



Unite for Children Unite against AIDS

By

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UNICEF is celebrating the second anniversary of the Unite for Children Unite against AIDS campaign on 25 October 2007. It is a global campaign launched by Kofi A. Annan Secretary-General of the United Nations on 25th October 2005, largest ever mounted to bring the world's attention to the global impact of HIV/AIDS on children and young people.

This campaign has put the missing face of children affected by AIDS at the centre of the HIV/AIDS agenda and made sure that the voices of children and young people are heard on the issues that affect them. It also recognizes and addresses the needs of their caregivers. It offers urgent and specific interventions and calls to action.

Since its launch in India in 2005 by His Excellency APJ Kalam, the then President of India, the campaign has developed many folds and has contributed to real change in the lives of children and families who are affected by HIV and AIDS in India.

Communications and Advocacy

Communications and advocacy on HIV/AIDS has become essential to break the silence, contain the spread of the disease, reduce the stigma and discrimination incidents and to influence the policies that will benefit the HIV positive children and young people. To achieve this, UNICEF is working on two levels - (a) A strategic anti stigma and discrimination campaign (b) Advocacy with MPs and key policy makers.

A. Anti Stigma and Discrimination Campaign

HIV positive children face discrimination in their everyday life. This stigma and discrimination practiced by the general public against the HIV positive children denies their access to education, health and many other crucial government provided services.

It is clear from various studies that HIV positive children who are being denied an education based on their HIV status are due to lack of knowledge or awareness about how HIV/AIDS spreads or does not. This will focus on health and education settings, the most crucial services, which are necessary for physical, emotional and intellectual well being and growth of a person. The campaign will create awareness on the modes of HIV/AIDS transmission, why HIV positive people deserve our respect and why HIV positive people should have uninterrupted access to all public services. This is supported by famous celebrities from all walks of life, including films, sports, faith networks, political leaders and positive networks themselves.

In Partnership with International Cricket Council

UNICEF and UNAIDS are implementing an anti stigma and discrimination campaign in partnership with ICC. The 2006 Championship Trophy and 2007 Cricket World Cup has provided UNICEF, UNAIDS and the ICC with a powerful platform to promote the campaign. We have filmed 30 cricketers from the 10 most well known cricket teams and produced 15 PSAs. Through

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these PSAs, world famous cricketers appealed to children and young people to learn more about HIV/AIDS and to protect themselves and people around them from getting infected with HIV and to respect those who are HIV positive.

These PSAs were broadcasted throughout the world during the World Cup 2007. We have been working closely with many cricket players to raise awareness and deliver anti stigma and discrimination messages. UNICEF has also produced post cards containing anti stigma and discrimination messages from famous Indian cricketers who include Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Yuvraj Singh and Anil Kumble for children and young people.

B. Policy and Advocacy work with MPs

UNICEF works hand in hand with the Government of India through NACO, Parliamentary Forum on HIV/AIDS and MPs to influence the HIV/AIDS policies. UNICEF plans to influence the new HIV/AIDS Bill to make sure that children and women are well represented and all the rights of HIV infected and affected children are fulfilled. UNICEF also works towards supporting the GOI's commitment and leverage local resources towards the betterment of children, young people and families living with HIV/AIDS.

The campaign is set achieve better results for the children, young people and women in near future. We congratulate all our partners for making many great things possible and many more milestones to come.

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