

Join the fight against AIDS in Panama



Panama is a country of contrasts, particularly in socioeconomic terms. Its urban areas enjoy prosperity and wide access to technology. Meanwhile, in its rural areas and areas where indigenous people live, persistent poverty challenges those engaged in improving the quality of life of all Panamanians.

Panama's economy depends largely on the service sector. Its geographic location also makes it an important transit zone for thousands of visitors, workers and travellers. These factors both challenge, as well as provide opportunities, for HIV prevention and care.

A crucial time...

Panama is one of the three most affected countries in Central America, with HIV prevalence estimated at 1% among the population between 15–49 years of age. More than 20 000 Panamanians are estimated to be living with HIV, but most of them are unaware of it. Since the epidemic began in 1984 to the end of 2004, 6600 AIDS cases have been notified. In 2004, about 2000 people living with HIV were receiving antiretroviral treatment.

To date, AIDS has claimed 5000 Panamanian lives. Approximately 80% of these individuals were aged 15–49, the most productive population segment. Of these deaths 60% occurred among workers.

In Panama, AIDS is changing lives, families must meet the challenge. Panama's national transmission and caring for those directly affected.

In Panama, sex is the main HIV-transmission mode, accounting for 66% of documented cases, but in 28% of notified cases the risk factor is unknown. Two thirds of all cases were men, but the number of women infected is increasing. Injecting drug use accounts for another 2%, while mother-to-child transmission accounts for 4%. The Hospital del Niño reports that 30% of children born to HIV-positive mothers seroconverted.

The progress of the national response...

To facilitate a greater involvement of the private sector in the response to the epidemic, the Panamanian Business Council created in 1999 the Council for HIV/AIDS Prevention, aimed to support the private sector's participation in prevention, education and behaviour change; as well as to reduce stigma and discrimination in the workplace.

In the year 2000, a law on *Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV/AIDS* was passed to promote a stronger legal response to the epidemic. The law protects the rights of people living with HIV by stating that AIDS is an issue of national interest. The law prohibits discrimination, provides a legal framework for comprehensive care, and establishes mandatory national prevention and bio-safety programmes.

The law also offers tax incentives of up to US\$ 10 000 for individuals or companies who contribute to HIV prevention and AIDS care programmes. One of the achievements of this law is to acknowledge the HIV epidemic as a matter of importance to the State; however, the mechanisms for enforcing this law need to be strengthened.

Panamanians receive health care through either the Social Security or other systems of the Ministry of Health. In 1999, the Social Security System began providing antiretroviral drugs at a cost of more than US\$ 3 million per year. This system currently cares for an estimated 1500 Panamanians, mainly workers and their families. In 2004, the Ministry of Health allotted close to US\$ 1.5 million dollars to AIDS treatment, providing care for another 600 people.

Illustrative menu of partnership options in Panama

Young people

Mass media and HIV/AIDS

Care and support

Vulnerable populations

Condoms

Workplace and HIV and AIDS

Join the fight against AIDS

For more information on partnership opportunities with organizations involved in HIV/AIDS, go to www.unaids.org/partnership

Young and at risk...

- ▶ More than 845 000 Panamanians (28% of the total population) are aged between 10–24. As of December 2004, 568 HIV cases were reported in this age group.
- ▶ On average, Panamanians are sexually active by the age of 14. In 2004, almost 2500 pregnancies were reported among girls between 15 and 19 years old.
- ▶ Forty per cent of Panamanians are poor and 26.5% live in extreme poverty. In urban areas, 46% of poor people are under the age of 18. More than 20% of poor children and 30% of those living in extreme poverty have not completed elementary school.

What they need...

Young people need more information about their sexuality before they become sexually active.

Make it happen...

Peer education

Peer education programs allow young people to talk to each other about issues they might have difficulty discussing with adults. These programmes reinforce their skills on leadership, safer sex negotiation, self-esteem and promote youth-friendly spaces where they have access to information. The Ministry of Health, the Institute for the Development of Women and Children and UNICEF work in the provinces of Colón and Coclé to reinforce HIV prevention among young people. The Peer Education for Young People Project trains 1200 young people as peer educators on prevention and sexuality and raises AIDS awareness among parents and teachers.

- ▶ US\$ 20 000 would train 240 parents in two districts;
- ▶ US\$ 8000 would cover the production and distribution of 2000 AIDS-awareness materials. US\$ 5000 would cover capacity-building events, such as workshops, forums or a national meeting.

In-kind contributions: Training expertise and meeting rooms would facilitate training and workshops.

For more information, contact: Lic. Mayanin Rodríguez; National Director of Promotion and Health Prevention at Ministry of Health, phone: (507) 212-9184 or Dra. Edilma Berrío, at: eberrio11@hotmail.com, phone: (507) 212.9191 or Nancy Andrade de Castro, UNICEF at nandradecastro@unicef.org

Training of trainers

The Panamanian Red Cross is training 25 trainers in HIV and STI management and prevention. These trainers will reach 100 000 young people in eight provinces through four-day workshops, as well as house, school and community visits.

- ▶ US\$ 10 000 would cover eight four-day workshops in eight provinces;
- ▶ US\$ 5000 would cover 16 prevention seminars in two schools of each province.

In-kind contributions: the design, production and distribution of AIDS-awareness material would be welcome.

For more information, contact: Migdalia Salas, Executive Director, Panamanian Red Cross at: cruzbien@pa.inter.net

Primary school education

The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the nongovernmental organization PROBIDSIDA and UNICEF have developed a project on Sexual Education for HIV Prevention in three public schools in the urban area of San Miguelito. The project focuses on children attending 4th to 6th grades of primary schools, and uses a multicultural approach, since the majority of children and young people in these schools is indigenous.

Training workshops on HIV prevention, sexual and reproductive health, violence and gender are conducted with teachers, parents, and health care workers. A local consultant also works with the students using theatre as a communication method.

- ▶ US\$ 30 000 would train 300 facilitators for one year;
- ▶ US\$ 40 000 would pay for HIV prevention seminars to reach 17 000 of San Miguelito's elementary and high school students.

In-kind contributions: the design, production and distribution of AIDS-awareness material would be welcome.

For more information, contact: Profesor Diego Gutiérrez, Ministerio de Educación; Tel. (507) 278-0950, (507) 278-0942, Nancy Andrade de Castro, UNICEF at nandradecastro@unicef.org

A wide reach...

- ▶ Mass media are powerful tools to inform and educate the public. They provide an important platform for social marketing, promoting behavioural change and challenging the negative images of AIDS that foster stigma and discrimination.
- ▶ In Panama, radio reaches 85.5% of the national audience; television 76%, and the Internet 4.8%. There are also five national newspapers, with a combined circulation of 170 000 copies a day.

Get the message out...

An effective AIDS strategy uses all forms of mass media to educate the public about HIV prevention, treatment and care. However, information alone is not enough. Mass-media campaigns are more efficient when they are supported by local-level programmes that provide life-skills training and livelihood options.

Make it happen...

Public Service Announcements

TV and radio spots with messages of awareness have been designed and produced by nongovernmental organizations for local audiences.

- ▶ US\$ 100 000 would support the implementation of sustained mass-media campaigns for one year, including:
 - ▶ US\$ 50 000 for awareness and training activities in three provinces;
 - ▶ US\$ 30 000 for 50 radio, television and news paper ads and
 - ▶ US\$ 20 000 for the distribution of 80 000 flyers and posters.

For more information contact: Norma Garcia de Paredes, Internacional Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies at: Ifrcpa9@ifrc.org, phone (507) 317.1300

AIDS awareness, training and communication

The Joint HIV/AIDS Awareness, Training and Communication project was developed by the Ministry of Health with the support of Panama United Nations Expanded Theme Group on HIV/AIDS and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation. It raises AIDS awareness of both the general population and those most likely to be exposed to HIV.

- ▶ US\$ 200 000 would sustain mass-media campaigns for one year, including radio, television and newspaper ads; flyer and poster distribution, and awareness and training activities.

In-kind contributions: air time, media access, and technical expertise in designing media campaigns would be welcome.

For more information, contact: Ministry of Health at: pnsida@minsa.gob.pa or UNAIDS Theme Group; onusida.gt@un.org.pa

AIDS information centre

Panama's HIV/AIDS Specialized Information Centre, developed by the Panamanian Family Planning Association, is the only one of its kind in Panama. The Centre offers a wide array of HIV documents in hardcopy and via Internet. The Family Planning Association reaches young people with HIV information through the Youth Network for HIV/AIDS and STI prevention.

- ▶ US\$ 30 000 would cover the production and distribution of AIDS awareness materials, as well as prevention activities in schools for one year.

In-kind contributions: computer equipment, and venue and technical assistance would be welcome.

For more information, contact: Elsa Berroa, Panamanian Family Planning Association (APLFA) at: aplafa@orbi.net, Phone (507) 317.0430

Caring for people living with HIV...

- ▶ As of December 2004, Panama had more than 6100 reported HIV cases. Approximately 40% receive AIDS treatment at a monthly cost of US\$ 100–200/per person.
- ▶ HIV testing is currently available through the Ministry of Health and Social Security systems, private laboratories and some nongovernmental organizations
- ▶ In Panama, those living with HIV still face stigma and discrimination. Many people avoid being tested for fear that a positive result will mean the loss of their families, friends, jobs and social contacts.

What they need...

People living with HIV need: counselling and antiretroviral treatment in health facilities adapted to them; care and support from their families, communities, workplaces and health-care facilities; and comprehensive programme strategies such as stigma alleviation and confidential voluntary counselling and testing services.

Studies show that providing treatment and counselling reduces AIDS-related illnesses and the hospitalizations that occur as a result of these. For example, in the Social Security Hospital, the treatment and care costs associated with AIDS-related illnesses diminished considerably when access to treatment and counselling became available.

Make it happen...

Voluntary counselling and testing

The nongovernmental organization, PROBIDSIDA with technical support from the Social Security System, provides HIV tests for approximately 5000 people per year at health-care centres with pre- and post-test counselling. HIV-positive people receive special attention for referral and follow-up. PROBIDSIDA also organizes promotion programmes for voluntary testing and counselling in government and private institutions.

- ▶ US\$ 10 000 would cover the costs of 2000 HIV tests, as well as counselling and follow-up referral.

For more information, contact: Orlando Quintero at: probidsida@cwpanama.net, phone (507) 225.9119, 225.8043.

Self-help groups

Self-help groups, such as The Saint Thomas Hospital's Self-help Group and the Group Genesis Panama, offer specialized counselling, legal assistance, care and support to people living with or affected by HIV. The groups also promote AIDS awareness campaigns to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV.

- ▶ US\$ 5000 per year would ensure the sustainability of these self-help groups, as well as educating group members on motivational issues, treatment adherence and self-esteem.

For more information, contact Ruben Pechio, Grupo Génesis Panama at: genesis_panama@yahoo.com

Helpline

The AIDS helpline offers emotional support and information to both the general public and people living with HIV. Helpline personnel are thoroughly trained and sensitized, and refer people to other specialized services when necessary. It is Panama's first helpline for people living with HIV.

- ▶ US\$ 12 000 would cover the running costs of the helpline to open daily (from 9a.m.–12p.m.) for one year.

In-kind contribution: telephone services, equipment and technical training would be welcome.

For more information, contact: Orlando Quintero at: probidsida@cwpanama.net. Phone (507) 225.9119, 225.8043.

Orphans and HIV-positive children

Care and support for infected children or orphans of deceased parents due to AIDS is offered by two faith-based organizations in Panama and Colón. Services include counselling, healthcare, nutrition and boarding until they are integrated into a foster family. The Albergue de Maria for Children with AIDS, in the province of Colón, is a humanitarian home run by the fraternity Pequeña Familia de Maria. The Orphanage San José de Malambo, located in Arraijan—on the East side of Panama—provides a home to children at risk. Since 1995 the number of children with AIDS admitted in the orphanage had been increasing, therefore, in 1998 it opened the House Clinic Casa Virgen de la Esperanza to provide care for these children. This year, a sponsoring programme called "Supportive Godparents" was created to obtain contributions for treatment, control and follow-up services.

- ▶ US\$ 450 is the annual cost for treatment and care of a child with AIDS.

For more information, contact: Padre Vicente Magante, Albergue de Maria at: pefama@cwpanama.net; Phone: (507) 442 2722 and Sister Idian Reiss, Orphanage San Jose de Malambo at: idianreiss@hotmail.com; Phone: (507) 259-9186

Populations at risk...

In Panama, some people are at higher risk of HIV infection due to their socioeconomic status, sexual behaviours and cultural patterns. These populations include men who have sex with men, sex workers, men and women in prisons, mobile populations, indigenous groups and injecting drug users. They are often stigmatized and have limited access to sex education and mainstream HIV services. As such, outreach and peer networks must bring services to where these groups work and socialize.

What is needed...

Populations at higher risk of exposure to HIV need services and support systems that address their specific needs, including livelihood opportunities, safer-sex negotiation skills, counselling and access to HIV information. Effective interventions and wide-ranging educational campaigns for them must be increased nationwide.

Make it happen...

Men who have sex with men

In Panama, men who have sex with men represent a significant proportion of the total of AIDS cases. However, this fact is under-reported due to stigma and discrimination. The Association of New Men and Women of Panama is the country's only gay and lesbian organization with legal status. It works on mass condom distribution, social marketing, HIV prevention, and participates in studies on prevalence and sexual behaviours.

- ▶ US\$ 25 000 would train 30 facilitators to provide 1000 men who have sex with men with HIV-prevention methods and other information on HIV and sexually transmitted infections, such as how to access counselling.
- ▶ US\$ 15 000 would cover the design, printing and distribution of educational materials adapted for each group.

For more information contact Ricardo Beteta, Asociación de Hombres y Mujeres Nuevos de Panamá at: ahmnp@yahoo.com, Phone (507) 292-3208

Sex workers

In Panama, there are an estimated 7500 sex workers: young men and women who sell sex to support themselves and their families. Empowering sex workers with knowledge and skills enables them to protect themselves against HIV. The Panamanian Family Planning Association and the nongovernmental organization EMESSAR train sex workers on prevention skills and distribute free condoms. These organizations also work with the local police.

- ▶ US\$ 15 000 would train 300 sex workers in Panama City, San Miguelito and Colón on prevention of HIV and sexually transmitted infections for one year.
- ▶ US\$ 8000 would cover more than 100 AIDS-awareness workshops for the local police.

In-kind contributions: legal services, counselling, and social support would be welcome.

For more information, contact: Lic. Carmen de Aguilar Director, Instituto Intenacional de Derechos Humanos en Salud at iidehsa@pa.inter.net or Elsa Berroa at aplafa@orbi.net, Phone (507) 317-0430 or Ministry of Health, pnsinsa@hotmail.com; pnsida@minsa.gob.pa; www.minsa.gob.pa

Men and women in prison

Panama has more than 10 000 prison inmates, all at risk of HIV due to psychological pressures, high-risk sex, drug use and over populated prisons. Men and women in prison need HIV prevention information, access to condoms, counselling and health services.

- ▶ US\$ 15 000 would cover the costs of a study on HIV in prisons in Panama's most-affected areas (Panama City, San Miguelito and Colón). The results of this study would define the best prevention strategies for this population.
- ▶ US\$ 7000 would train 40 trainers to reach 4000 inmates with accurate information on prevention of HIV and sexually transmitted infections. US\$ 3000 would cover the costs of 300 voluntary tests, as well as counselling.

For more information, contact: Director, Instituto Internacional de Derechos Humanos en Salud at: iidehsa@pa.inter.net and Migdalia Salas, Executive Director, Panamanian Red Cross at: cruzbien@pa.inter.net

Injecting drug users

The National Drug Commission supports the prevention of drug abuse among young people through the National Coalition of Youth Organizations for HIV/AIDS and Drug Abuse Prevention. The Coalition currently reaches 500 young people with activities such as prevention training.

- ▶ US\$ 6000 would support dissemination of good practices to prevent HIV and drug abuse. US\$ 3000 would strengthen the Coalition through prevention workshops, publications and two annual meetings.

For more information, contact: Holda Marré at the National Drug Commission (CONAPREP) Executive Director Phone: (507) 207.3000

Condoms: the best way to stop the epidemic...

For sexually active men and women the most effective way to prevent HIV transmission is by using male and female condoms correctly and consistently. Without this, other prevention strategies such as education on reproductive health issues and for behaviour change lose much of their potential value. Sustained condom promotion requires more technical and financial resources.

What can be done...

Social marketing is an effective strategy for boosting regular condom use. Through education and commercial marketing strategies, social marketing makes condoms widely and easily available, and encourages people to buy and use them consistently and correctly.

Condom promotion messages need to reach young people. They, along with women, need to be better educated and more empowered to protect themselves from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

Make it happen...

Sailors, people in port cities and border cities

Panama's economy depends on the transportation industry. Its geographic location also makes it an important transit zone for thousands of visitors, workers and travellers. Given the well-established connection between HIV and mobility, the Pan American Social Marketing Organization works to ensure that sailors and people in port- and border-cities have access to high-quality, low-cost condoms in non-traditional sales points, namely Colón's Duty-Free Zone, Bocas del Toro and Paso Canoa, on the Costa Rican border. Prevention messages and condoms are placed in areas where they eat, rest or attend to customs procedures reaching over 2000 people with information on correct condom use and increasing personal risk awareness.

- ▶ US\$ 45 000 per year would help reach out to another 4000 sailors and people at their meeting sites in port and border cities.

For more information contact: [Aideth Flores and Beverly Grajales in the Centro de Investigación en Reproducción Humana at phone \(507\) 207-5639](#)

Making condoms available in the workplace

The Pan American Social Marketing Organization promotes the sale and distribution of low-cost condoms, as well as information on correct condom use. The organization is placing 600 condom dispensers and 10 information stands in accessible locations, to reach young men and women in their workplace.

- ▶ US\$ 20 000 would cover the costs of the 300 condom dispensers and 10 information sites for one year.

In-kind contributions: supplies of condoms, and the design and printing of educational materials would be welcome.

For more information, contact: [Jaime Arrunátegui, gerentepasmop@cableonda.net](#) Tel. (507) 6616 8265; Fax: (507) 213 2077 or [Fernando Jiménez, coordinadorccc@cableonda.net](#)

Condoms for sex workers

The Pan American Social Marketing Organization's programmes through local nongovernmental organizations, aim to increase condom availability at non-traditional sales points such as carnivals, parades, fairs, bars, and Panama's commercial sex areas. Approximately 500 sex workers will be trained on condom negotiation strategies with their customers.

- ▶ US\$ 20 000 would train 500 sex workers, as well as provide the 200 condoms dispensers in non-traditional sales points for one year.

For more information, contact: [gerentepasmop@cableonda.net](#) Tel. (507) 6616 8265; [coordinadorccc@cableonda.net](#) and [condonesvive@hotmail.com](#).

Reaching the indigenous population

High rates of HIV infection have been notified among residents of the indigenous community of Kuna Yala, due to great migration of young people to urban areas in search of jobs, certain cultural customs, the need for updated prevention information and access to condoms. Community-based organizations are reaching young people through the dissemination of AIDS information using ethnically-adapted language, as well as through training of trainers.

- ▶ US\$ 20 000 would cover the cost of training 500 community leaders and the design and reproduction of information materials to reach 3000 families.

In-kind contributions: supply of condoms, printing of materials, as well as transportation would be welcome.

For more information, contact: [Juan Gomez, Agrupación Valor Joven, Capitulo de Kuna Yala, Tel. 211-4209](#)

HIV is a workplace issue...

- ▶ Worldwide, more than 42 million people are living with HIV. Nine out of every 10 are adults in their productive and reproductive prime. In Panama, almost 80% of AIDS cases occur among people in their most economically productive years.
- ▶ In 2002, the Social Security System documented a variety of occupations among the new HIV cases, including craft workers, professionals, technicians, security workers and police officers, office clerks, and domestic workers.

It's our business...

Since 1999, the private sector and labour unions have worked together to respond to the epidemic. Through the Panamanian Business Council for HIV/AIDS Prevention, they have distributed pamphlets and posters, and have conducted prevention workshops in the workplace. Labour unions, such as the Panamanian General Workers' Union, are doing the same. Nevertheless, more support and business engagement are needed.

Investing in the future...

Prevention in the productive sector

Since October 1999, the Panamanian Business Council for HIV/AIDS Prevention and nongovernmental organizations, with the support of USAID, the Social Security System and Ministry of Health has promoted prevention within the productive sector. For example, the Council distributes its HIV/AIDS Management Manual to human resource managers, and provides the corresponding training. It also prepares other educational materials and prevention seminars in the workplace.

- ▶ US\$ 60 000 would cover the costs of an HIV-prevention seminar for 400 managers, as well as the costs of printing and distributing educational materials and publications to reach 10 000 workers per year.

For more information, contact: Ing. Gennaro Marino at ifarma@pty.com or Manuel Burgos at burgosmg@sinfo.net

HIV training programmes for workers

The Panamanian General Workers Union trains workers to increase their knowledge on HIV and sexually transmitted infection prevention and promotes safer sex practices. Thirty workers are trained as peer educators in each module. The full programme consists of three modules per year, each with 40 hours of training.

- ▶ US\$ 10 000 would cover three training sessions for workers from across the country.

For more information, contact: Gabriel Garrido, Alianza Estratégica at: ggabriel09@yahoo.com.es and Maité Cisneros, The Ombudsman of the Republic of Panama (Defensoria del Pueblo) at: (507) 214.9835, 213.8568 mcisneros@defensoriadelpueblo.gob.pa

HIV Prevention, Control, and Monitoring Project

The national organization of people living with HIV, PROBIDSIDA, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and the National STI/HIV/AIDS Program developed the HIV/AIDS Prevention, Control and Monitoring Project. The Project's objective is to reduce the infection rates among the population through more HIV information and the promotion of stigma prevention messages.

- ▶ US\$ 15 000 would cover the costs for 170 facilitators to bring prevention messages for health workers, teachers, police officers, and government and private enterprise employees at the workplace. People living with HIV are encouraged to participate in the programme.

For more information, contact Orlando Quintero at: probidside@cwpanama.net, phone (507) 225.9119, 225.8043

Governmental and nongovernmental institutions, with the support of international cooperation organizations, work together to prevent the spread of the epidemic through a Strategic Multisectoral Plan (PEM) for the period 2003–2007, which focuses on improving prevention, care quality, and the rights of Panamanians living with HIV.

To coordinate and guide a broader response to the epidemic, the Government created The National Commission on AIDS (CONASIDA), comprised of: the Ministries of Health; Education; Economy and Finance; Work and Labour; Government and Justice; Youth, Women, Children and Family; the Social Security system; and the Office of the First Lady.

Nongovernmental organizations have coalesced in the Strategic Alliance for the Public Promotion and Defence against HIV/AIDS which includes different entities such as: Association of New Men and Women of Panama; the Ombudsman of the Republic of Panama; the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights on Health; the Central Union of Panama Workers and PROBIDSIDA.

Panama in Statistics

- ▶ Estimated population (2005): 3 million
- ▶ NGI (2004): US\$ 4000
- ▶ Life expectancy (2004): 74.2 years
- ▶ Reported AIDS cases (through December 2004): 6694

*s, schools and workplaces; the response
ul initiatives aimed at preventing HIV
affected need businesses to engage.*

But more is needed...

Despite these efforts, 2000 new cases were reported between 2002–2004.

Among men who have sex with men, prevalence is estimated at 10%. If prevention efforts among these groups are not expanded, approximately 1300 new cases of men who have sex with men can be expected by 2010.

The prevalence among female sex workers was over 2%, and almost 100 new cases are expected within the next year.

African-descendants and indigenous populations living in the city of Colón and Kuna Yala are also registering high infection rates among their residents.

Where are the gaps?

- ▶ Despite the strong national efforts, the financial assistance from both internal and external cooperation agencies is still insufficient.
- ▶ The private sector needs to be more engaged in the response to the epidemic in the workplace and communities.
- ▶ National policies based on Panama's successful small-scale pilots need to be adopted and implemented urgently.
- ▶ Prevention programmes need to be strengthened and scaled-up.
- ▶ The country's epidemiological surveillance programmes need to be expanded.
- ▶ Prevention programmes for sex workers, men who have sex with men, indigenous populations and prisoners need to be strengthened and assigned additional resources.
- ▶ Increased coverage is needed for diagnoses at prenatal consultations in order to prevent mother-to-child transmission.

Your next step...

To find out how you can make a difference, contact:

- ▶ Gladys Guerrero, Chief, STI/HIV/AIDS Program, Ministry of Health, Panama at: pnsminsa@hotmail.com; pnsida@minsa.gob.pa
- ▶ UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS at: onusida.gt@un.org.pa
- ▶ Ing. Gennaro Marino, National Business Council, at: ifarma@pty.com
- ▶ Orlando Quintero Arosemena, Fundación PROBIDSIDA at: probidsida@cwpanama.net; www.probidsida.org. Phone (507) 225.9119
- ▶ Gabriel Garrido, Alianza Estratégica at: ggabriel09@yahoo.com.es
- ▶ Ernesto Guerrero, UNAIDS Country Coordinator, at: guerreroe@unaids.org

To find out more about how Panama is responding to the epidemic, consult the following publications:

All Against AIDS: National Strategic Plan on STI/HIV/AIDS, 2003–2007. Ministry of Health Panama www.minsa.gob.pa

Testimonies: The Panamanian Face of AIDS. Ministry of Health, Pan American Health Organization and UNAIDS, 2003.

Let's Talk About AIDS. Ministry of Health and the Pan American Health Organization, Panama, 2003.

Estudio Multicéntrico Centroamericano de Prevalencia de VIH/ITS y Comportamiento en Hombres que tienen Sexo con otros Hombres en Panamá. Dr. Cesar Antonio Nuñez, et al, PASCA/USAID, Universidad de Washington, OPS y la Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional, 2003.

La Importancia de Trabajar el tema de la Prevención, Atención y Apoyo en VIH/SIDA CON Hombres Homosexuales, Bisexuales y otros Hombres que Tienen Relaciones Sexuales con Hombres, OASIS, ASICAL, 2003
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja, FICR. *Reducción de la vulnerabilidad familiar al VIH/SIDA y otras Enfermedades Infecciosas.* Programa Mundial 2002–2004.

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The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) brings together ten United Nations organizations: UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP UNDP, UNFPA, UNODOC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank.

As the leading advocate for worldwide action against HIV/AIDS, the global mission of UNAIDS is to lead, strengthen and support an expanded response to the epidemic that will:

- ▶ prevent the spread of HIV;
- ▶ provide care and support for those infected and affected by the disease;
- ▶ reduce the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS; and
- ▶ alleviate the socioeconomic and human impact of the epidemic.

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
20 avenue Appia | 1211 Geneva 27 | Switzerland
tel. +(41) 22 791 36 66 | fax +(41) 22 791 4187