

Building on Success



G. Nitish, Age 9, India

World AIDS Day 2010



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Dear Friends,

World AIDS Day is both a day of remembrance and a day of celebration. We must all remember those who have lost their lives to AIDS. It's in their honor that we work each and every day to provide HIV prevention, treatment and care to millions across the globe.

Yet, it's also a day to celebrate those whose lives have been improved and saved throughout the world, thanks to global efforts to fight this devastating disease. On this World AIDS Day, it is important to remember that we have a shared responsibility to build on the success achieved to date by making smart investments that will ultimately save more lives.

And there is much success to build on. Launched in 2003 to combat global AIDS, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is the largest commitment in history by any nation to combat a single disease. With support from PEPFAR and other programs, the global community has made groundbreaking progress in saving lives through HIV prevention, treatment and care services.

These gains have translated into better health for millions of people around the world. Globally, about 5.2 million people in low- and middle-income countries were on treatment at the end of 2009, up from 4 million the previous year. PEPFAR was a major contributor to the increase, supporting treatment for nearly 2.5 million people through September 2009, up from approximately 1.7 million the previous year. PEPFAR programs allowed almost 100,000 babies to be born free of HIV in fiscal year 2009, adding to almost 240,000 babies born HIV-free in the first five years of the program.

The United States is proud to be supporting countries as they take a leadership role in their fight against HIV/AIDS. Working together, we can build on our successes to save even more lives. In Tunisia, the United States funded the construction of an AIDS Prevention and Confidential Testing Center in 2006 in the region of Sfax. A second center, scheduled to open in 2011, will provide AIDS information and offer free testing.

On this World AIDS Day, we honor the lives lost and celebrate the lives saved, but we cannot rest. Working together, we must remain dedicated to building on success by making smart investments to save even more lives.

Gordon Gray
Ambassador