



MEDIA ADVISORY

Local voices go global: honouring communities for action on AIDS

Five groups to receive Red Ribbon Award at Toronto AIDS 2006 Conference

Communities around the world are developing innovative and practical responses to the growing HIV pandemic, often in the face of war, genocide, and extreme poverty. In Rwanda, women living with HIV--victims of rape and violent crime during the genocide--find solace in a 'Village of Hope'. Impoverished teenagers in Argentina learn safe-sex practices. A campaign to secure medical treatment for people with HIV gains steam in Ukraine.

These advances represent the work of a little-known team of HIV experts: local people battling the growing global epidemic in their own cities and villages.

Between August 12 and 18, these and other inspirational stories will be brought to light through the inaugural **Red Ribbon Award: Celebrating Community Leadership and Action on AIDS**, which will be presented at the [AIDS 2006](#) Conference in Toronto, the world's largest forum on HIV and AIDS.

FOR YOUR DIARY

What: FIVE WINNERS ANNOUNCED AT RED RIBBON AWARD DINNER

When: Wednesday, August 16, commences 18:30 (programme available upon request)

Where: Hart House, University of Toronto

Five outstanding communities will be chosen from a group of 25 finalists by an eminent jury that includes Crown Princess Mette-Marit of Norway, actress Naomi Watts, former President of Ireland Mary Robinson. The five will be announced at the dinner and presented with their award by a representative of the jury. Seats will be reserved for the media. There will be photo and interview opportunities with the winners. **RSVP details below.**

What: MEET THE COMMUNITIES RECEPTION

When: Monday, August 14, 17.30 – 19.30

Where: Global Village, Toronto

The media are invited to visit the communities participating in AIDS 2006 at the Community Dialogue Space, where members of the communities will gather to share and learn from each others innovations and experiences. The space will be open to the media throughout the conference.

More details of the real-life stories of these communities and the challenges they face in responding to the HIV epidemic are available at: www.redribbonaward.org.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is leading on the Red Ribbon Award, working in partnership with UNAIDS, the Community and Leadership Program Committees of the XVI International AIDS Conference and the governments of Canada, Norway, Austria, Finland and Ireland. Other partners include Care International and UNESCO.

MEDIA INQUIRIES: To set up interviews with the community representatives before or during the conference, or to confirm attendance at the Red Ribbon Award dinner, please contact: **Ms. Niamh Collier-Smith, UNDP New York:** + 1 212 906 6111, or + 1 212 906-5382, niamh.collier@undp.org

Broadcast-quality footage of the communities at work in Argentina, Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Ukraine will be available. **For broadcast-related inquiries, please contact Boaz Paldi, UNDP New York:** e-mail: boaz.paldi@undp.org



About UNDP: UNDP is the UN's global network to help people meet their development needs and build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working as a trusted partner with Governments, civil society and the private sector to help them build their own solutions to global and national development challenges. Further information can be found at www.undp.org

About UNAIDS: UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, brings together the efforts and resources of ten UN system organizations to the global AIDS response. Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. Based in Geneva, the UNAIDS secretariat works on the ground in more than 75 countries world wide. www.unaids.org

About the XVI International AIDS Conference: AIDS 2006 is the world's largest HIV/AIDS conference provides an international, open and independent forum for the exchange of ideas, knowledge and research which will inform HIV/AIDS programmes and strengthen prevention, treatment and care efforts worldwide. The theme of AIDS 2006 is 'Time to Deliver', reflecting the demands of the epidemic for increased accountability from all stakeholders to fulfill commitments made. www.aids2006.com