

August 2009

For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Luke 18:15

HIV&AIDS & CHILDREN

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In a recent visit to Zambia I was reminded of the freedom, personal respect, and resilience that comes when children and young people understand deeply that they are special and valuable. Loving parents and a caring community help children develop normally in all areas of life. AIDSLink 83 invites us to think about how this might be fostered in our own environment. What resources have you found helpful to creatively teach and reinforce human worth especially among children? Send your suggestions to: international.aids-consultant@sim.org

Diane

SIM HIV&AIDS related ministries and HOPE for AIDS

1. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS: HIV&AIDS AND CHILDREN

HIV&AIDS creates orphans and vulnerable children in overwhelming numbers. It strips parents of their dignity. It fractures families, destroying the hopes and dreams of individuals and communities. It exposes children to injustice and leaves them at risk of neglect and abuse. Against this backdrop, God reminds us that he has created all human beings in His image (Gen 1:26,27, 5:1,2). As Christopher Wright says in *The Mission of God* (pg 423), being made in the image of God forms the basis of radical equality of all human beings regardless of gender, ethnicity or any form of social, economic or political status. We should also include age and stage of life in this list. Children, including those impacted by HIV&AIDS, bear the image of God. Children, like adults, are 'God aware' and capable of communicating with Him. They have equal worth in God's eyes and deserve to be treated by us with equality, dignity and respect. But what does this look like in practice?

Those of us in positions of influence need to seriously wrestle with how best to foster an environment in which children affected by HIV&AIDS can thrive and maximize their God given potential. This can happen when we strengthen the capacity of families and communities to care for children; focus on all vulnerable children, not only those orphaned by HIV&AIDS; reduce stigma and discrimination; ensure access to education; support HIV prevention and awareness; provide psycho-social support including grief counselling; and strengthen the ability of caregivers and young people to earn livelihoods. These are all recognized good practices. As children, young people and adults grasp the value of their worth before God they find dignity and can face the future with hope. We take greater responsibility for our actions knowing that God delights in us, and wants us to flourish and thrive (Ps 139:14).

For reflection and discussion:

1. Is it possible to *over-value* children? Why or why not?
2. Read Luke 2:40,52. How did Jesus grow as child? What does this teach us about points of vulnerability in the process of child development?
3. Consider Luke 18:15-17. In what ways might children in your context be restricted from reaching their full potential (physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual)? What place do children have in the Kingdom of God?

2. PLAY: IT COSTS ALMOST NOTHING

“All children need to play. Play teaches children problem solving and coordination skills, as well as skills of communication and social interaction. Depending on the particular game, play can help children increase their knowledge of basic colours, words, logic, geography, and mathematics. All children deserve the same opportunities to play and learn, including children made vulnerable by HIV&AIDS. Educational games, handicrafts, and play teach them many skills needed in daily life.

It costs almost nothing: Beneficial indoor games and handicrafts from rubbish and recycled materials (2007) is a collaborative effort produced in Namibia. Activities in this 148-page book promote the psycho-social wellbeing of children affected by HIV&AIDS and poverty as part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce their vulnerability. The book is filled with photographs, illustrations and diagrams for easy use by teachers, volunteers, and caregivers in pre-schools, art classes, and after-school and home settings. As the title suggests, all the games and crafts in the book use throw-away and recycled materials commonly found in Southern Africa. It can be accessed (7MB) at:

www.fhi.org/en/HIVAIDS/pub/res_CostsAlmostNothing.htm

3. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY-LED CHILD CARE

Mobilizing and strengthening community-led childcare through community care groups and coalitions: A study from Ethiopia, Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia is published in the International NGO Journal Vol. 4 (1), Jan 2009. This is a study of World Vision’s Community Care Coalition (CCC), a foundational feature of WV’s model for mobilizing and strengthening community-led care for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), and people chronically and terminally ill. It reflects the views of over 700 respondents from 24 communities where WV has supported community-led child care initiatives. Important lessons learned include:

1. Community-led child care established through strong community mobilization processes are sustainable mechanisms for enhanced child well being at the community level
2. The quality of care depends largely on the quality and frequency of home visits. Home visitors often have limited capacities in areas such as HIV&AIDS information, psychosocial care, local level service access advocacy, as well as child rights and protection. There is a need to enhance investment in training and strengthen the skill sets of home visitors
3. Organizational capacity building is an important step towards full ownership and sustainability. Stronger, well established community-led initiatives should mentor less established initiatives in the same geographical areas
4. Community-led child care initiatives should be seen as not “just” HIV&AIDS projects but as the foundation for long-term sustained and community owned child care and support institutions
5. Children need to be seen by program and home visitors as active participants rather than simply beneficiaries

The full article can be found at:

<http://academicjournals.org/INGOJ/PDF/Pdf2009/Jan/Germann%20et%20al.pdf>

4. A GUIDE TO DIRECTING RESOURCES FOR OVCS

One of the greatest challenges faced by faith-based and community groups serving children on the ground in Africa is that their work is under-recognized and under-funded. *From Faith to Action: Strengthening family and community care for orphans and vulnerable children in sub-Saharan Africa* (5MB) serves as a comprehensive source of information for those faith-based groups seeking to make a contribution to the needs of children made vulnerable by HIV&AIDS.

It guides donors in how to best direct their resources by covering topics such as: Supporting family and community care; Strategies to support family and community care for orphans and vulnerable children; Raising community awareness and inspiring action; Helping caregivers and youth sustain livelihoods; Providing home-based care, health, and daycare services; Ensuring the right to an education; Supporting children’s social and emotional needs; Protecting children from abuse; Twelve strategies for supporting orphans and vulnerable children; Institutional care: a temporary response; and How to direct your money to those in need.

Downloadable (5.1MB) from: www.faithbasedcarefororphans.org

5. MOTHER-TO-CHILD TRANSMISSION AND CHILD MORTALITY

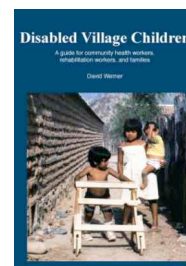
1. *Scaling up prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV* (2008) (372kb) is by Kathy Attawell, TEAR Fund. It draws our attention to the reality that mother-to-child transmission of HIV, which can occur during pregnancy, delivery or breastfeeding, is responsible for over 90 per cent of pediatric infections. With interventions, the rate of transmission of HIV from mother to child can be dramatically reduced. This report (372kb) provides an overview of prevention, captures innovative examples of successful programming and partnerships in Malawi, Nigeria and Zambia, and explores what is working, and why, in scaling up access. See: http://tilz.tearfund.org/webdocs/tilz/HIV/C8786a_web.pdf and http://tilz.tearfund.org/webdocs/tilz/HIV/C8786a_summary_web.pdf

2. *Failing Women, Failing Children: HIV, Vertical Transmission and Women's Health* is a 2009 report prepared by the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition. It cites research from six countries, and makes a strong case to show that governments and UN agencies have failed to meet their commitment to reduce HIV infection in newborns. Download from: www.aidstreatmentaccess.org/mtt7_final.pdf

3. *Reducing maternal, newborn and child deaths in the Asia Pacific: Strategies that work* (2008) produced by World Vision and the University of Melbourne, presents eight case studies of low cost projects that have resulted in significant improvements in maternal, newborn and child health in the Asia Pacific region. These show how evidence based interventions can be practically applied and that significant improvements are possible in a wide range of social and economic environments including low cost. The paper is available (996kb) at: www.worldvision.com.au/Libraries/3_3_1_Aid_Trade_and_MDGs_PDF_reports/Reducing_maternal_newborn_and_child_deaths_in_the_Asia_Pacific_Strategies_that_work.sflb.ashx

6. DISABLED VILLAGE CHILDREN

From Hesperian, publishers of *Where There Is No Doctor* and other books on health, comes the *Disabled Village Children* (2009). This is full of practical information from making playgrounds more accessible to creating low-cost rehabilitation aids. With over 4000 helpful drawings and photographs to help readers of all levels, it shows how to identify primary and secondary disabilities, the best range-of-motion exercises, how to build six different kinds of wheelchairs using local resources, and fun and educational toys that children with disabilities can make and use. Tools are provided that allow children with disabilities to develop the self-confidence and self-reliance needed. It is now available from Hesperian's online store for free download under Hesperian's open copyright policy. See www.hesperian.org



7. BOOKS ON HIV&AIDS FOR CHILDREN

What makes good HIV&AIDS education? Reaching young people early is vital. The best HIV&AIDS education increases resilience in youth especially if they are reached early enough, before critical choices have been made. The best HIV&AIDS education does much more than deliver the facts:

- It engages young people so that they identify with the issues
- It builds their sense of control and self-confidence
- It gives them the knowledge and life skills they need to cope with difficult situations

The *Junior African Writers (JAWS)* series published by Heinemann has 24 story and information books designed to inform and provoke discussion about HIV& AIDS. The series cover ten main themes: life skills; gender, power and human rights; stigma and discrimination; normalization and disclosure; care and support; orphans and vulnerable children; death, loss and grief; feelings; and information about HIV&AIDS. For the full range of titles available see:

www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.co.uk/GlobalPages/HIVAIDS/HIVAIDS.aspx

The *Key Reader Series* from Shuter and Shooter includes 28 books, four on each of seven reading levels. Each set includes one non-fiction title and three stories, all with HIV-related themes. The stories are lively and inviting. Attractive, full color illustrations show children from a variety of racial backgrounds with Africans predominant. Most stories on the lower reading levels (which are shorter) would work well for reading aloud. All are good discussion starters and include brief exercises that could be done independently or in a group. The series was designed for use in schools and has no specifically religious content. Abstinence is supported as the most effective way of preventing the spread of HIV.

Included in this series is *Beads and Braids* by LeAnne Hardy, illustrated by Arnold Birungi for children ages 9-13 years. Lindiwe wants her mother to go on touching her forever, but her mother is sick, and it is her angry cousin Grace who finishes braiding Lindiwe's hair. Only when the two girls share their pain and grief can they make peace and work together for their family.

Sales information is available from Shuter and Shooter sales coordinators: Tiny Naicker tiny@shuters.co.za and Robert Mavundla robert@shuters.co.za

8. MAKING IT KNOWN – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

1. Global Health Action's *Design, Management, and Evaluation of HIV&AIDS Programs 2009 Course* will be held in Arusha, Tanzania, September 14-25. This will cover concepts and tools for developing, managing, and sustaining HIV&AIDS programs. It will address the four interrelated topics of: leadership and management of social change organizations; program planning and project design, with a focus on HIV&AIDS program; proposal writing; and project monitoring and evaluation. See: www.globalhealthaction.org/whatwedo/dmeinenglish.htm

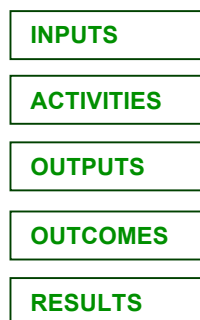
2. Global Health Action is also conducting an international course on *Effective Management and Evaluation of HIV&AIDS and Reproductive Health Programs*, October 22-31, 2009, in China. This is in collaboration with the Nanjing Population Program Training Center International with the aim of strengthening South-South collaboration for the implementation of effective HIV&AIDS programs, particularly in the Asia Pacific region. See: www.globalhealthaction.org/whatwedo/china.htm

3. Hospice and Palliative Care in Developing Countries, 18-19 September 2009 is offered by the University of California, San Francisco. The two-day event for healthcare professionals will cover how to adapt hospice and palliative care to majority world countries, how different cultures view death and dying; the integration of cultural factors into care delivery, and factors influencing care provision and access among rural versus urban populations. Visit the website calendar at: www.cme.ucsf.edu

9. TIP of the MONTH – M&E: MEASURING OUTPUTS IN A RESULTS CHAIN

As you design any Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework, check:

- Does this design provide an appropriate basis for M&E?
- What information is needed?
- How will this information be collected, analyzed, reported, and used?
- Have adequate resources been allocated?
- Who is responsible for collecting, storing, analyzing, reporting and using the information?
- Will the M&E arrangements be sustainable?



Outputs are the immediate results, information, products or services stemming from the activities of an organization, policy, program, or initiative. They occur in a relatively short time period (0–2 years) and are usually at the level of an increase in awareness or skills of ... or access to ... among beneficiaries, and are typically written as nouns + adjectives. Typically there are between 2–8 outputs in a log frame as more than that makes it over-complicated. Examples might include: pamphlet produced, research completed, songs and drama productions delivered, training sessions provided, school fees provided, and partnership established. These are the results over which managers have a high degree of influence.

For further reference see the Canadian International Development Agency, *Results-based Management in CIDA: An Introductory Guide to the Concepts and Principles* at: www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/ANN-102094249-J4B#a2.6 and AusAID's *Activity-level Monitoring & Evaluation* (96kb) at: www.ausaid.gov.au/ode/pdf/ME_guidance.pdf



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