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## THE SALGA COUNTRY GUIDELINE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON

# HIV and AIDS

## PROMOTING AN EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP RESPONSE

As one of the mandates of local AIDS councils (LACs) is to advise government on policy issues related to HIV and AIDS, political representation in the LAC helps ensure that crucial inputs of AIDS councils reach the agenda of the municipal council. This is one example of the type of local government leadership required to ensure widespread and sustainable responses to HIV and AIDS at the local level. The vital importance of municipal political leadership in the response to HIV and AIDS is also one of the key messages in the "SALGA Country Guideline for Local Government on HIV and AIDS".

The Guideline was adopted by the SALGA national executive committee in October 2007. The process of developing it started in 2004 and included wide stakeholder consultation, political

inputs from the SALGA working groups and secondary research. The document was finalised in 2007, which allowed for the alignment of the guideline to the HIV and AIDS and STI

Strategic Plan for South Africa 2007–2011 and the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) Framework for an Integrated Local Government Response to HIV and AIDS (2007). In line with SALGA’s mandate to provide support and guidance to municipalities, the goals of the Country Guideline are:

- to promote an effective leadership response to HIV and AIDS;
- to enhance local government input into policy development and support;
- to increase local capacity for an effective internal response;
- to increase local capacity for an effective external response;
- to promote effective partnerships; and
- to ensure monitoring, sustainability and integration.

Whereas both administrative and political leadership are essential, the focus of this contribution is on the role of political leadership. The section below builds on Chapter 5 of the Guideline.

## Promoting an effective leadership response to HIV and AIDS

The SALGA Country Guideline identifies three areas where local political leadership is required.

### *From political intent to implementation*

An effective HIV and AIDS response starts with political intent. The Guideline emphasises this by identifying strong political will as “one of the most powerful tools available in the response to HIV and AIDS”. While both administrative and political leadership are vital for an effective response to HIV and AIDS, the mayor takes ultimate responsibility in this regard. Political will is required for HIV and AIDS to be taken out of the ‘health’ corner, to be considered a developmental issue and to become a standard item in the integrated development plan (IDP) processes, from planning until review. This is where the administrative leadership comes into play. The key roles and responsibilities for specific municipal officials and councillors in responding to HIV and AIDS effectively are set out in the table below.

**Table 1: Roles and responsibilities of municipal officials and councillors**

Role-player	Roles and responsibilities
Executive mayor/ executive committee	Leads the HIV and AIDS agenda throughout the municipality Ensures that the positions to drive the agenda are filled and function
Speaker	Ensures that ward councillors champion HIV and AIDS in their wards
Portfolio councillors	Champion HIV and AIDS in their portfolios
Portfolio councillor responsible for HIV and AIDS	Champions HIV and AIDS programming with support from the HIV and AIDS coordinator
Ward councillors	Champion HIV and AIDS in the wards with support from ward committees
Municipal manager	Ensures municipal plans, programmes and projects mainstream HIV and AIDS Ensures that programming activities cover both the workplace and the community dimensions of HIV and AIDS
Line function heads	Ensure sector plans, programmes and projects mainstream HIV and AIDS
IDP manager	Ensures that the IDP process plan and framework adequately cater for the voices of HIV and AIDS to be heard in the IDP process; the various components of the IDP mainstream HIV and AIDS; and HIV and AIDS are mainstreamed through the implementation and monitoring of the IDP
IDP steering committee	Ensures that the strategic thrust and operational components of the IDP appropriately mainstream HIV and AIDS
IDP representative forum members	Ensure that the interest groups, communities and stakeholders they represent are able to consider and express their respective concerns in respect of HIV and AIDS

Source: DPLG Framework for an Integrated Local Government Response to HIV and AIDS (2007: 31)

The integration of HIV and AIDS into the IDP would also assist the implementation of the Abidjan Declaration adopted by the Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL). The Abidjan Declaration summarises the agreements and commitments made to respond more effectively to HIV and AIDS at community level (see box 2). So far all mayors in the Free State province have signed this pledge. Mayors in other provinces are expected to sign it in 2008.

*Public recognition and collaboration with other community leaders*

In addition to the need for leadership in ensuring that HIV and AIDS are mainstreamed into the IDP, local leaders have an advocacy role to play in engaging with community members and community leaders on issues of HIV and AIDS. This includes active participation in community HIV and AIDS events, public statements that promote a climate of care for people with HIV and AIDS and that help reduce stigma, and information to the community on how the municipality integrates HIV and AIDS into its day-to-day functions.

*A collective vision and direction created with and owned by all stakeholders*

The two key roles mentioned above can together contribute to the establishment of a collective vision owned by the political

and administrative arms of the municipality, as well as the local communities. As the SALGA Country Guideline states, “facilitating the creation of the collective vision, instilling enthusiasm and harnessing energy for goal orientated action is probably the most important deliverable of any leader in this pandemic”.

There are a variety of techniques to assist local leaders in developing widely shared visions at community level. Mass visioning techniques engage communities in designing their own destinies, clarify roles and responsibilities, and may result in actions taken by all stakeholders in the pursuit of a common vision. More on this can be found in the SALGA Country Guideline, which also provides practical tips for each of the goals mentioned earlier.

While it is obvious that political leadership is a key requirement for an effective response to HIV and AIDS, in itself it is not enough. As advocated in the SALGA Country Guideline, it needs to be linked with strong technical and managerial capability at the local level, and investments are needed in local government managers as much as in the politicians. SALGA intends to enhance the understanding of the Guideline by both the political and administrative leadership through a set of workshops planned to take place in 2008.

Practical tips for an effective leadership response	
<b>Role of local leadership and political intent</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the Abidjan Declaration is prominently displayed</li> <li>• Include HIV and AIDS in the political agenda</li> <li>• Play a role in driving the implementation of the political intent of AMICAALL in South Africa</li> <li>• Include HIV and AIDS in governance and community participation processes</li> <li>• Integrate with moral regeneration</li> <li>• Clarify roles between the political and administrative elements of leadership in the council</li> <li>• Ensure councillors take a leadership role in their wards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include HIV and AIDS in strategy setting and vision determination</li> <li>• Task a stakeholder to gather information on mass visioning techniques</li> <li>• Include HIV and AIDS in IDP community participation processes</li> </ul>
<b>Producing a shared vision</b>	

*Source: SALGA Country Guideline for Local*

## Abidjan Declaration By African Mayors and Municipal Leaders

We, the Mayors and Municipal Leaders of Africa, meeting December 9, 1997 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on the occasion of the Xth International Conference on STD/AIDS in Africa, have adopted the following declaration, called the "ABIDJAN DECLARATION".

Aware that the precarious economic conditions in our cities intensify the impact of HIV/AIDS on vulnerable communities, in particular women and youth, and jeopardise our long term local development plans;

Recognising that our cities are increasingly becoming centres of demographic growth in our countries and that, given the powers invested in them, our municipalities have an important role to play in responding to the many challenges posed by the HIV/AIDS epidemic;

We hereby commit ourselves to search for solutions relevant to local needs and realities, in accordance with the goals and principles of the United Nations and our own laws and regulations, in order to respond more effectively to HIV/AIDS in our communities.

### **To this end we have agreed to:**

- Aim to reduce the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS in our communities by implementing effective measures to reduce HIV transmission.
- Promote and co-ordinate local multisectoral approaches for HIV prevention and the care of infected and affected people.
  - Participate in efforts to mobilise the human and financial resources necessary to implement local strategies.
  - Ensure the active involvement of people infected and affected by the HIV epidemic in designing and implementing local strategies.
  - Strengthen solidarity amongst our cities and develop an effective partnership with national and international public and private stakeholders.

### **We therefore commit ourselves to:**

- Ensure that the search for effective solutions to HIV/AIDS is a public policy priority.
- Effectively involve our citizens in designing action plans, defining local strategies, and implementing activities.
  - Provide the necessary institutional support to our cities and communities and strengthen their capacity to intervene.
  - Guarantee transparency and accountability in programme management.
  - Create an ALLIANCE OF MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL LEADERS to maximise commitment, participation, leadership, capacity and experience at community level in response to the challenge of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa.

## News Flash

### **SALGA Country Guideline for Local Government on HIV and AIDS**

A full copy of the document can be downloaded from the HIV&AIDS pages of the SALGA website: [www.salga.net](http://www.salga.net).

### **IDF annual stakeholders workshop hosted by Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality**

On 1 and 2 November, Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality hosted the CMRA annual stakeholder Interdepartmental Forum and Mainstreaming workshop. The workshop looked into the progress and challenges experienced in the six municipalities taking part in the project "Decentralised Response to HIV and AIDS in South Africa": Emalahleni, Buffalo City, Madibeng and Marble Hall local municipalities, and Nelson Mandela Bay and eThekweni metropolitan municipalities. The workshop was well attended and delegates comprised representatives from SALGA and DPLG, portfolio councillors, IDP managers, head of units, special programmes unit coordinators, HR officials and CMRA project coordinators. The presentations on the link between HIV and development as well as the progress made and

challenges experienced can be downloaded from the HIV pages on the SALGA website.

### **Launch of eThekweni AIDS Council by the Mayor, Councillor Obed Mlaba**

On 21 November, the eThekweni AIDS Council (EAC) was re-launched by the Mayor of eThekweni, Councillor Obed Mlaba. In his opening speech, the Mayor, who is the chairperson of the EAC, reiterated the importance of local government political and administrative leadership in the response to HIV and AIDS. This leadership is reflected in the membership of the EAC, which includes four executive committee councillors and ward councillors, as well as traditional leaders. The Interdepartmental AIDS Forum (IDAFO), responsible for internal mainstreaming, is represented on the EAC by its chairperson, while other sectors are also widely represented: business, community-based organisations, faith-based organisations, traditional practitioners, people living with disabilities, various government departments such as Education and Social Development, unions, tertiary institutions and youth. The EAC has a clear coordination body, based in the Aids Programme Department in the Health Unit.



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As a partner in the "Decentralised Response to HIV and AIDS in South Africa" project, SALGA actively promotes the sharing of lessons learned among municipalities and news of other relevant developments in local government and HIV and AIDS through various media, including the *Local Government Bulletin*. SALGA welcomes any feedback on the articles written so far, as well as ideas and suggestions for future contributions.

