



# GHANA BUSINESS COALITION HIV & AIDS NEWSLETTER

1ST JANUARY 2008

Volume 1, Issue 1

Quarterly Information Exchange Bulletin of the Ghana Business Coalition against HIV & AIDS

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- > The GBCA was inaugurated on 26th July 2006 by H.E. Aliu Mahama, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana.
- > Business Coalitions against HIV/AIDS exist in Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- > The Private sector response has been recognized as a key element in the national response to HIV and AIDS.
- > Persons aged between 15 years and 29 years represent 30% of the national prevalence. This age group forms the bulk of the nation's productive workforce.

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## INTRODUCING THE GHANA BUSINESS COALITION AGAINST HIV AND AIDS

Since the year 2000 when Ghana adopted the multisectoral approach to the fight against HIV/AIDS, both private and public sectors actively joined in the national response by implementing various interventions. The Ghana AIDS Commission, in collaboration with the Tripartite Committee, developed the National Workplace Policy on HIV/AIDS. Most multinational companies and a limited number of local small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) adopted the workplace policy and initiated HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support programmes. These activities received technical assistance from International Labour Organization (ILO), Family Health International, Ghana Social Marketing Foundation (GSMF), Ghana Employers Association (GEA), Private Enterprise Foundation (PEF) and Trades Union Con-

gress (TUC) with funding from UNFPA, USAID, and the ILO.

In spite of these positive developments, majority of business entities failed to initiate workplace policies and programmes. Secondly, workplace HIV/AIDS programmes continued to remain uncoordinated and lacked sustained technical support. In order to scale up business sector response, the Ghana AIDS Commission, in collaboration with business leaders, established the Ghana Business Coalition Against AIDS (GBCA) with the aim of effectively mobilizing the business sector to fight HIV/AIDS at the workplace.

In the quest to facilitate the expansion and to ensure more effective coordination of business sector response to HIV/AIDS, the Ghana AIDS Commission began consultations with business

leaders on how to strengthen business sector response drawing from international best practices.

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To this end, a business lunch was organized on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2006 for Chief Executives of Ghana Chamber of Mines, Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Association of Ghana Industries, Ghana Employers Association, Association of Bankers, State Enterprises Commission, Private Enterprise Foundation and the Trades Union Congress. The Chief Executive of Unilever Ghana, Mr. Charles Cofie was invited as guest speaker for the occasion.



The GBCA Launch by H.E. The Veep.

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BUSINESS COALITION IN 2007 (CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 COL. 3)

The Business Coalition was duly registered in July 2007. Currently there are four staff, namely the Program Director, a Program Officer (sponsored by GTZ/CIM) Administrative Secretary and a Driver. There is currently a part-time finance officer.

The GBCA has been selected as a private sector representative on the

Ghana Country Coordinating Mechanism of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. A number of bilateral and multilateral organizations have been supporting the GBCA with equipment and small grants, since the secretariat was established.

A media program was embarked on in March be-

ginning with a feature article in the Daily Graphic on a reception held for Founding members of the Coalition. The purpose was to introduce the Program Director to stakeholders and to draw attention to the GBCA and its purpose. This was followed by two advertiser's announcements in a leading Newspaper to project the GBCA to the public and

**INTRODUCING THE GHANA BUSINESS COALITION  
AGAINST HIV AND AIDS (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)**



**Interim Board of Directors at the launch in July 2006.**



**Dancers at the GBCA Launch.**

**“...the most significant feature of the epidemic is its concentration in the working and productive population...”**

*H.E. Alhaji Aliu Mahama, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana.*



**First GBCA Peer Educators workshop with support from GTZ.**



Mr. Cofie brought a wealth of expertise to bear on the deliberations of the meeting based on his experience in Malawi where he contributed immensely to the creation of a Business Coalition. The business leaders unanimously agreed to set up a business coalition with Mr. Charles Cofie as the Chairman of the Interim Board.

The Interim Board demonstrated high commitment to the pursuance of its agenda. At its maiden meeting, the members agreed on a road map for the inauguration of the Coalition and the establishment of its secretariat. The end of July was chosen as the appropriate time for the inauguration and a technical committee was appointed to plan the inauguration and draft the constitution of the Coalition.

On 26th July 2006, H.E Alhaji Aliu Mahama, the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana inaugurated the GBCA at Labadi Beach Hotel, Accra. Almost 200 participants attended the launch involving development partners, companies, NGOs and the media. The attendance of the business sector was very encouraging since as many as 140 businesses were in attendance including a few chief executives.

Goodwill messages were delivered by the Chief Executive of Standard Chartered Bank, Executive Director of Private Enterprise Foundation, Chairman of the Ghana TUC and the Director General of the Ghana AIDS Commission.

In his Keynote address, H.E. Alhaji Aliu Mahama, the Vice President said the Government's commitment to the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic is acknowledged in all the related policy documents and initiatives on HIV and AIDS. He said though the private sector has been slow in responding to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the establishment of the Ghana Business Coalition against HIV and AIDS is a clear indication of the increased commitment of the private sector to take on the challenge of fighting this disease within the workplace.

The Vice President pointed out that the most significant feature of the epidemic is its concentration in the working and productive population and in view of the profound negative impact of HIV/AIDS on productivity and profitability of enterprises, it makes it imperative for corporate organizations to be responsible for managing HIV/AIDS at the work-

place.

He encouraged the business entities gathered to fully support the initiative and sign up as founding members of the Business Coalition and on that note he launched the Ghana Business Coalition Against HIV and AIDS.

The GBCA is now fully and legally registered with a functioning Secretariat which has been accommodated in the premises of the State Enterprises Commission. The minimum infrastructure for operations has been acquired and the GBCA currently has three full time staff, namely, a Program director, a Program Officer, an Administrative Secretary and a Driver, Finance Officer and M&E Officer will soon be hired.

A Membership drive began with the recruitment of Founding Members. 27 companies (2007) have so far been recruited.

**ACHIEVEMENTS  
OF THE GBCA  
(CONT'D FROM  
PAGE 1)**

potential subscribers, and to appeal for membership.

**DONOR SUPPORT**

The GBCA obtained funding from the WHO for its Website and this Newsletter. This Quarterly electronic-newsletter will feature GBCA's activities and other HIV/AIDS related programs going on in the world of work in Ghana, especially prevention activities. It will also be a platform for sharing best practices and knowledge, and to advocate workplace HIV/AIDS related issues. The GBCA Website is up and running and can be accessed at [www.gbcaweb.org](http://www.gbcaweb.org).

**PROGRAM QUALITY**

A Technical Team has been reconstituted which includes stakeholders from members, development partners in the HIV & AIDS field, people with technical skills and knowledge and selected private sector workplaces. The 11 member technical committee meets bi-monthly to discuss and recommend pro-

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE GBCA (CONT'D FROM PAGE 2)

jects, recommend funding of GBCA objectives and define methods of implementation and responsibilities.

### TRAINING

The GBCA has held training programmes during its short period of existence with support from GTZ. Training was held for 14 Ambassadors from the Founding members of the Coalition. The Ambassadors will assist the GBCA secretariat in fulfilling its responsibilities for recruitment each year.

A Peer Educators training workshop was held for 15 persons from eight member organizations. More of such programmes are planned for the first quarter of 2008.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

A Baseline survey has commenced to assess extent of implementation of workplace policies and knowledge attitudes and practices of the workforce and management in selected private sector organizations. 50 enterprises taken from all levels will be studied.

A strategic planning process begun with a draft plan in July, which has been reworked in collaboration with a mission from the Corporate Council on Africa, a World Bank MAP Project affiliate based in

the USA.

### INFORMATION SHARING ON BEST PRACTICES.

The GBCA has been a key partner and stakeholder in the National Public Private Partnerships forum on HIV & AIDS and related conditions. The GBCA, working with ILO and The Ghana Employers' Association has disseminated the National Workplace HIV/AIDS Policy to more than 130 companies.

### NEW PARTNERSHIPS FORMED

The GBCA has formed partnerships with development partners (UNAIDS, ILO, GTZ, Global Fund and WHO). In the public sector with the National AIDS Control Program, TB program and Private sector Unit of the Ministry of Health) and with Local NGOs (GSMF International, Ghana HIV AIDS Network and others.

The GBCA has international partnerships with the Pan African Business Coalition (Kenya), the Corporate Council on Africa (CCA)

### MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The GBCA currently has 27 members. This achievement in a short space of time compares favorably with countries of higher prevalence who have membership ranging from 40 to 70 companies.

## THE GBCA ATTENDS A STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION IN BAMAKO, MALI

The GBCA has been represented at a Stakeholder Consultation on the Private Sector Role in fighting HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa in Bamako Mali. The consultation took place from the 3rd December 2007 and to the 5th December 2007. Participants were brought together from many countries in the Sub-region, mostly from Business Coalitions and their private sector partners.

The consultation was organised under the auspices of the AIDS Campaign Team for Africa (ACTAfrica) and Africa Region Finance and Private Sector Development (AFTFP) of the World Bank jointly with the Government of Mali and in partnership with the Pan-African Business Coalition (PABC), and UNAIDS. The GTZ/ACCA workshop extended this to the 9th December to hold further training with Business Co-

alitions and Companies. (Continued on back page).

The Bamako Consultations brought together key players in the private sector, including, but not limited to business coalitions, representatives from national AIDS authorities, donor agencies, representatives of labour unions, and NGOs from across the Continent. The consultations focused on discussing: (i) strategies and business models to better protect the workforce



GBCA Dissemination of the National Workplace HIV/AIDS Policy, with support from ILO.

The GBCA has international partnerships with the Pan African Business Coalition, and the Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) .....



GBCA receives a donation of IT equipment from WHO.



GBCA, with GTZ and other Business Coalitions from East Africa (from left, Namibia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Ghana)

**STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION IN  
BAMAKO, MALI (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)**

**GHANA BUSINESS  
COALITION AGAINST  
HIV & AIDS**

P.O. Box P.M.B. MB57  
Ministries, Accra  
Ghana

Phone: 021-667260; 021-687136  
Fax: 021-667210  
E-mail: [gbcapd@4u.com.gh](mailto:gbcapd@4u.com.gh)



*Combating HIV & AIDS  
at the Workplace*

and business community, (ii) how to leverage capabilities and resources of the private sector to fight the epidemic, and (iii) enhance delivery of sustainable services through public-private partnerships.

The Bamako Workshop was an exciting opportunity for the private sector and its partners to share best practices and experiences, and agree on a course of action for the future.

Visit our website for more news and links:  
[www.gbcaweb.org](http://www.gbcaweb.org)

**Editorial Team**

Dr. Derek Aryee  
Program Director, GBCA,  
Chairman

Ms Gertrude Adzo Akpalu  
Program Advisor  
Joint UN Team on HIV & AIDS  
UNAIDS  
Member

Dr. Morkor Newman  
Country Advisor, HIV & AIDS,  
WHO  
Member

Mr. Charles Asante Bempong  
Program Officer  
Ghana Employers Association  
Member

Mr. Kwasi Deh  
Standard Chartered Bank  
Member

Rosemary Ardayfio  
Graphic Communications Group,  
Editor

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**African Business Coalitions in a "Think Tank"  
at GTZ/ACCA workshop in Bamako, Mali.**

**GBCA ADDRESSES WEST AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY  
INSTITUTE SEMINAR**

The Program Director of the GBCA addressed a seminar at the West African Civil Society Institute on "Meeting the Challenge of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria: Partnership Between Civil Society and the Global Fund" held on the 26 November, 2007, at WACSI Secretariat, Accra, Ghana.

He gave a presentation on "A Critical Analysis of the Country Coordinating Mechanism's efforts at integrating Civil Society in Ghana". Among the recommendations he made were:

A "Grand Durbar" of CSOs to establish governance, institutional needs; An Improved communication strategy/channels between CSO

leadership and CCM; To identify gaps, categorizations and map CSO resources and expertise; To develop program for empowerment/capacity building of key CSOs and a mentoring program; To develop a monitoring unit for CSOs involved in GF activities (expandable in scope); and to establish forums for sharing Best practices and how to replicate them.

Other presenters at the event were Executive Director, West Africa Civil Society Institute; Country Coordinator, UNAIDS; Head of Global Partnerships, Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis & Malaria; Chairman, Ghana Country Coordinating Mechanism; Chairperson of Ghana HIV/AIDS Network;

Chairperson, Ghana Network of NGOs in Rollback Malaria (GHANENGO-RBM); General Secretary, West Africa Civil Society Forum (WACSOF); Country Coordinator, Parliamentary Center; and Prof. Sakyi Awuku-Amoa, Director General, Ghana AIDS Commission.