

Andrew Bunbury (formerly Official Funding Officer, Action Aid)

Introduction: I would like to divert from the official proceedings, and call on Andrew Bunbury, one-time official funding officer of ActionAid, to come and say a few impromptu words. **Alice Welbourn.**

Andrew Bunbury: I am actually one of the very privileged people to have been associated with the project right from 1989, and the attitudinal climate in those days was very different from what it is now. I think we are all aware of that. It was my doubtful pleasure at ActionAid to extract very large sums of money from official bodies to pay for ActionAid's work in various parts of the world, and among the projects for which we were seeking funding were obviously for SFH and indeed for TASO in Uganda. And I will say that our first applications were rejected by official bodies such as the Overseas Development Administration (the former DfID), and the European Commission in Brussels, on the grounds that their way of dealing with AIDS was quite simple - they would concentrate on blood screening and on education programmes in schools. That was all they felt they needed to do to deal with HIV and AIDS, and it was actually an education programme that was needed for them themselves - about the implications of HIV and AIDS, and about positive messages that could be promoted. And when Glen mentioned this event to me tonight, and said it is not an occasion of congratulations, it is more of reflection, and I have no dispute with that. And there's been a lot of good things said about the project, but I think what we should bear in mind is that when we came to the process of educating the donors, of de-stigmatising AIDS, of promoting positive messages on AIDS, and positive living with AIDS, there were one or two key figures, and Glen and Alison have been absolutely tireless in that. We have congratulated the project, but I really want to congratulate the individuals behind the project - namely Glen and Alison.