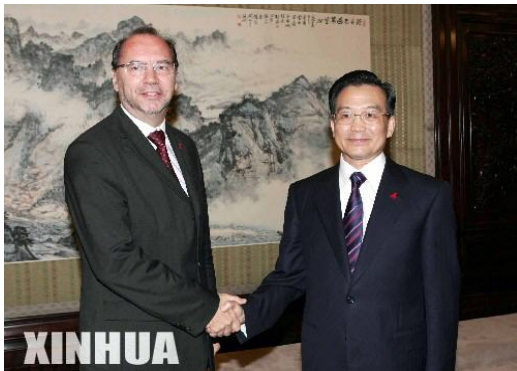


## Strengthening and sustaining leadership and political commitment to the response to HIV epidemic in China

### Objective

The project is aimed at increasing and sustaining leadership and political commitment of the Chinese government response to the HIV epidemic in China.



Premier Wen Jiabao met with Dr Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director on June 13, 2005, Beijing

patients. In 2005, there were an estimated 70,000 new infections and 25,000 deaths. Though the estimated number of HIV and AIDS cases remains less than 0.1% of the total population, HIV continues to rise, but with significant geographic variation. New HIV cases are being transmitted primarily through injecting drug use (IDU) and commercial sex. More people are developing clinical AIDS and AIDS-related deaths are on the rise. The epidemic is spreading from vulnerable populations - such as IDUs, sex workers and men who have sex with men - to the general population, and increasingly among women. There is a potential risk that the HIV epidemic will spread further.

### Partners involved

- UNAIDS cosponsoring agencies and other UN agencies, development agencies, government agencies and representatives, civil society, NGOS and foundations.
- Chinese Ministry of Health and other government ministries and agencies, People's Congress, State Council AIDS Working Committee.

### Overview of the situation

In China, by the end of 2005, there were approximately 650,000 people living with HIV, among which, 75,000 were AIDS

### Description

In order to achieve the objective, the following strategies and stages were followed by the UN Theme Group with UNAIDS as the secretariat and coordinator, and with the support of all the partners involved:

- Advocacy and strategic information.
- Patient dialogue, coordination and information sharing.
- Building a common understanding through a joint analysis of the HIV epidemic situation, identification of challenges and planning of responses.

- UNAIDS China worked on securing continued and articulated Government support at the highest level to the response against HIV.
- UNAIDS China provided critical support to the efficient functioning of the UN Theme Group through which the above strategies and steps were followed.
- UNAIDS China improved significantly the understanding of the HIV situation in China by the national authorities and the international community.
- Launch of 'Four Free and One Care' policy in 2004<sup>1</sup>.
- Five commitments by the Chinese government in response to HIV and AIDS were presented at the UN in New York in September 2003 by Executive Vice Minister of Health Gao Qiang.
- Increased budget by the central Government from US\$ 48.75 million in 2003 to US\$ 100 million in 2005.
- Development of a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the progress of implementation of the National Action Plan.

## Deliverables

After several years of persistent advocacy, dialogue, coordination, joint planning, and technical support specific achievements are:

- Visible and strengthened leadership and political commitment to respond to AIDS by Chinese top leaders and by the government were generated.
- Intensified government-led, multicultural and comprehensive responses were witnessed in the last two years.
- Establishment of a multisectoral State Council AIDS Working Committee.
- Adoption of HIV prevention and control as a priority in the 11th National Five-Year Development Plan (2006-2010).
- Launch of a National Action Plan on HIV prevention, treatment and care (2006-2010) in 2006.
- Launch of a new regulation on HIV prevention and control in 2006.
- Revision of the law on contagious disease prevention and control in 2004 which outlaws discrimination against people living with HIV.

## Next steps

- Continued advocacy efforts to sustain the top leadership's commitment to achieve the targets of scaling up towards Universal Access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.
- Introduce and implement recent policies and regulations related to HIV prevention, treatment and care at all levels of government.
- Strengthen HIV related multi-sector response, strategic planning, awareness, capacity and advocacy at the local level.

## Contacts

Joel Rehnstrom  
 UNAIDS Country Coordinator  
 Tel: +8610 8532 2226  
 Email: [joel.rehnstrom@public.un.org.cn](mailto:joel.rehnstrom@public.un.org.cn)

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to a nationwide policy to provide the following services: 1. Free ARV drugs to AIDS patients who are rural residents or people with financial difficulties living in the urban areas; 2. Free VCT; 3. Free drugs to HIV infected pregnant women for PMTCT, and HIV testing of newborn babies; 4. Free schooling for children orphaned by AIDS; and 5. Care and economic assistance to the poor households of people living with HIV.