Combating major communicable diseases: accelerated action within the context of poverty reduction

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PURPOSE : to present the communication from the Commission on accelerated action targeted at major communicable diseases within the context of poverty reduction. CONTENT : this communication on the need for accelerated action targeted at major communicable diseases as a burden on the poorest and an obstacle to development, analyses the major political issues involved, reports on the rationale for continuous Community involvement, and sets out a framework with three broad areas for targeted action. These three areas for targeted action include: 1) reaching optimal impact of existing interventions, services and commodities targeted at the major communicable diseases affecting the poorest populations; 2) increasing affordability of key pharmaceuticals through a comprehensive and synergistic global approach; 3) increasing investment in research and development of global goods targeted at three major communicable diseases. An accelerated Community response to the major communicable diseases should be seen as part of and complementary to ongoing Community investments in health and poverty reduction. For the response to be effective, coherent efforts of the Commission in conjunction with the EC Member States, partner countries, international and civil society partners and other stakeholders are required, as are greater innovation and more rapid action than traditional development assistance allowed for so far. The policy framework set out in the communication is the Community's first response to the recommendations of the G8 Summit held in Okinawa in July 2000. The framework will be broadly discussed during a high level Round Table with all interested parties, in particular developing countries, EU Member States, European Parliament, international development agencies, civil society, researchers and the pharmaceutical industry. The results of the Round Table will provide valuable input to the Commission in formulating a programme for action.