfinder has worked with youth in more than 30 countries, implementing projects that include:

- Early intervention focused on prevention and negotiation, communication, conflict resolution and other life skills;
- Facility and community-based youth-friendly health services;
- Health facility provider, supervisor, and peer educator training;
- Parent, educator, and youth and community involvement;
- Innovative behavior-change communication materials;
- Interventions to address gender inequities, such as condom negotiation, male involvement, girls’ education, and gender-based violence training; and
- Advocacy for supportive national youth policies and programs.

RELEVANT PATHFINDER PUBLICATIONS:

- Partnering with African Youth: Pathfinder International and the African Youth Alliance Experience, 2004
- Reproductive Health and Family Planning Training Curriculum: Module 16: Reproductive Health Services for Youth, 2003
- Clinic Assessment of Youth-Friendly Services: A Tool for Improving Reproductive Health Services for Youth, 2003
- Adolescent Cue Cards, 2003

MOZAMBIQUE

Pathfinder/Mozambique collaborates with several partners on the Geração Biz (meaning “Busy Generation”) project, a national multisector, youth-friendly, sexual and reproductive health initiative that has been identified as a best practice by the World Bank. In 2008 alone, Geração Biz reached nearly 3,700,000 youth aged 10-24 years through 7,345 peer educators. Key partners include national and local representatives from the ministries of Education and Culture, Youth and Sports, and Health, as well as community youth organizations.

Other countries with active HIV-focused youth projects: Bolivia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Peru, South Africa, Viet Nam

Photo: MOZAMBIQUE Sarah Day

Engaging and Supporting Vulnerable Groups

**INDIA**

Pathfinder/India’s Mukta (meaning “Freedom”) project works with community organizations and over 250 trained peer educators to provide HIV and sexually transmitted infection prevention services to over 24,000 female sex workers and men who have sex with men. Pathfinder’s community-based approach supports the formal organization of sex worker groups and has reduced the rate of sexually transmitted infections among these groups by over 30 percent. The project’s peer educators and comprehensive facility services promote prevention and treatment through static clinics, outreach medical visits, preferred health facility providers, referral laboratories, and access to a government hospital.

Other countries with active projects for vulnerable groups: Brazil, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Viet Nam

Photo: INDIA Deepa Chavan Pathfinder/India

Sex workers, injecting drug users, men who have sex with men, truckers, displaced people, migrants, and military workers are often blamed for bridging HIV into the general population, and targeted as “high-risk” groups. These groups suffer increased vulnerability to HIV and poor access to treatment due to high rates of sexually transmitted infections, stigma that discourages healthcare-seeking behavior, and deep social inequities. Pathfinder goes beyond providing information, condoms, and harm reduction to vulnerable groups—we actively engage group members in developing and implementing strategies to address the policies and social factors that fuel vulnerability. Our projects support the rights of vulnerable groups and promote:

- Active participation by vulnerable groups in planning, implementation, and evaluation of project activities;
- Building the capacity of vulnerable group associations for outreach and behavior change communication;
- Training in prevention, care, and treatment for vulnerable groups, as well as stigma reduction and access to comprehensive services; and
- Policymaker and health facility provider advocacy.

**RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS:**

- Kenyan Sexual Networks: Collecting evidence for interventions to reduce HIV/STI risk in Garissa, North Eastern Province, and Eastleigh, Nairobi, 2009
- Reducing Stigma and Raising Awareness: The APHIA II Nairobi/Central Advocates, 2008
In sub-Saharan Africa, three young women are infected for every young man among 15-24 year-olds.

Mobilizing Multisectoral Approaches for Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Orphans and vulnerable children and the adults who care for them require psychosocial, financial, nutritional, and educational support, in addition to health services. Pathfinder aids these children and families directly through community home-based care, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, community and facility capacity building, and youth-friendly services. We also address other needs through referrals and partner organizations. Our responsive approach includes:

- Facility and community capacity building for routine preventive health and HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, and care;
- Access to basic education, vocational training, and life skills;
- Training for community organizations to support volunteers, identify children in need, and track referrals;
- Counselor, parent, and guardian training in addressing psychosocial, income-generation, legal protection, and basic living needs; and
- Emergency food relief, supplementary feeding, food support, and breastfeeding and nutrition education for parents and guardians.

UGANDA

Pathfinder/Uganda supports local governments and community organizations in planning, implementing, and managing need-based services for orphans and vulnerable children in nine districts in the North Central Zone of Uganda. During 20 years of civil conflict, much of the zone’s infrastructure and social support networks were destroyed and thousands of children now live in conditions that render them extremely vulnerable. Pathfinder promotes government and community collaboration to assess and address children’s health and social needs as well as establish committees to serve orphans and vulnerable children.

Other countries with active projects for orphans and vulnerable children: Brazil, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda

Photo: UGANDA Sarah Day
Pathfinder thanks the following public and private donors for their support of our work in HIV and AIDS: the United States Agency for International Development, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Brazil National AIDS Program, The World Bank, the United Nations Population Fund, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, The Trull Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Tides Foundation.