



## World AIDS DAY

1 December 2006

### A DAY DEDICATED TO RAISING AWARENESS OF THE GLOBAL AIDS PANDEMIC CAUSED BY THE SPREAD OF HIV INFECTION.

#### South African Diary: "Living With AIDS"

By Thembi Ngubane

#### The Trespasser

Every morning when I wake up I run off to my drawer, take out the mirror and look at myself. Then I start to do my prayer. I say it every day, every time when I'm feeling angry, like how when you are angry at someone, you always have that thing inside you that you need to tell that someone what you feel. I say, "Hello HIV, you trespasser. You are in my body. You have to obey the rules. You have to respect me. And if you don't hurt me, I won't hurt you. You mind your business, I'll mind mine. Then I'll give you a ticket when your time comes."

I never thought I would worry about HIV and AIDS. It was the last thing on my mind.

I'm going to tell you how I was infected.

Read the full story and listen to a complete audio recording of this remarkable story at: [http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworl d/blog/2006/05/south\\_african\\_d.h tml](http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworl d/blog/2006/05/south_african_d.h tml)

#### Mapping the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic

by David Montero

Approximately 40 million people around the world are currently

living with HIV/AIDS. More than 3 million died because of the disease

in 2003. AIDS is now considered the leading cause of death and lost years of productive life for adults aged 15-49 worldwide.

Ninety-five percent of people who are infected with HIV live in the developing world, 70 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa alone. Countries in Africa continue to have the highest prevalence rates of HIV infection in the world. In some African countries, well over a third of the population is living with HIV/AIDS. In Swaziland, for example, 38.6 percent of the total population is infected.

Treatment and prevention efforts are making headway in some developing countries around the world, most notably in Brazil, Thailand, Senegal and Uganda, thanks to the introduction of awareness programs, condom distribution and free antiretroviral drugs.

Some 6 million people around the world require antiretroviral drugs, but only 400,000 currently have access to them. The high cost of drugs, even generic drugs that cost as little as \$140 per person per year, continues to be a barrier to effective treatment.

Our interactive map shows how many men, women and children live with HIV/AIDS in different regions of the world. It also provides a snapshot of prevention and treatment efforts in 12 countries, highlighting both

successes and challenges in the global fight against AIDS.

Read the Full summary and view the interactive map of HIV/AIDS at <http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworl d/stories/india304/aids1.html>

#### Synopsis of "The Sex Workers"

In the heart of Mumbai, India [also known as Bombay] lies Kamathipura, one of the country's poorest districts and also its largest red light district, home to more than 60,000 sex workers. In the spring of 2004, FRONTLINE/World correspondent Raney Aronson travelled to Kamathipura to investigate what has quickly become the center of the AIDS epidemic in India, which affects more than four and a half million people.

On the streets of Kamathipura, it's no challenge for Aronson to find sex workers to talk with. In a small gathering she asks them frankly about the core issues of their trade -- economics and health. The women get the equivalent of US\$1.50 for sex, \$2 on a good night, less than a dollar on a bad night. To have sex without a condom, men will often pay more or, after a few visits, tell the women they love them. The women in the group laugh a bit about the men's proclamations of love, but there's a tragic fact behind their laughter: more than half of the sex workers here are HIV positive.

For a full story with a video link, please visit:

<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/india304/thestory.html>

## **Breaking the code of silence**

**By Joel Hood**  
**Bee Staff Writer**

In a small, two-bedroom home on a quiet street in Modesto, Maria is trying to find her voice.

Colorful, unscented candles flicker in the hallway. Framed pictures of Jesus hang on the walls, beside those of her children.

Abuse has shaped her life. Rape. Beatings. Deception by those she loved and trusted.

This is baggage Maria carries every day — along with a secret.

It's been more than five years since Maria found out she has the human immunodeficiency virus, the precursor to AIDS. The diagnosis came on a cloudy winter day in 1999, exactly five days after the single mother discovered she was pregnant with her third child.

"Your test is positive; you have HIV," Maria remembers the nurse telling her. The words were blunt, unkind. In her mind, they were a death sentence.

"You're lying," Maria blurted out. Then she walked out the door.

Each day since has seemed to bring Maria a new emotion. There are times when the Modesto woman, who spoke to The Bee on the condition that her real name not be used, shows the strength and resilience that carried her through an abusive childhood.

But there are other days, too — when medicine and stress keep Maria confined to her room; when she barely recognizes her reflection in the mirror.

Since her diagnosis, Maria has kept her illness hidden from family and closest friends, something health experts say is common for

Latino men and women living with HIV and AIDS.

AIDS carries added stigma in Latino cultures, because of its link to homosexuality and largely outdated ideas about how the virus is spread, said Dr. Victoria Cargill, the director of minority research at the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Md. Men with AIDS are assumed gay. Infected women are thought to have been unfaithful, she said.

For the Full story, visit <http://www.modbee.com/local/story/10453152p-11250713c.html>

## **Nelao's story**

### **Ambassador of hope**

Nelao, from Namibia, was infected with HIV at the age of 16, nearly five years ago. "I knew about HIV," she says. "I was just afraid to follow the steps that I was telling other people. The man that infected me ... the love that I had for him fooled me. The words were inside, to just use a condom. But I failed to tell him that: 'Let's use a condom.' I felt, if I tell him, maybe that will be the end of the relationship. And I was just still too young to say 'no' and let 'no' mean 'no'."

Nelao only found out that she was HIV-positive when her son, who is now three years old, became ill. This led to their both having an HIV test. They were both found to be infected with the virus.

Not surprisingly, this was a great shock. But Nelao's mother stood by her and gave her a lot of support. "I'm still part and parcel of the family," Nelao says. "Later on, when I got enough counselling, it made me understand what it means to be positive, how one can live and how one can cope with HIV."

Nelao also made a brave decision — one that had a big impact not only on her own life, but on the lives of other young people...

For the Full story, visit [http://www.unicef.org/voy/explorer/aids/explore\\_206.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/explorer/aids/explore_206.html)

**For other real stories on HIV/AIDS, please visit**

[http://www.unicef.org/voy/explorer/aids/explore\\_181.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/explorer/aids/explore_181.html)

## **AIDS Epidemic expanding**

**IRIN – 2006-11-23**

The global HIV/AIDS epidemic is expanding, according to new figures released on Tuesday by UNAIDS and the World Health Organisation (WHO), with sub-Saharan Africa still carrying the heaviest burden. Of the estimated 4.3 million new infections in 2006, 65 percent occurred in the region.

Despite a major scale-up in antiretroviral treatment, which reached more than one million people in sub-Saharan Africa by June 2006, the area accounted for almost three-quarters of AIDS-related deaths. Overall, the region is now home to an estimated 24.7 million HIV-infected people, up from 22.6 million two years ago.

The '2006 AIDS Epidemic Update', compiled from the most recent worldwide HIV/AIDS surveillance, records alarming evidence of a resurgence of HIV infection in countries that previously had some success in stabilising or reducing prevalence. "This is worrying, as we know increased HIV prevention programmes in these countries have shown progress in the past, Uganda being a prime example. This means that countries are not moving at the same speed as their epidemics," commented UNAIDS Executive Director Dr Peter Piot.

A study of some rural areas in Uganda found a rise in prevalence from a low of 5.6 percent in men and 6.9 percent in women in 2000, to 6.5 percent in men and 8.8 percent in women in 2004. The increase appears to correspond with studies suggesting that older men in those areas are engaging in more casual sex.

With a few exceptions, including Mali and Burundi, most countries in East and West Africa are experiencing stabilising or declining HIV prevalence rates.

Southern Africa is still hardest hit. In this region, Zimbabwe is the only country where HIV data from antenatal clinics indicate a decline in adult HIV prevalence from around 30 percent in the early 2000s to 24 percent in 2004. The report says that while behaviour change resulting from increased AIDS awareness probably accounts for some of the decrease, "inconsistencies and biases in some of the data mean that the extent of the decline in HIV prevalence might not be as substantial as indicated by the antenatal clinic data."

**For a full report on this story, please visit:**  
<http://www.irinnews.org/>

### **Botswana: Making a Statement**

#### **REUTERS - 2006-11-28**

On Monday it will be exactly two weeks after Mr President's national address. But we still reel in disbelief at what we saw and heard at the National Assembly that day.

We were not only spellbound by the top man's statements, but we were equally fascinated by the fashion statements made by our ladies, who left us with the thoughts of getting a new wardrobe.

These thoughts have since disappeared due to the scarcity and rarity of the Pula (our money). Enough about fashion statements. Next Friday we commemorate World AIDS Day with the rest of the world.

We have had HIV/AIDS for 21 years. Which is why we beg each and every reader to make a commitment today to stop new HIV infections.

President Festus Mogae has stated in the nation address that "we can not meet our Millenium

Development and Vision 2016 goals unless there is a significant change in behaviour.

"In this respect, I appeal to every citizen to make a personal commitment to abandon risky behaviour that might lead to HIV infection," he said.

We have ears, let us hear. We can stop the spread of HIV by knowing our HIV status instead of assuming that we are HIV negative and indulging in unprotected sex. Let us refrain from having sex with minors after abusing alcohol. After all the youth are our future leaders.

**Source:** <http://allafrica.com/>

### **Mining co's help fund Australia's Virax African HIV trial**

#### **REUTERS – 2006-11-27**

By Ben Wilson

Australian biotech firm Virax Holdings Ltd. said on Monday eight big mining companies had agreed to pay for trials of its HIV vaccine in South Africa, which is battling one of the world's worst AIDS crises. Virax applied to South Africa's drugs regulator in September for approval to conduct a clinical trial of its VIR201 HIV vaccine, with global mining giant BHP Billiton Ltd. /Pic. as the main sponsor.

On Monday it said another seven mining and metals firms from Australia, Britain, Japan and South Africa had offered funding.

Details of the total funding were not disclosed, but Virax spokesman Tim Duncan said the typical cost for trials of this size was usually between \$5 million and \$6 million.

**For the Full story, please visit**  
<http://ww.reuters.com>

### **Southern Africa: SADC Region Steps Up Fight Against HIV/Aids**

By Sydney Chisenga

The Times of Zambia

2006-11-28

A Latest UNAIDS/WHO report on HIV/AIDS has revealed that the global AIDS epidemic continues to grow and there is evidence that some countries are seeing a resurgence in new HIV infection rates which were previously stable or declining.

However, declines in infection rates are also being observed in some countries, as well as positive trends in young people's sexual behaviours.

According to the latest figures published in the UNAIDS/WHO 2006 AIDS Epidemic Update, an estimated 39.5 million people are living with HIV.

There were 4.3 million new infections in 2006 with 2.8 million (65 per cent) of these in sub-Saharan Africa and important increases in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where there are some indications that infection rates have risen by more than 50 per cent since 2004. In 2006, 2.9 million people died of AIDS-related illnesses.

The reports indicate that new data suggests that where HIV prevention programmes have often not been sustained or adapted as the epidemics have changed, infection rates in some countries are staying the same or going back.

And some countries that had shown earlier successes in reducing new infections, such as Uganda, have either slowed or are experiencing increasing infection rates.

New data from the report show that increased HIV prevention programmes that are focused and adapted to reach those most at risk of HIV infection are making inroads.

According to the report, declines in HIV prevalence among young people between 2000 and 2005 are evident in Botswana, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

The annual AIDS epidemic update reports on the latest developments in the global AIDS epidemic.

With the world commemorating the World's Aids Day on December 1, under the theme "Accountability", clearly, the report indicates that the pattern in HIV/AIDS infections are increasing in most countries particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and HIV/AIDS response in the region standing at crossroads.

The ravages of the pandemic have not spared the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region, though, according to the report, some member countries have made remarkable efforts in the fight against the incurable disease. For a Full report, please visit <http://www.times.co.zm/>

**HIV epidemic 'is getting worse'  
Sub-Saharan Africa is still bearing the brunt of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, a UNAids report has revealed**

**BBC NEWS -2006-11-21**

Almost three-quarters of deaths from Aids in 2006 occurred there and two-thirds of those living with HIV are in that area.

UNAids says there are an estimated 39.5 million people now living with HIV.

The number living with the virus has increased everywhere, with the most striking increases in East Asia and Central Asia/Eastern Europe.

Some countries, such as Uganda, are seeing a resurgence in new HIV infection rates which were previously stable or declining.

The report, which is based on disease surveillance around the world, says there were an estimated 4.3 million new HIV infections this year, with 2.8 million of these occurring in sub-Saharan Africa.

Forty per cent of new infections were in people aged 15 to 24-years-old.

In 2006, 2.9 million died of Aids-related illnesses.

The report says: "The future course of the world's HIV epidemics hinges in many respects on the behaviours young people adopt and maintain, and the factors that affect those choices."

**Women at risk**

In Eastern Europe/Central Asia there was a 70% increase in the number of new infections seen in 2006 compared with 2004 - 270,000 compared with 160,000.

In South-East Asia, the number of new infections rose by 15% from 2004 to 2006.

The increase is fuelled by high-risk behaviour such as injecting drug use, unprotected paid-for sex and unprotected sex between men.

Across the world, women are more likely to be affected by HIV than ever before, the report reveals.

In sub-Saharan Africa, there are around 14 women living with HIV for every 10 men.

UNAids also says the HIV epidemics in Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland are continuing to grow.

**Vulnerable**

Zimbabwe is the only southern African country where the prevalence of HIV among adults is falling.

Dr Peter Piot, UNAids executive director, warned it was vital to sustain HIV prevention efforts, and to ensure they were adapted where necessary to target the most vulnerable.

**Full report at:**  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/>

**Clinton announces boost for**



**Aids fight**

**SAPA - 2006-12-01**

Former United States President Bill Clinton announced an agreement on Thursday to cut prices of HIV/Aids treatments for children, making the life-saving drugs far more accessible worldwide.

Two Indian pharmaceutical companies have agreed to supply antiretroviral (ARV) formulations for HIV-positive children at prices as low as 16 US cents a day, or \$60 annually, Clinton said in a speech at a New Delhi children's hospital ahead of World Aids Day on Friday.

"This breakthrough is a great example of what we can do together. This is a great day, but we have a long way to go. We have to make a new commitment that every child and adult who needs treatment should have access" to the drugs, Clinton said.

Under the agreement, the two companies -- Cipla and Ranbaxy Laboratories -- will supply 19 different ARV formulations for prices that would be about 45% less than the lowest current rates for these drugs in developing countries, he said.

"Though the world has made progress in expanding HIV/Aids treatment to adults, children have been left behind. Only one in 10 children who needs treatment is getting it," Clinton said. For a full report, please visit: <http://www.mg.co.za>

**LINKS TO HIV/AIDS RESOURCES**

[www.sanpad.org.za](http://www.sanpad.org.za)

[www.saf aids.org.zw/](http://www.saf aids.org.zw/)

[www.sat regional.org/](http://www.sat regional.org/)

[allafrica.com/aids/](http://allafrica.com/aids/)

[www.aidsconsortium.org.za/](http://www.aidsconsortium.org.za/)