

Asia can afford universal access for AIDS prevention and treatment

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This paper draws on published reports, data from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria and the Asian Development Bank, and analysis by the Commission on AIDS in Asia to estimate financial resources required to achieve universal access for HIV in low-income and middle-income countries of Asia. It explores optimal use of available resources to mount effective response to AIDS in Asia against an uncertain economic climate. Although there is global commitment to tackle the HIV pandemic, available financing falls short of minimum requirements to achieve universal access to prevention and treatment. To support essential HIV priorities in Asia, the Commission on AIDS in Asia estimated annual resource needs to be US\$ 3.1 billion. Yet, in 2007, according to one study, estimated total public spending on AIDS in 14 major Asian countries was only US\$ 0.9 billion. Hence, scarce resources need to be carefully applied to address the concentrated HIV epidemics in Asia and achieve universal coverage by prioritizing investment in high-impact interventions to maximally avert new infections and deaths, intensifying multisectoral efforts through catalytic financing that mainstreams HIV interventions into existing services, particularly for low-impact prevention programs, and ensuring countries with growing economies mobilize increased amounts of domestic funding to match international financing.

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Introduction

The turn of the millennium was marked by an increased global commitment to tackle the HIV pandemic [1]. The United Nations General Assembly, recognizing HIV as a significant barrier to development, pledged to contain the spread of the disease in the Millennium Development Goals in 2000 [2] and endorsed the Declaration on HIV/AIDS at its Special Session (United Nations General Assembly Special Session) in 2001 [3]. Similarly, at their 2005 summit, the G8 called for universal access to AIDS treatment by 2010 [4,5], a pledge expanded that year at

the United Nations World Summit to include universal access to prevention, treatment, care, and support for AIDS, followed by the United Nations General Assembly's Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS in 2006, following discussions on universal access at the United Nations High Level Meeting on AIDS [6]. Global resource needs for AIDS were estimated at US\$ 9.2 billion for 2005 [7–10], US\$ 14.9 billion for 2006, US\$ 18.1 billion for 2007, and US\$ 22.1 billion for 2008 [10].

International donor financing for HIV increased from US\$ 1 billion before 2000 [9,10] to US\$ 8.7 billion in

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