Message From the Executive Director

I am delighted to announce that Elizabeth Mataka has joined the AAI board. Elizabeth is the current UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on AIDS in Africa and brings with her a wealth of experience in the field of HIV/AIDS. Her participation in the recently concluded board meeting reaffirmed the board’s conviction that the perspective she brings will be invaluable.

The board endorsed AAI’s new research agenda, which proposes a number of adjustments towards becoming more flexible and improving usefulness of our research. The board also approved the expansion of AAI’s research to explore additional public health issues related to HIV and AIDS, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Finally, the board recommended that AAI puts a stronger effort on advocacy for accountability and leadership in the response to AIDS. This is a significant strategic shift and opens up many more possibilities for us to ensure that accountability and AIDS remain on the agenda. Finally, I would like to warmly welcome Karla Bush who has just joined AAI as our executive assistant.

-Rodrigo Garay

Surveys on LGBTIQ and Trans Issues

AAI is currently conducting the Sexual Diversity Scorecard research on how governments are performing on issues for sexually diverse or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer people (LGBTIQ). This research has led us to understand that a lack of data exists on two important aspects of the LGBTIQ world and HIV and government accountability; Violence against LGBTIQs and Issues of rights for Transgender. The Scorecard on Sexual Diversity goes beyond the analysis of UNGASS and other civil society data and is now conducting our own international surveys. To learn more about the
surveys and to participate, please see our website. For further information or to join our email list for the project contact Phillipa Tucker at: phillipa@aidsaccountability.org

Improving UNGASS Indicators

AAI has through our research showed the need for better indicators to monitor the response to HIV, specifically in relation to women and other key groups. UNAIDS and other UN agencies initiated a consultative process to review the current 25 core indicators in the UNGASS M&E process in order to see how they can be improved. AAI had direct representation in the process through the participation by Per Strand, AAI Research Director, in the expert group in one of the four tracks, ‘enabling environment’. The suggested revisions will now be discussed by increasingly select groups of experts. AAI will monitor the results from this process and at a later stage report on what changes were made, but also, as far as we are able, on what suggested changes were dismissed at late stages of the process. Read more.

New AAI Initiative on SRHR

AAI initiates a new project supported by Ford Foundation to improve transparency and accountability in relation to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Southern Africa. AAI will assess progress by African governments to the Maputo Plan of Action for the Operationalisation of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Continental Policy Framework. The research and advocacy will be focused on to improving the reporting process and provide support and capacity building among stakeholders to ensure their full involvement in increasing efforts to realize the SRHR targets in the region in time for the 2015 deadline. Read more.

XVIII International AIDS Conference, Vienna, 18-23 July

AAI is proud for the presence AAI had at the XVIII International AIDS Conference in Vienna 18-23 July. AAI was represented at a variety of events including workshops, panels and not
the least a strong presence at the Youth Pavillion in the Global Village. AAI welcomed the theme of the conference, Rights Here, Rights Now acknowledging that human rights is an important aspect of an effective response to HIV.

Moreover, AAI signed two Memorandums of Understanding during the conference, one with South African Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS (SABCOHA) and one with regional research network The Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance (SAHARA), a unit within Human Sciences Research Council. The two partnerships are important to strengthen AAI's foundation in Africa.

AAI also noted that accountability was at the heart of many speakers and presenters, although still a complex concept to grasp. It inspired us to develop resource packs for accountability, exploring the concept and different mechanisms from various stakeholders’ perspective. For more information, contact Lisa Grafström at: lisa@aidsaccountability.org.

**Workplace Initiative Update**

AAI is honoured to have been invited to present the AIDS Accountability Workplace Initiative to the plenary session at the Pan African Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS Partner Forum. This meeting on October 14 in Johannesburg will bring together national business coalitions from across Africa and representation from the ILO/AIDS, UNAIDS and the Global Fund. The forum’s theme is overcoming the challenges of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria in the workplace and beyond.

Consultations on the methodology of the Business Scorecard which is a central component of the Workplace Initiative, are at an advanced stage. We plan to conduct a pilot of the scorecard in February 2011.

For more information, contact Johanna Löfgren at: johanna@aidsaccountability.org

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