

CHILDREN AND AIDS: A STOCKTAKING
FACT SHEET #2

PROVIDING PEDIATRIC TREATMENT FACT SHEET:

Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS target: By 2010, provide either antiretroviral treatment (ART) or cotrimoxazole, or both, to 80 per cent of children in need.

Of the 2.3 million children under 15 living with HIV, an estimated 780,000 were in need of antiretroviral treatment (ART) in 2005. Ten per cent of children in need of ART have access to it.

Those not receiving ART face a bleak and short-lived future. An estimated one-third of infected infants die in their first year, and half die by their second birthday.

In 2006, an estimated 380,000 children died of AIDS-related causes; the vast majority of these deaths could have been prevented either by treating opportunistic infections or providing ART.

An estimated four million children globally are in need of cotrimoxazole prophylaxis to prevent opportunistic infections that can prove fatal; only four per cent of them received it in 2005.

Only seven countries for which data are available for 2005 provide ART to at least 20 per cent of children in need. These include:

- Thailand (with over 95 per cent coverage);
- Botswana (84 per cent);
- Namibia (52 per cent);
- Jamaica (47 per cent);
- Cape Verde (47 per cent);
- Dominican Republic (23 per cent);
- Rwanda (20 per cent).

The growing momentum to provide paediatric treatment to children affected by HIV/AIDS in 2006 is expected to show more positive results in the coming year. This progress can be attributed to a number of initiatives among high-prevalence countries, including:

- Integrating paediatric HIV treatment into adult treatment sites;
- Early identification of HIV-infected infants through routine testing of sick children;
- Adopting innovative new testing technologies for early diagnosis in children.

Global advocacy has also contributed a great deal toward saving young lives. Prices of ARV drugs for children have come down dramatically over the past 12 to 18 months thanks to efforts such as the Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative, which negotiated a reduction in the cost of paediatric ARVs to less than \$0.16 per day.