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

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This Commission's Programme for Action develops the policy framework presented in the September 2000 Communication on "Accelerated Action targeted at major communicable diseases within the context of poverty reduction". It establishes a broad and coherent Community response, over the period 2001-2006, to the global emergency caused by the three major communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, which most affect the poorest populations and which undermine global health. The Programme, as part of an expanded global effort, targets actions to increase; the impact of existing interventions, the affordability of key pharmaceuticals, and research and development of specific global public goods to confront these diseases in developing countries. The Commission will prioritise investment in health, aids and population in the context of poverty reduction. A greater focus on communicable diseases will be provided through options including; the redirection of unspent resources, guidance on future programming exercises and the use of regional funds. More effective aid management processes will speed up the disbursement of funds to improve health. While the overall approach will be comprehensive, targeting the support for better health. The Commission will maintain a major focus on prevention. Investment in strengthening pharmaceutical policies will include the appraisal of opportunities to develop local production capacities. The Commission will seek to work in close cooperation with the UN, the G8 partners and the World Bank, civil society and EU Member States to, based on each partner's comparative advantage, to enable greater coordination, complementarity and efficiency of international funding. The European Community will seek to increase the affordability of key pharmaceuticals through attention to issues related to taxes and tariffs in developing countries. The European Community will also work towards the introduction of tiered pricing as the norm for the poorest developing countries, while seeking to prevent re-importation to the EU market. Investment will build capacity within developing countries on health and trade-related issues, including implementation of the TRIPs Agreement. Moreover, building increased capacity for research in developing countries will be a priority. The Framework presented identifies main actions, potential partners and instruments, and will be further detailed within specific work plans following endorsement of this Programme for Action. Lastly, appropriate mechanisms, resources and partnerships will be put in place to monitor implementation of this Programme for Action, and to participate in a global monitoring system encompassing the efforts of all the international partners.