



## **Illustrating the linkages between Food and HIV: A call for stories of how access to food contributes to decisions regarding treatment for HIV**

**Deadline: 26 November 2010**

As part of its campaigns on Food and on HIV and AIDS, the EAA wants to raise awareness among churches and policymakers of the links between access to nutritious food and comprehensive intake of antiretroviral drugs (ARVs). Thus the EAA launches this call for cases and stories that illustrate the links, both positive and negative, that address the right to food of people living with and affected by HIV.

This link is reflected in the June 2006 United Nations Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS. Paragraph 28 highlights aspects of the right to food such as availability, accessibility and adequacy, and United Nations Member States resolve to “integrate food and nutritional support, with the goal that all people at all times will have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, for an active and healthy life, as part of a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS”.

Malnutrition contributes greatly to the progression of HIV-related diseases and undermines the body’s response to ARVs. Lack of access to nutritious food also increases the frequency of opportunistic infections, and leads to a loss of appetite and further weakening of the immune system. In addition, as HIV reduces an individual’s capacity to absorb and use nutrients, people living with HIV require a high energy intake. An adequate diet can therefore help people living with HIV maintain their nutritional status and can reduce their vulnerability to AIDS-related illnesses. Providing medicine alone is not enough – adequate food and nutrition are essential elements of treatment.

On the other hand, HIV and AIDS have an impact on food security, particularly because they affect the most productive people in a society. AIDS-related diseases limit people’s energy levels and ability to work and earn money to buy food. This, in turn, reduces the size of the labor force, including for agricultural production, and limits agricultural output. In addition, food insecurity may also force people to prioritize buying food over ARVs, and thus reduce the effectiveness of ARV treatment. Food insecurity and limited earning options can also increase people’s vulnerability to HIV if it leads to higher-risk behaviors such as engaging in sex for food or money.

These linkages call for the need to adopt a comprehensive approach to ensure effectiveness of HIV treatment by protecting the right of people living with HIV to access nutritious food. Addressing these nutrition needs will also help in maintaining the labor force for agricultural production.

The objectives of collecting the cases and stories are therefore:

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- To promote understanding of the interaction between access to food and both vulnerability to HIV transmission and effectiveness of HIV treatment.
- To use the stories as tools of advocacy both at the national and international policy making level.

You are kindly invited to participate by providing the EAA with a brief description of cases that illustrate how people living with HIV make decisions regarding their intake of ARVs. The case studies will result in an EAA publication compiling all the stories and a number of recommendations to national governments and international institutions. The compiled report will be shared with all members through the EAA website.

### **How to participate?**

Stories and case studies can be submitted by filling in the attached form, and sending it before 26 November to [amunzara@e-alliance.ch](mailto:amunzara@e-alliance.ch) and copy to [rfoley@e-alliance.ch](mailto:rfoley@e-alliance.ch).

The form has been prepared to facilitate the preparation and processing of the stories. You may add any existing documents as appendices and refer to them in this standard form. Please understand, however, that we are aiming for concise stories and may not be able to take the appendices into consideration. All submissions will be acknowledged.

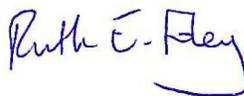
For more information about EAA Food for Life Campaign and the Live the Promise HIV and AIDS Campaign, please visit: [www.e-alliance.ch](http://www.e-alliance.ch)

**Please share this call with your partners and networks and encourage their participation.**

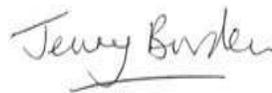
Yours Sincerely



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