

PACIFIC ISLANDS HIV AND STI RESPONSE FUND 2009–2013

FACT SHEET

The Pacific Islands HIV and STI Response Fund 2009–2013 ('Response Fund') is a multi-donor pooled funding mechanism that supports implementation of national and regional HIV strategic plans. Australia, New Zealand and France contribute to the Response Fund.

The Response Fund aims to contribute to the Pacific Regional HIV and STI Strategy goal, which is to reduce the spread and impact of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) while embracing people infected and affected by HIV in Pacific communities.

Background

The Response Fund builds on previous support provided through the HIV/AIDS Pacific Regional Initiative and the Pacific Regional HIV/AIDS Project (PRHP). PRHP was implemented by IDSS Ltd and the Burnet Institute in conjunction with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), through what is known as the Franco-Australian initiative.

There have been many achievements through this project, including the development of national plans, a grants programme that has increased the focus on vulnerable groups, an increase in gender-sensitive interventions, and expansion of the availability of antiretroviral treatment for people with HIV.

Under PRHP, SPC received funding to coordinate a regional approach to HIV. This funding assisted with the development of a regional strategy on HIV/AIDS that was endorsed by Pacific Leaders in 2004. The strategy and its implementation plan, the Pacific Regional Strategy Implementation Plan (PRSIP), now form the cornerstone of the regional response to HIV and have attracted funding from other donors.

PRSIP takes into account the need to build the capacity of a regional organisation (SPC) in its role of supporting Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) to implement their responses to HIV and other STIs, and recognises the presence of other donors in the region. Within this context, a multi-donor funding facility that aims to work in partnership with PICTs, regional agencies such as SPC, multilateral agencies and other donors is considered more appropriate than the stand-alone project previously supported by AusAID.

The Response Fund design was developed after extensive consultation with national, regional and international implementing agencies.

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This initiative acknowledges the importance of harmonising responses to HIV in the Pacific region in a way that is consistent with the Rome and Paris declarations and the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles, as adopted by the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). The proposed approach recognises that an effective response to HIV and other STIs in the Pacific region requires capacity building at regional, national (both government and civil society) and community levels. Capacity building includes training, technical support and organisational systems strengthening as well as financial resources.

Capacity-building support may be provided by regional technical agencies, such as SPC, WHO and UNAIDS, or by other sources, such as the UN Technical Support Facility and Australian-based agencies participating in the HIV Workforce Capacity Building Consortium.

Decisions on the most appropriate form and provider of capacity building will be determined at a country level, and be supported through national and regional funding allocations.

This programme will complement current AusAID support for HIV-related activities in the Pacific, including those that have a focus on broader sexual and reproductive health issues. These include the Asia Pacific Leadership Forum, the Pacific International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) sexual and reproductive health capacity building programme, and the AusAID regional HIV/AIDS capacity building programme 2007–2011 and HIV/AIDS research programme.

The Response Fund will provide funding streams that support national and regional implementation (both government and non-government), as well as support the governance, administration, monitoring and evaluation of the Response Fund.

The Response Fund will be overseen by a Fund Committee responsible for ensuring that interventions are evidence based and funds are used appropriately and effectively.

SPC will have responsibility for managing the processes associated with the Response Fund, and providing secretariat services to the Fund Committee.

For further information visit SPC website etc.