WHO embarks on a new HIV strategy to boost further progress in 2011-2015

3 JUNE 2011 ¦ GENEVA – An estimated 6.6 million people in low- and middle-income countries were receiving antiretroviral therapy (ART) for HIV/AIDS at the end of 2010, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Of this, an estimated 420 000–460 000 were children. This progress represents the largest-ever annual increase in the number of people accessing HIV treatment–1.4 million more than a year ago.

"The impressive new estimates are an important milestone in the public health response to HIV that began 30 years ago," said Dr Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General. "But we have much to do to reach the goal of universal access, and doing more of the same will not get us there. We need further innovation in HIV, including simpler and more accessible prevention and treatment approaches for all those in need."

Dr Chan will speak at the UN High-Level Meeting Panel on "Innovation and New Technologies" on 9 June 2011 in New York.

The new HIV treatment figures show a 16-fold increase in the number of people receiving ART between 2003 and 2010. While this is an impressive achievement, about nine million more people were eligible for ART but were not receiving it in 2010. The figures are included in the "AIDS at 30" report released today in New-York by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

Closing the remaining gap through more effective HIV programmes is a central theme of the new WHO *Global Health Sector Strategy on HIV/AIDS for 2011-2015* that has been endorsed by the Sixty-fourth World Health Assembly just ten days ago.

"Innovation in finding more optimal ways to deliver HIV services is key," said Dr Gottfried Hirnschall, WHO's Director of HIV/AIDS Department. "For example, by linking HIV with other health services such as for maternal and child health, tuberculosis, drug dependence and primary care, we will greatly increase the coverage of HIV interventions and also achieve broader health outcomes."

The *Global Health Sector Strategy on HIV/AIDS for 2011-2015* will guide actions by WHO and its member countries to strengthen health systems and address inequalities and human rights violations that are impeding access to HIV prevention, treatment, and care services.

More information on the UN High-Level Meeting on AIDS can be found at www.un.org/en/ga/aidsmeeting2011/ .

You can download the *Global Health Sector Strategy on HIV/AIDS, 2011-2015* at http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789241501651_eng.pdf

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