AIDS Accountability International
Narrative Report 2008
This report highlights the activities undertaken by AAI during 2008 where focus on efforts was concentrated on three areas: research, communication and organizational structure. The activities that AAI planned for 2008 were the following (see appendix I. for more details):

A. Establishing the AAI Rating Centre in South Africa
B. Development of AAI Ratings
   a. Country Rating Scorecard
   b. Private Sector
   c. Other: Civil society and donor
C. Creating and Coordinating Rating Advisory Groups
D. Designating Collaboration Research Centres
E. Establishing an Advocacy Platform in the North
F. Monitoring and Evaluation
G. Resource Mobilization Southern Africa

Challenges, implications and ways forward are commented on where relevant. The activities are not presented in chronological order, but rather divided into themes related to the activity plan submitted.

The AIDS Accountability Country Scorecard

In January, an independent reviewer and members of the AAI’s Country Rating Advisory Group (CRAG) – a global panel of close to one hundred representatives of civil society, bilateral and multilateral agencies, academia, government and the private sector – were invited to give feedback on the first country rating pilot the Relative Response Model. Most CRAG members believed the country rating to be a potentially powerful advocacy tool at both local and national levels that would spark debate and dialogue. AAI’s consultative approach to developing the tool was also appreciated and considered a good way of creating buy-in for the rating. However, CRAG members had two general criticisms of the Relative Response Model: 1) with a focus on developing countries, the rating was not inclusive enough in terms of countries included in the analysis, and; 2) the model was not sufficiently comprehensive in that it covered only three aspects of the very complex reality that is the response to AIDS. In response to this critique, AAI decided to adopt a more comprehensive scorecard approach that would include virtually all countries and that would cover a more comprehensive range of elements of the response to AIDS.

The development of the scorecard model was undertaken by the Country Scorecard Development Team, led by Dr. Jaran Eriksen. A first draft of the scorecard model was presented at AAI’s first Rating Workshop in May, where some 40 global experts in HIV/AIDS representing civil society, private sector, academia and governments participated. Based on the feedback received at the workshop the scorecard model was updated and again reviewed by the AAI Advisory Committee, as well as the CRAG, before being presented at a technical session at the XVII International AIDS Conference in Mexico City in August. Simultaneously, a web-based scorecard evaluation tool was placed on the AAI website. In addition, a gender review of the proposed scorecard was commissioned from an external reviewer, Chiseche Mibenge at the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, University of Utrecht. The scorecard was subsequently
updated twice after additional evaluation of the AAI Advisory Committee and upon receiving further data from UNAIDS.

The development of the first Country Scorecard has revealed three critical priorities that must be addressed if country progress in the response to AIDS is to be better evaluated and governments truly held accountable for their commitments; 1) need for independent validation of data, 2) need for better and more complete reporting and 3) need for additional indicators. The expanded panel will have an important role in the validation of the data, and discussions with UNAIDS are ongoing as not to duplicate their work on validation. The proposed collaboration research centres will also play a role in identifying and piloting measurement studies of new indicators to monitor the epidemic. This work will further explored during 2009. To address the lack of gender incorporated in the scorecard, AAI are developing a Gender Reporting Index in 2009.

In August, a new scientific director was appointed, Dr. Per Strand based at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Final changes were made before the global launch of the scorecard. The launch started off with a global press conference call on 25 November, followed by two physical events; the first in Pretoria 28 November and the second in Stockholm on World AIDS Day. The launch generated responses in the media, including articles in Lancet Infectious Diseases, Financial Times, Bloomberg, UN Radio, Swedish Science Radio and a number of South African newspapers. In addition, three TV-interviews with AAI chairman Prof. Lars O. Kallings were broadcasted in Sweden on World AIDS Day. The scorecard was also posted on several websites related to AIDS, such as AIDS portal, World AIDS Campaign, POZ, Kaiser Network and AIDS Action Europe. The report has been distributed through networks such as SAF AIDS, ICASO, and AIDS Free World.

The feedback to AAI regarding the scorecard at the launch was in general very positive. Much of the critique put forward at the satellite in Mexico and review rounds with the CRAG concerning the scorecard was taken into account by AAI in the development process. Consequently, a number of adjustments were made prior to the launch, for example to only use UNGASS data and to be clear that the scorecard mirrors what the governments reported and not the actual situation. Furthermore, the transparent reporting of the scorecard, which highlighted the gaps identified concerning e.g. gender and youth contributed to a clear messaging about the scorecard which may have contributed to avoid serious criticism.

AAI has already managed to stimulate other accountability initiatives; The Executive Mayor of Tshwane (Pretoria) Metropolitan City Dr. Gwen Ramokgopa declared that the city is going to make a rating of the response to HIV/AIDS in the city. At the event in Stockholm, AAI was invited by the Director of European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Mrs. Zsuzsanna Jakab, to join the steering group of a new initiative to improve the European and neighbouring countries reporting through the UNGASS system. The World Bank has taken an initiative for a rating of Eastern Europe “Composite HIV/AIDS Response Index”, where they refer to AAI in their currently unpublished report.*

Another referral to AAI and the Relative Response model is made by the Director of the AIDS and Society Research Unit at the University of Cape Town Nicoli Nattrass’ paper on leadership in

HIV/AIDS**. AAI has also been in contact with Centre for Global Development (CGD), to discuss a development of a rating of donors. In this regards, CGD launched a report on transparency of donors ***. Another initiative is the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW) and their work with developing the “People living with HIV stigma index”. AAI will evaluate how this can be incorporated into the AIDS Accountability Country Scorecard.

**The Business Sector Rating**

The second rating that has been developed during 2008 is that of the Business Sector. The initial work of Alyson Slater, Global Reporting Initiative, and Gavin George, HEARD department of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, was presented at the workshop in May. The proposal was encouraged by the workshop participants, although it needed further development. AAI hosted a breakfast meeting during the XVII International AIDS Conference in Mexico City in August. Invited were among others Pam Bolton, Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria (GBC), Brad Mears, CEO South African Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS (SABCOHA) and Ludvig Hübendick, Swedish Workplace Programme on HIV/AIDS (SWHAP). This meeting led to further endorsements and an invitation to present a proposal at SABCOHA’s annual conference in South Africa in November. The updated proposal received support not only from Brad Mears and SABCOHA but several businesses has approached AAI to take part of the initiative since the conference. The initiative will be a complement to already existing initiatives, and a dialogue is ongoing with e.g. Lindsey Smith at the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) where an ISO standard for HIV and businesses is being developed. The major difference between the business and the country rating is mainly that there is no universal promise such as UNGASS in the world of business, hence it is important to have buy in and involvement of the businesses which will be rated. AAI’s strategy is to get large networks such as SABCOHA on board, to have an inclusive process and start on a smaller scale to begin with. The first business sector rating will be launched at the end of 2009.

**Civil Society Rating**

At the workshop in May, the third rating that received most support was the one presented on civil society. In order to determine what existing initiatives in this field are doing, AAI has during this year held discussion with ISO and the Swedish Standards Institute, representatives from Code of Good Practice for NGO’s Responding to HIV/AIDS, as well as the organization Charity Rating. For next year, AAI will explore the possibilities of develop a rating of the civil society alternatively a global standard for the civil society.

**Country Rating Advisory Group**

The establishment of the Country Rating Advisory Group (CRAG) has played an important role in the work of AAI. Through CRAG, AAI has been able to keep a finger on the pulse of a selection of stakeholders in different matters, mainly concerning the Country Scorecard. There are about 100 experts members in the CRAG who have been involved with different frequency and intensity. An analysis of the demography has highlighted a need for expanding the group to involve more women and to have a panel that reflects the geography of the epidemic. The CRAG will be expanded during 2009 and will become a panel and a forum. The panel is for experts who want to become more involved in the different rating initiatives, and used to perform opinion polls,
and identify additional issues that would improve monitoring of the epidemic. Experts can also join the forum for lesser involvement, but pivotal for dissemination of ratings and other advocacy tools. The challenges for managing the panel will lie in achieving gender and geographical balance of the members. The worst hit areas are not always easy to reach with Internet based communication, and alternatives, such as mobile phone surveying, must be explored.

**Rating Centre**

One of AAI’s core values is to increase participation of the south and strives for the ratings to be developed from the south. To this end, a Rating Centre has been established in South Africa, in the legal form of a Section 21 Company, a non-profit company which is a part of AAI. The centre will most likely be based in Cape Town where our Scientific Director is based, although offers for offices have come from several locations. The rating centre will have several tasks; manage the panel and forum, host workshops and the accountability conferences as well as carry out outreach activities in the south. The legal establishment was finalized in December and the recruitment of new staff will commence in the beginning of 2009. In addition to a Project Manager, and depending on resources available, several Research Assistants will be recruited in order to build capacity in South Africa within the field of global ratings in health.

**Advocacy Platform in the North**

Several important steps were taken during the past year with regards to the advocacy platform. An advisory group was established on communication and advocacy. Although AAI is not an advocacy organization as such; we need to effectively reach out with our rating and advocacy tools to those who do advocate for an improved response to HIV/AIDS and greater accountability.

The website was updated during the summer, as well as prior to the launch to cater for all stakeholders. Not only does it provide the visitor with all necessary material, from introduction level to technical reports, it has an easy to search database for the scorecard, and encourages for comments, feedback on ratings, and to join AAI’s network. So far, most of the material is in English, although some documents have been translated to Spanish and French and we are assessing the need to translate more documents to achieve greater dissemination.

Continuous updates to our network are done by newsletters “AIDS Watch” sent by email on a regular basis. To enable for other organizations and researcher to refer to our work, AAI launched a Working Paper Series during the autumn. All papers that AAI has written or commissioned will be published and distributed through this series, which will later be complemented with an e-journal for scientific papers.

**Monitoring & Evaluation**

A strategy for monitoring and evaluation has been developed with regards to impact in the short-, medium and long term in relation to AAI’s goals. The monitoring is carried out both internally and externally. Since the first rating was launched as late as in November, the evaluation so far, has revolved around measuring and stimulation the accountability agenda and to have an inclusive and technical process for developing ratings.

The external evaluation was done by hosting the satellite meeting at AIDS 2008 in Mexico City, consulted the current panel, hosted the workshop in May and having individual consultations of the technical development of the rating and its quality.
Concerning the stimulation of the accountability agenda, AAI has monitored how different organizations work with accountability and invited them into our continuous process. At the time of the launch of the scorecard in November, the external evaluation started of the media coverage of the country scorecard, its reception by the civil society by actively discussing with a select number of global civil society organizations. This work is continued throughout 2009 by formalising the collaboration with the World AIDS Campaign, but also by evaluating how regional organizations reflect over the scorecard. This work is continuing with focus on the Latin American region in the beginning of 2009.

Resource Mobilization
During 2008, the foundation has been successful in getting financial support for 2008-2010 from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) of a total amount of SEK 6 million. In addition, the Ford Foundation has supported the foundation with USD 300 000 for 2008-2009 and SPIDER supported with SEK 100 000 for increasing southern participation in the workshop in May. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also granted the foundation with a support of USD 150 000 for 2008. The fundraising strategy is to have a diverse funding basket to enable long term sustainability. Initial steps were taken to enable resource mobilization from South Africa, which will proceed in 2009 once the rating centre is legally established.

Organizational Changes
The activities during 2008 have been scaled up in comparison to previous years, which had implication on the organizational structure. Dr. Jaran Eriksen was recruited in March to lead the development team for the country scorecard. When Dr. Eriksen was recruited by the ECDC he was replaced with Dr. Per Strand. The change of Scientific Director at such a crucial point in time, proved to be strength as two researchers with different backgrounds were able to form the scorecard into strong tool that later was launched. The Scientific Coordinator for the Business Sector rating, Gavin George, was recruited from South Africa.

In addition, one assistant and one resource mobilizer were recruited as a response to increased work load and financial support. The responsibilities and competencies of the in-house staff are continuously increasing, yet the need to use consultants in those areas where our own expertise is insufficient will remain. We are aware of the costs this result. AAI has a group of consultants that know us and our products, who we will continue to work with whenever necessary. The secretariat in Sweden will remain the communication hub in the north and conduct resource mobilization but will not expand, as the Rating Centre in South Africa will need further staff recruitments.

Staff names & titles

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rodrigo Garay</td>
<td>Founder and Executive Director</td>
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<td>Michael Schragger</td>
<td>Director of Communications (ended employment as of January 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Per Strand</td>
<td>Scientific Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johanna Löfgren</td>
<td>Project Leader</td>
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<td>Lisa Grafström</td>
<td>Project Leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marisa da Silva</td>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
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**Strategic development**

Apart from the specific strategies for the different ratings, some resources have been used for development of the concept paper "Unlocking the Southern Voices in the Response to HIV/AIDS" which explains the background and rationale for establishing the Rating Centre and how the centre and the secretariat in Stockholm complement each other. The strategic plan for the centre has gone through several consultations, including a one-day workshop focused on recruitment, use and engagement of the panel and forum. In addition, AAI have had meetings on location in South Africa, to reconnoitre office space, handle the legal establishment, inform ourselves of recruitment related issues specific to the South African labour market and to meet with potential partners.

A SWOT analysis of AAI’s strategy was carried out in conjunction with the panel workshop and below is an extract of the five most important points under each heading.

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<tr>
<th><strong>Strengths:</strong> AAI 1) is supported by leading scientists and international NGO’s among others, 2) continuously consults stakeholders, 3) is independent, 4) has a scientific base in the south and 5) is uniquely positioned between collectors and users of data</th>
<th><strong>Opportunities:</strong> The right timing as more actors are requesting accountability and realises the importance of monitoring and evaluation, and improved leadership for a sufficient response to HIV/AIDS. There is a vast number of international collaboration partners where we can use existing networks and structures for development and dissemination. There is also a long term commitment by different actors to develop ratings as the epidemic is worsening and useful tools for advocacy are greatly needed.</th>
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<td><strong>Weaknesses:</strong> AAI 1) needs further financial support to expand the organization and reach its full potential, 2) has a challenge in communicating the products (ratings and other advocacy tools) in a easy to understand manner suitable for all stakeholders 3) is a new actor in this field, 4) has limited human resources and is thus partly dependent of external experts for development of ratings.</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> AAI could be challenged by: 1) critique of the ratings at launch, 2) disagreeing researchers in issues related to HIV/AIDS, 3) development of ratings is a time consuming process, 4) risk of loosing our independence if donors want to impose conditions on the ratings, and 5) need for additional resources to transform the rating into powerful advocacy tools.</td>
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**Concluding Remarks**

For AAI, this past year has been filled with significant events; the expert workshop in May that strengthened many collaborations and confirmed the way ahead, the Satellite meeting in Mexico City where the scorecard model was presented, the start of the business sector rating, the establishment of the rating centre in South Africa and last but not least the launch at the end of the year. AAI has a new position thanks to the launch, one where there is a strong rating that can be referred to, as well as promoting products that are under development. This has given new opportunities for collaboration on a global level, and we look forward with anticipation to the coming year.
### Appendix I:

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<th>AIDS ACCOUNTABILITY INTERNATIONAL</th>
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<td>SUMMARY ACTIVITIES 2008</td>
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A. Establishing the AAI Rating Center in South Africa
- Feasability study
- Setting up the legal and administrative structure
- Temporary relocation of AAI staff to South Africa
- Recruitment process Director/Project manager for the center
- The new Director/Project manager starts
- Office operational
- Relocated staff returns to Sweden

B. Development Of the AAI Ratings
- Continued work with the Country Rating 1 (Development team)
- Appointment of Scientific advisor for Private Sector rating (based in South Africa)
- Scientific process of incorporating Human Rights into the Country Rating
- Scientific process starts: Country Rating 1
- Scientific process starts: Private Sector Rating
- Commission of papers: Private Sector Rating
- Commission of papers: Country Rating1
- Commission of papers: Donor Rating
- Experts meeting: Ratings
- Experts meeting: Private Sector Rating
- Updated methodology and data for Country Rating 1
- Proposal of methodology for the Private Sector Rating

C. Creating and Coordinating Global and Regional Rating Advisory Groups
- Continuous identification of members for the Country Rating Advisory Group (CRAG)
- Consultation with CRAG regarding Country Rating 1 starts
- Identification of member for the regional CRAG for Southern Africa (CRAG-SA)
- Appointment of the CRAG-SA
- Consultation with CRAG-SA regarding Country Rating 1
- Feedback from CRAG and CRAG-SA is compiled
- Consultation with Rating Advisory Groups regarding the Private Sector Rating
- Identification and appointment of a RAG for the Private Sector Rating

D. Designating Collaborating Research Centers
- Feasibility study to identify a process and a strategy for the collaborating centers
- Identification of the first two centers and development of terms of reference
- Appointment of the first two to four centers
- Development of terms of reference for pilot studies
- Implementation of pilot studies

E. Establishing an Advocacy Platform in the North
- Initiated dialogue with key stakeholders in the South
- Initiated dialogue with key stakeholders in the North
- Development of website
- Identification of partners for advocacy cooperation
- Drafting of the 2008 global report for Country Rating 1
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<th>Launch of the updated Country Rating 1</th>
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<td>Logistics and activity plan for the IAS Conference in Mexico</td>
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<td>Satellite and other activities at the IAS Conference</td>
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<td>Identification of partners for advocacy cooperation</td>
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<td>Development of strategies for launching the Ratings</td>
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<td>Media activities</td>
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<td>Identification of conferences and/or meetings where AAI should participate</td>
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<td>Development of an advocacy tool-kit</td>
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**F. Monitoring & Evaluation**

| Development of process to monitor and evaluate AAI’s work |
| Identification of an organization that will do the evaluation |
| Monitoring & Evaluation activities |
| Report |

**G. Resource mobilization Southern Africa**

| Identification of partners (launch, long term development) |
| Agreements |