



– AIDSLink #57 – Collaboration & HIV

“What is faith? It is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen.” Heb 11:1

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Every HIV & AIDS program should not try to do, and does not need to do everything! It is important identify what our particular organization is best at doing and what are the comparative advantages of other players. AIDSLink #57 will get us thinking about collaboration.

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SIM HIV&AIDS related ministries

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1. Hope and faith as motivators

Rahab was a woman of ill repute, a risk taker, articulate, desperate, and a Canaanite among a people who worshipped gods opposed to the true and living God. Socially she was a person living on the edge of respectability to the extent that she did not appear to feel bound by social norms of loyalty to her own community. She could have easily been labeled as “the person least likely to succeed”. You can read her story in Joshua 2. Yet her heart was open to the Lord God in heaven and she trembled before him. “Rahab the prostitute...was made right with God by her action when she hid those messengers and sent them away by a different road. Just as the body is dead without a spirit, so also faith is dead without good works” (Jas 2:25). Through her risky actions grounded in faith and hope, Rahab has earned the reputation as an outstanding woman of faith and is honoured for her good works (Heb 11:2).

Risk taking can be deceptive. Alone among all the citizens of Jericho, Rahab recognized the real risk: reliance on the strong city walls and the gods of the ancestors. She was prepared to sacrifice her apparent security within this military strong hold because of a “mustard seed” of faith in this new God of the Israelites who acted on behalf of his people. She recognized her need of God’s protection and grace in her life and that of her family (Josh 2:12,13; 6:22,23). Her faith displayed by her works not only saved her in a physical and spiritual sense. She helped change the course of history with her faith earning her a place in the lineage of Jesus (Mt 1:5).

The story of Rahab is a powerful reminder that God chooses to use people, not because of their greatness, gender, education or social status but because they further his purposes. Many living with HIV feel that they are living on the edge of community, church or even family and are fearful of the future. Yet they can be the very ones that God is using to profoundly impact others for eternity as they take risks to share their personal stories of faith, challenge stigma and discrimination, offer words of comfort, hope and direction, and boldly advocate to bring about justice.

For discussion:

1. Why are we as individual believers, churches and faith communities often fearful of the opportunities God is giving us to impact the course of history? Identify a time when you were bold and what was the outcome?
2. Rahab’s actions spared her family. What can be done to ensure the safety and salvation of families in your context?
3. Notice how the spies’ faith is rekindled by Rahab’s faith (Jos2:24). To what extent is faith contagious in your setting?

2. Mapping the role of FBOs in HIV&AIDS care and treatment

According to an important study by the WHO released 8 Feb 2007, efforts are needed to encourage greater collaboration between public health agencies and faith-based organizations (FBOs), if progress is to be made to the goal of universal access towards HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010. The report, *'Appreciating Assets: Mapping, Understanding, Translating and Engaging Religious Health Assets in Zambia and Lesotho'*, estimates that between 30% and 70% of the health infrastructure in Africa is currently controlled by faith-based organizations yet there is often little cooperation between these organizations and mainstream public health programmes. According to the report, FBOs play a much greater role in HIV & AIDS care and treatment in sub-Saharan Africa than previously recognized. It concludes that greater coordination and better communication is urgently needed between organizations of different faiths and the private and public health sectors.

The executive summary (124KB) is available at: www.who.int/hiv/mediacentre/executivesummaryARHAP.pdf
The full large report (118MB) is available at: www.arhap.uct.ac.za/downloads/ARHAPWHO_entire.pdf

3. Helping boards work well

'Organizational Governance' is the 10th in the ROOTS series produced by TEARFund. This 96 page book "aims to help current board members and those managing Christian development organisations to consider their different roles and how they can work together to fulfill the organization's mission. The authors suggest there are many reasons why it is a good idea for development organizations to have a governing body. Organisations without a board may face a number of problems and find their work restricted:

- The CEO may be overburdened by overseeing the work of the organization as a whole and being involved in the details of its operations. A governing body is able to look at the big picture and increase effectiveness.
- Accountability can be weak and vulnerable to mis-management and poor decision-making. A governing body holds the manager, director or CEO accountable.
- Often, having a governing body is a legal requirement of a registered organization.
- Organizations without governing bodies may have limited access to funds, since some donors will only fund organizations that have a governing body.

'Organizational Governance' looks at key governance principles and issues in detail so that organizations can improve their governance structure or set up a governing body if they do not already have one. There is guidance about recruiting and welcoming new board members so that they can fully understand their role before they start their service. It is written specifically for Christian development organizations. However, although governance structures of churches may be very different from those of organizations, many of the principles outlined could be transferred to a church context. Case studies are used to assist learning and help readers to consider how principles work in practice." It can be downloaded (514KB) as a whole or in smaller sections from <http://tilz.tearfund.org/Publications/ROOTS/Organisational+governance.htm>

4. Collaboration in home based care

a. For those who appreciate reflecting theologically "*Life Beyond Infection: Home-based care to people with HIV-positive status within a context of poverty*" is a thought provoking doctoral thesis by Vhumani Magezi (Pastoral ministry and post graduate supervisor at George Whitfield College, South Africa). It is available at <http://ir.sun.ac.za/dspace/handle/10019/256>

Other articles by Vhumani Magezi include "*Congregational Home-Based Pastoral Care: Merging the African Family and Church Family Systems for Effective HIV Ministry*" and "*Between healing and fanning pain: The dynamics of community healing and integrative pastoral care to the sick and suffering in Africa*" in the Journal of Theology for Southern Africa (July 2006)

b. A comprehensive trainers' guide and participants' manual, "*Community Home-Based Care for People and Communities Living with HIV/AIDS: A Handbook for Community Health Workers*" produced by Pathfinder

International is available from:

www.pathfind.org/Publications_Training_and_Capacity_Building_CHBC

This pre-tested and peer-reviewed curriculum focuses on the knowledge and skills necessary for providing holistic to people living with HIV&AIDS, transferring knowledge and skills to caregivers and home based care clients, and mobilizing communities around HIV&AIDS prevention, care, treatment, and support. The trainer's guide uses simple language and emphasizes participatory learning methodologies that do not require high literacy levels of participants. It includes comprehensive units that cover topics such as HIV basics, communication skills, nursing care, nutrition, positive living, family planning, HIV prevention, ART, and community mobilization. The trainers' guide (6.4MB) but can be downloaded by chapters.

An accompanying illustrated handbook provides community health workers with a practical user-friendly tool that can be used as reference material for skills transfer to clients and caregivers. It is 8.4MB but also downloadable by chapters.

5. Making it known – Training opportunity + awards

1. Training seminars by *Crisis Care Training International*, a ministry of WEC International.

Seminar 1: Trauma and Crisis, 23-25-July 2007 and Seminar 2: HIV & AIDS, 26-28 July 2007 will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA. Speakers are Dr Phyllis Kilbourn, founder of Rainbows of Hope and Crisis Care Training International, addressing trauma issues affecting the child, project development, and care for the caregivers. Dr Gisela Schneider will be presenting a new AIDS curriculum and ways to explore the complex issues surrounding AIDS. Information is available from crisiscare@comporium.net

2. World Vision US and Rich Stearns and have teamed up with the Willow Creek Association, an organization providing vision training and resources for churches worldwide, to create 'The Courageous Leadership Award.' The award will honour three churches that demonstrate outstanding involvement and effectiveness in the fight against AIDS, what many have called "the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time." A total of \$100,000 will be awarded, with \$60,000 going to the winning church and \$20,000 to each of two runners up. The award is open to all Christian churches worldwide affirming an historic, orthodox understanding of biblical Christianity. Deadline to apply is March 31, 2007, with the winners to be announced at the Willow Creek Association Leadership Summit (Chicago) in August. "The goal is not only to honour those churches already involved in fighting HIV and AIDS, but also to be a catalyst, encouraging other churches to explore how they might get involved in what God is doing through His Church to have an impact," says Rich Stearns, WVUS president. "Regardless of the churches' size or budget, the recipients of The Courageous Leadership Award will be selected based on how they strategically, intentionally and creatively have leveraged their God-given vision, gifts and resources to help address AIDS." I urge you to contact pastors in your community about this award and consider nominating a church you believe is deserving of such an honour. The complete application and more information on the award can be found by visiting: www.courageousleadershipaward.com/

3. The African Network for Strategic Communication in Health and Development (AfriComNet) has established annual awards to recognize excellence in HIV and AIDS strategic communication in the region. The awards highlight outstanding contributions made by individuals and organizations in strengthening and popularizing strategic communication as an essential element of health programs. Award categories include:

1. Best mass media strategy, campaign or tool
2. Best folk media strategy, campaign or tool
3. Best multi-media strategy, campaign or tool
4. Best interpersonal/community-based strategy, campaign or tool
5. Best article, series or column on an HIV and AIDS topic

Deadline for receiving nominations is March 1, 2007. For more information see www.africomnet.org/about/excel.php

6. Tip of the Month – Using ‘insiders’ or ‘outsiders’ in program evaluation?

An evaluation often involves people who are ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ in the program. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of both. Although one person or team may be responsible for ensuring that evaluation happens, they will wisely look for feedback on the evaluation design at an early stage from representatives of stakeholders.

“Insiders” provide a number of benefits. They:

- Bring a comprehensive understanding of the project to evaluations
- Are typically more familiar with the context and target groups
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the organization
- Can tailor evaluation methods well to the program
- Can be a part of long range planning and the implementation of recommendations

“Outsiders” may be consultants, researchers or from other organizations. Benefits of using an external person or team to undertake or facilitate an evaluation include:

- Bringing specialist skills, including proven evaluation or facilitation skills, and new perspectives
- Bringing a fresh view, often more ‘objective’ than insiders
- They may be able to make comparison with other similar projects
- Fulfilling requirements by some donors who prefer or require external evaluators
- Being able to more easily highlight problems or sensitive issues
- Allowing program beneficiaries and staff to feel more comfortable expressing opinions
- Providing less risk of an ‘atmosphere of blame’ than when using internal people.

For an easy-to-use on 10 page (282KB) overview on evaluation with illustrations suitable for community groups, churches, non-governmental organizations, and charities, see TearFund’s ‘*Introducing Assessment: Guidelines on Evaluation.*’ Downloadable at: http://tilz.tearfund.org/webdocs/Tilz/Roots/Introducing%20evaluation_E.pdf



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Championing HIV & AIDS ministries and helping partners respond more effectively to growing epidemics in Africa, Asia, and South America

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