

## **Press statement**

### **Standard Bank Group and UNAIDS collaborate in response to Sub-Saharan African HIV/AIDS pandemic**

**27 November 2012**

Johannesburg - Standard Bank and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) today signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU), agreeing to collaborate on education and advocacy initiatives to maximise results for the AIDS response in sub-Saharan Africa. The MOU, which was signed for an initial two year period, focuses on community and staff initiatives, and centres on the UNAIDS 2015 vision of 'zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS related deaths'.

The latest UNAIDS report, *'Results'*, shows that the acceleration in the AIDS response is producing unprecedented results. According to the report, the number of people accessing HIV treatment increased by 60% between 2009 and 2011. In 5 countries in Southern Africa (Botswana, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland and Zambia) more than 80% of people living with HIV who are eligible for treatment are receiving antiretroviral therapy. However, 7 million people still do not have access to life saving treatment which negatively impacts their wellbeing and the socio-economic development of their nations.

Clive Tasker, Head of Corporate Banking International, signed the MOU on behalf of the Standard Bank Group. He noted the decrease in new HIV infections and AIDS related deaths in sub-Saharan Africa but cautioned the private sector against complacency. "Healthy staff and communities are high on the agenda for any corporate, especially those operating in developing countries. Without a healthy workforce, economies can't thrive. As the biggest bank in Africa, we believe that we have a role to play in supporting government health objectives. Our partnership with UNAIDS allows us to do so - by working with a respected and influential organisation to educate our staff and communities on prevention and treatment, and remove the stigma of HIV and AIDS," he says.

"Employers play a critical role in the AIDS response. UNAIDS is committed to bringing the knowledge, solid experience and commitment of the private sector to the AIDS response," said Professor Sheila Tlou, Director of the UNAIDS Regional Support Team for Eastern and Southern Africa. "The signing of the MOU with the Standard Bank Group will allow us to strengthen this commitment through a partnership with an organisation that is represented in 18 countries on the African continent."

### **Project 90/90**

UNAIDS and Standard Bank are already involved in a partnership in South Africa, which is built on the UNAIDS 'Getting to Zero' campaign. In 2012, Standard Bank piloted 'Project 90/90', an initiative which aims to provide 90% of all staff with comprehensive health assessments annually. A typical 90/90 health assessment includes tests that check sugar levels, blood pressure, cholesterol and HIV status.

"If a staff member is at risk for any disease, it is our goal to get 90% of those staff onto a proper treatment programme. Over the six month pilot run in Gauteng province in South Africa, 6 500 staff underwent a 90/90 health assessment. Of those, approximately 65% took an HIV test. We believe that by including an HIV test in a broad health assessment, we are starting to lessen discrimination – one of the key objectives of the

UNAIDS ‘zero’ campaign,” said Dr Wendy Orr, Head of Inclusion at Standard Bank Group. “Following the success of our pilot, it is our intention to scale up the number of tests we do so that by 2015 all staff across the group will be receiving 90/90 screenings annually.”

### **Community outreach**

In addition to 90/90, Standard Bank remains committed to its ‘wellness champion’ programme. “Wellness champions are peer educators who do amazing education and advocacy work within our organisation and in the communities we serve. Our wellness champions need access to quality healthcare information. Our partnership with UNAIDS has been invaluable for the work that our wellness champions do,” says Orr. “They will continue to be crucial to our success as we extend our focus to the Standard Bank Group more broadly.”

### **ENDS**

### **About Standard Bank**

Standard Bank Group is the largest African bank by assets and earnings. Our strategy is to build the leading African financial services organisation using all our competitive advantages to the full. We will focus on delivering superior sustainable shareholder value by serving the needs of our customers through first-class, on-the-ground operations in chosen countries in Africa. We will also connect other selected emerging markets to Africa and to each other, applying our sector expertise, particularly in natural resources, globally. We operate in 17 countries on the African continent, including South Africa, and 13 countries outside Africa with an emerging market focus.

Standard Bank has a 150-year history in South Africa and started building a franchise outside southern Africa in the early 1990s. In recent years, Standard Bank has concluded key acquisitions on the African continent in Kenya and Nigeria. Africa is at our core and we will continue to build first-class on-the-ground banks. The group’s 52 000 employees in all regions deliver a complete range of services across personal and business banking, corporate and investment banking and wealth management.

### **About UNAIDS**

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners to maximize results for the AIDS response. Learn more at [unaids.org](http://unaids.org) and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.

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