

PREVENTING HIV AND UNINTENDED PREGNANCIES: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2011–2015



**IN SUPPORT OF THE GLOBAL PLAN TOWARDS THE
ELIMINATION OF NEW HIV INFECTIONS AMONG
CHILDREN BY 2015 AND KEEPING THEIR MOTHERS ALIVE**

THE INTER-AGENCY TASK TEAM FOR PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF
HIV INFECTION IN PREGNANT WOMEN, MOTHERS, AND THEIR CHILDREN

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ABOUT THIS FRAMEWORK

This framework supports the 'Global Plan Towards the Elimination of New HIV Infections among Children by 2015 and Keeping their Mothers Alive'. It is a product of The Inter-agency Task Team (IATT) for Prevention and Treatment of HIV Infection in Pregnant Women, Mothers, and their Children and was developed by the IATT Working Group on Primary Prevention of HIV and the Prevention of Unintended Pregnancies in Women Living with HIV (now included with the Integration Working Group under the re-configured IATT).

The framework is compliant with the greater involvement of people living with HIV (GIPA) principle. People living with HIV were included in all stages of the framework development process, including conceptualization, drafting, and review. In addition, organizations and networks of people living with HIV, led jointly by GNP+ and ICW, undertook a consultation to

provide their input to the framework and share their broader perspectives on how the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (eMTCT) is impacting upon their livesⁱⁱ, and how programming could be strengthened to support a human rights-based response.

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

There has been a shift from *preventing* mother-to-child transmission of HIV to *eliminating* such transmission as reflected in the global targets 2011–2015 (see *Introduction*). People living with HIV have indicated that the term 'elimination' of mother-to-child transmission is difficult as it fails to recognize that HIV is not just a virus but is part of people's lives, affecting how the community relates to them on every levelⁱⁱⁱ. Particularly when used alone ('elimination') it is also perceived to be derogatory, since, if taken out of context, without qualifying terms, it can seem to connote an end to the lives of people living with HIV.

The term 'elimination' can:

- evoke fear and be disempowering for people living with HIV
- prevent people from accessing necessary services and, subsequently, from being able to prevent transmitting HIV to their child, if these services are associated with the term
- be understood to mean eliminating women living with HIV or infants living with HIV in order to eliminate mother-to-child transmission.ⁱⁱⁱ

Furthermore, women living with HIV have recently advocated for the terminology 'comprehensive prevention of vertical transmission' to replace 'mother-to-child transmission', believing that "focusing on the event, rather than the persons involved removes the onus, blame and guilt for transmission of HIV to the baby solely from the mother. This simple change in term from MTCT turns the focus away from women being 'vectors of transmission'. Women find comprehensive prevention of vertical transmission less accusatory and more conducive to male involvement; it also has the potential to increase access to services."^{iv} This viewpoint also prefers the term stopping or ending vertical transmission instead of elimination, which "can be perceived as threatening to one's existence and, if taken out of context and without qualifying terms, can evoke fear and be disempowering for people living with HIV."

This framework supports the Global Plan and makes clear that the term 'elimination' **should not** be used alone, as a short-hand or as a slogan. Stakeholders must carefully consider choice of terminology in programming to ensure definitions are clear, not normative, clouded in ambiguity or value laden. This document uses the terms elimination of mother-to-child transmission or eMTCT, never 'elimination' on its own.^v

ii. Vital Voices: Recommendations from consultations with people living with HIV on the IATT's Strategic Framework for PMTCT Components 1 and 2. ICW and GNP+, 8 April 2011. www.gnpplus.net/images/stories/Empowerment/consultations/ICW_GNP_Recommendations_PMTCT_Framework_Final.pdf

iii. E-consultation on PMTCT Components One and Two. ICW and GNP+, 29 Nov–20 Dec 2010 in Vital Voices. Appendix B(1). www.gnpplus.net/images/stories/Empowerment/consultations/Appendix_B1_PMTCT_E-consultation_Report_April_2011.pdf

iv. Language, identity and HIV: why do we keep talking about the responsible and responsive use of language? Language matters. Dilmitis S et al. Journal of the International AIDS Society 2012, 15(Suppl 2):17990. www.jiasociety.org/index.php/jias/article/view/17990/723

v. Expert Teleconference on PMTCT Components One and Two. ICW and GNP+, 24 January 2011 in Vital Voices. Appendix B(4). www.gnpplus.net/images/stories/Empowerment/consultations/Appendix_B4_PMTCT_Experts_Teleconference_Report_April_2011.pdf



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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	MCH/MNCH	Maternal and child health/maternal, newborn and child health
ANC	Antenatal care	MDG	Millennium Development Goal
ART	Antiretroviral therapy	MEC	Medical eligibility criteria for contraceptive use
ARV	Antiretroviral	MOH	Ministry of Health
BCC	Behaviour change communication	MSM	Men who have sex with men
CBO	Community-based organization	MTCT	Mother-to-child transmission (of HIV)
CSO	Civil society organization	NGO	Non-governmental organization
CTX	Co-trimoxazole	OI	Opportunistic infection
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations	OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
EID	Early infant diagnosis	PEP	Post-exposure prophylaxis
eMTCT	Elimination of mother-to-child transmission (of HIV)	PHC	Primary health care
FBO	Faith-based organization	PICT	Provider-initiated HIV counselling and testing
FP	Family planning	PLHIV	People living with HIV
GBV	Gender-based violence	PP	Postpartum
GIPA	Greater involvement of people living with HIV	PreP	Pre-exposure prophylaxis
GHI	Global Health Initiative	PMTCT	Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (of HIV)
GNP+	Global Network of People Living with HIV	PSM	Product and supply chain management
H4+	UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, World Bank and UNAIDS	RTI	Reproductive tract infection
HBC	Home-based care	SPR	Selected practice recommendations for contraceptive use
HCT	HIV counselling and testing	SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus	SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health rights
HPV	Human papillomavirus	STI	Sexually transmitted infection
HSV	Herpes simplex virus	SW	Sex worker
ICW	International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS	TasP	Treatment as prevention
IMAI	Integrated management of adolescent and adult illness	TB	Tuberculosis
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation	UN	United Nations
IATT	Inter-agency Task Team (for Prevention and Treatment of HIV Infection in Pregnant Women, Mothers, and their Children)	UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
IDU	Injecting drug user	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
IEC	Information, education and communication	UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
LAM	Lactational amenorrhea method	VCT	Voluntary counselling and testing
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation	WHO	World Health Organization
		YPLHIV	Young people living with HIV

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We are at a turning point for delivering on the promise to end child and maternal mortality and improve health – marked by bold new commitments. This strategic framework supports one such commitment, the 'Global Plan Towards the Elimination of New HIV Infections among Children by 2015 and Keeping their Mothers Alive'. It offers guidance for preventing HIV infections and unintended pregnancies – both essential strategies for improving maternal and child health, and eliminating new paediatric HIV infections.

This framework should be used in conjunction with other related guidance that together address all four prongs of eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV. This document focuses on strengthening rights-based policies and programming within health services and the community for:

- **Prong 1:** Primary prevention of HIV in women of childbearing age (with special emphasis on pregnant and breastfeeding women)
- **Prong 2:** Prevention of unintended pregnancies in women living with HIV (as part of rights-based sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of people living with HIV (PLHIV)).

Prongs 1 and 2, together with safer infant feeding (prong 3), and treatment (prongs 3 and 4), are essential for improving the lives of women and children and eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV (eMTCT). The rationale for prongs 1 and 2 includes:

- Remaining HIV-negative, particularly throughout pregnancy and breastfeeding (period of higher risk) protects infants and children from becoming HIV-positive by eliminating the possibility of HIV transmission from the mother.
- Primary prevention of HIV improves survival and well-being; HIV is the leading cause of death among women of childbearing age, contributing significantly to maternal mortality.
- The benefits of family planning are far-reaching, ranging from fewer maternal and newborn deaths and healthier mothers and children to increased family savings and productivity, better prospects for education and employment, and ultimately improvement in the status of women.
- Unintended pregnancies contribute to maternal morbidity and mortality; 27% of maternal deaths can be prevented by meeting unmet need for family planning.
- HIV-related morbidity and mortality in a mother living with HIV impact critically upon her child's survival.

- Fewer unintended pregnancies mean fewer infants born to mothers living with HIV, thus resulting in a smaller number of potentially HIV-positive infants.

The principles upon which this framework is based are:

1. Addressing structural determinants of HIV and sexual and reproductive ill-health
2. Focusing on human rights and gender
3. Promoting a coordinated and coherent response (i.e. the Three Ones Principle)
4. Meaningfully involving people living with HIV (i.e. GIPA principle)
5. Fostering community participation by young people, key populations at higher risk, and the general community
6. Reducing stigma and discrimination
7. Recognizing the centrality of sexuality as an essential element in human life and in individual, family and community well-being.

It offers guidance to:

1. Implement a package of services for preventing HIV and unintended pregnancies within stigma-free integrated SRH and HIV services
2. Utilise key entry points to integrating services for HIV and SRH
3. Strengthen national programme implementation, including to deliver prong 1 and 2 interventions
4. Carry out five key strategies:
 - Strategy 1:** Link SRH and HIV at the policy, systems and service delivery levels
 - Strategy 2:** Strengthen community engagement
 - Strategy 3:** Promote greater involvement of men
 - Strategy 4:** Engage organizations of people living with HIV
 - Strategy 5:** Ensure non-discriminatory service provision in stigma-free settings.



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