

SARPN



WORKSHOP INVITATION

CHILDREN, HIV AND POVERTY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

9th & 10th April, 2002.
HSRC Conference Centre
134 Pretorius Street
Pretoria

To respond to this invitation please register with
sarpn@hsrc.ac.za (before 5 April 2002)

Introduction

HIV infection levels in southern Africa are the highest in the world. In Sub-Saharan Africa, HIV infection levels in the young adult population are in the region of 20%. However, in southern Africa, the rates of infection are considerably higher. One in three adults in Botswana and one in four adults in Zimbabwe and Swaziland are believed to be HIV positive, while one in five adults are infected in South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia and Zambia. AIDS is now increasingly the main cause of death of people between the age of 15 and 45 in these countries.

The visitation of the HIV virus on southern African societies is of a historical magnitude. The loss of life amounts to a humanitarian disaster. Life expectancy rates will plummet and development gains in terms of children's health and education will be undermined and reversed. The most damaging

legacy of all will be a predicted 9 million orphans in the southern Africa region who will need support, care and protection by 2010.

Virtually half of the populations in all southern African states are the under the age of 18. Infant mortality, malnutrition and poverty indicators in countries such as Angola, Mozambique and Malawi are some of the highest in the world. The high levels of rural and urban poverty in these countries will be exacerbated by sharply rising adult mortality and a declining capacity of the state to provide social services.

How effective will social safety nets be in southern African states, communities and families in dealing with such an acute social crisis? What can be learned from current government, community and civil society initiatives which will protect the rights of orphans and HIV-affected families? Are a range of developmental interventions adequate or should more urgent humanitarian actions be started? Are existing poverty reduction initiatives currently considering the longer-term impact of HIV on children? This workshop will attempt to address these urgent concerns.

Objectives of the workshop

This workshop will examine the impact of HIV on children's lives in southern Africa. It has a prime objective of raising the issues of poverty, children and HIV to a much higher level of understanding and concomitant action amongst policy makers, governments, donors and civil society organisations within southern Africa. It will particularly concentrate on how the rights of orphans and affected families can be secured, so that these most vulnerable of children can enjoy protection, food security and improved access to health and education. It will consider the macro-economic impact of HIV as well as the increasing demands placed on communities for the care of orphans.

There is still a profound level of ignorance on what the effects of HIV are on children. The workshop will thus concentrate on four areas of concern which need to be more fully and urgently understood:

- a) How are communities and families caring for affected children?**
- b) What are the best approaches to improve the understanding of the impact of HIV on child poverty and food security and of the role of children within their household and community economies?**
- c) How can debates and programmes that are promoting access and equity to treatment and care ensure that the rights of children are improved?**
- d) What is the relationship between conflict and HIV infection in countries such as Angola and how can children be effectively protected in such a hostile environment?**

This workshop will bring together government officials, policy makers, researchers, community development practitioners and a wide range of civil society organisations to debate these concerns. It is hoped that a set of realistic recommendations will come out of these deliberations, which will

strengthen the links between people making macro-level decisions on behalf of children and those organisations and communities who are supporting affected children on a daily basis.

The workshop has been organised jointly by Save the Children, the Southern African Poverty Network and the Child, Youth and Family Programme of the HSRC. These institutions share a commitment to policy processes which will alleviate the plight of children.

PUBLIC LECTURE

Tuesday April 9th

Public event with keynote speaker: Mrs. Graça Machel

“Poverty and the impact of HIV on children in Southern Africa”

Registration: 9.30am

Speech: 10.00 – 11.30am (An opportunity for questions will be given)

Venue:

HSRC Conference Centre
134 Pretorius Street
Pretoria

Secure parking is available in the HSRC's commercial parking area.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Wednesday April 10th

8.15 - 8.45

Registration

8.45 - 9.15

Opening remarks: Southern Africa Regional Poverty Network

9.15–9.55

Plenary presentation: Impact of HIV on children in Southern Africa

What is the present impact of HIV on children in Southern Africa and what may its potential impact be over the next ten years?

What is needed to ensure that children affected by HIV are not increasingly impoverished?

Speaker:

Stefan Germann & peer counsellor, Masiye Camp, Zimbabwe

9.55 – 10.15 Questions & discussion

10.15 – 10.40 COFFEE BREAK

10.40 – 11.50 **Round table discussions**

Group 1: Community-based care for children

What is the potential role of government welfare departments in ensuring that HIV-affected children can best have their basic needs met at community level.

What are the challenges faced by communities in responding to the needs of HIV-affected children?

Speakers:

Priscilla McKay, Director, Pinetown Child Welfare Welfare Society, South Africa

Maria Mobetwa, Director, HIV/AIDS Social Development Dept, South Africa

Brenda Yamba, SCOPE community-based care project , Zambia

Group 2: Food security, livelihoods and HIV-affected households

What tools and approaches can be used to assist communities, CBOs and planners to ensure minimum food security in HIV-affected households?

How can children be involved in assessing impact and planning appropriate responses?

Speakers:

Neil Marsland, Food Security Natural Resources Department, SADC /Save the Children UK

Jill Donahue, Regional Micro-economics Adviser, Catholic Relief Society, Harare, Zimbabwe

11.50 – 12.20 Group report back and plenary discussion

12.20 – 13.35 LUNCH

13.35 – 14.05 **Plenary presentation 2: Children's rights and access to care and support**

How can we ensure that existing services and initiatives consider children's needs and rights?

Speaker:

Lynette Mudekanye, Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Officer,
Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, South Africa

14.05 – 14.25 Questions & discussion

14.25 – 15.20 **Round table discussions**

Group 1: Ensuring children's treatment and support needs are met

Treatment access and equity – what are the current challenges to health care systems and governments in the light of current anti-HIV drug access and costs

What is the impact on children infected with HIV and living in HIV-affected households of treatment access?

What are the challenges and strategies that governments and NGOs face in ensuring greater access to treatment and care

Speakers:

Representative from Treatment Action Campaign, South Africa
Representative, Ministry of Health, Botswana (to be confirmed)

Group 2: Children, HIV and conflict

How is HIV affecting children (girls and boys) in already war-affected communities?

What can the key players do to ensure appropriate HIV responses for children in conflict areas?

Speakers:

Angolan speaker (final name to be confirmed)

Lynn Walker, Farm Orphan Support Trust, Zimbabwe

15.20 – 15.45 Group report back and plenary discussion

15.45 – 16.05 TEA

16.05 – 16.45 **Plenary presentation: Reflections on the issues covered during the day**

Speakers:

(Speaker to be confirmed)

16.45 – 17.15 Questions and discussion:
identifying key steps for policy relevant action

17.15 – 17.30 Closing summary

PLEASE NOTE:

Persons wishing to attend the conference are requested to RSVP to:

sarpn@hsrc.ac.za (before 5 April 2002)