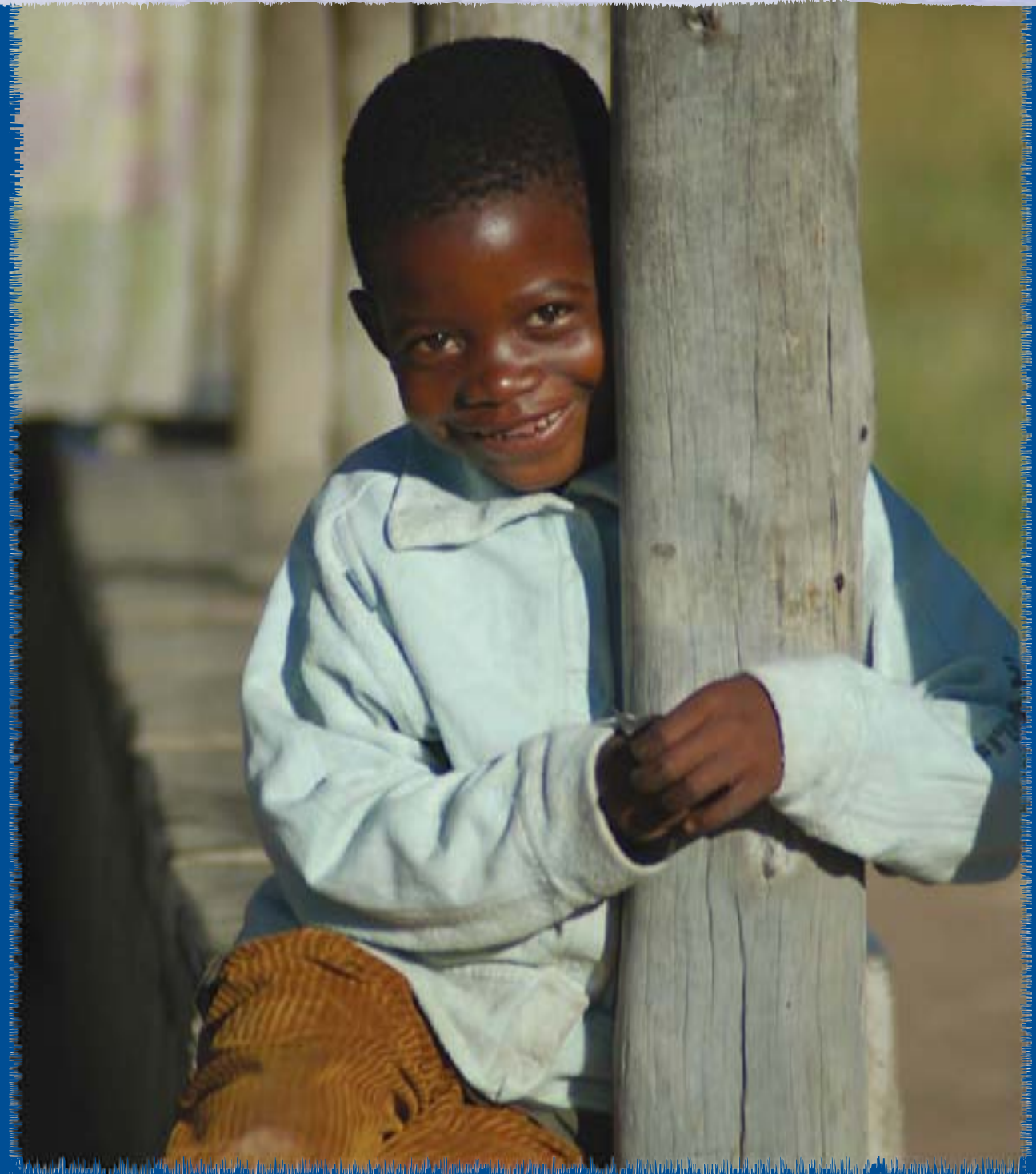


# From Faith to Action

Strengthening Family and Community Care for Orphans  
and Vulnerable Children in Sub-Saharan Africa



*A Resource for Faith-Based Groups and Donors  
Seeking to Help Children and Families Affected by HIV/AIDS*

**Second Edition**

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*The first edition of From Faith to Action was published in July 2006. Thirty thousand copies were produced and distributed. This second edition includes an updated list of resources, a pull-out poster highlighting key messages and strategies, additional endorsing organizations, and supporting statements from church leaders and practitioners.*

## **Credits**

This report was written and published by the Firelight Foundation with financial support for the first edition provided by American Jewish World Service, the Bernard van Leer Foundation, and Save Africa’s Children/Pan African Children’s Fund, and UNICEF. Thirty-two organizations are endorsing *From Faith to Action*. A complete list is provided on pages 30–33.

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Electronic copies of the summary and full publication of *From Faith to Action* are also available to download from the Firelight Foundation web site ([www.firelightfoundation.org](http://www.firelightfoundation.org)).

# Dear Reader,

**H**IV/AIDS and poverty threaten the safety and survival of millions of children across Sub-Saharan Africa. Family and community members struggle to provide for the increasing numbers of orphans and vulnerable children. Resources, meager to begin with, are being stretched to the limit. This is a mounting crisis with no immediate end in sight.

There is, however, a story of hope. In the midst of overwhelming human suffering, there has been a remarkable groundswell of African faith-based and community groups rising to the challenge and responding to the needs of children and families made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS.

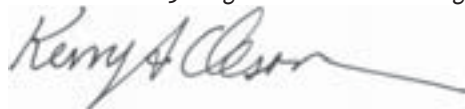
***Every child needs the nurturing support of family and the experience of community in order to thrive.***

This publication highlights the programs and strategies that help ensure that children remain in family care. It describes organizations that are doing this important work, especially those established by people of faith in the areas of Sub-Saharan Africa that are hardest hit by HIV/AIDS. All major religions share common ground in areas of social concern, upholding values such as respect for life, the importance of family and community, and concern for the poor and underprivileged. Faced with children who are going hungry, without adequate clothing or shelter, out of school, and grieving, religious and community members are taking action.

The organizations that have produced and endorsed this report fund many different programs serving children in African countries. We have witnessed the effective work of grassroots and faith-based groups rising to the challenge of HIV/AIDS in their communities. Our work also has brought us face-to-face with the complex issue of institutional care. We believe that investing in community-based approaches enables children to be provided for and cared for in families—where they grow best—and reduces the number of children who are left without care or are placed in orphanages.

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. It is the intent of this report to make the breadth, depth, and effectiveness of these local groups come to life. We offer *From Faith to Action* as a guide to faith-based organizations, congregations, and other groups and individuals seeking to contribute their resources to support the needs of children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS.

On behalf of the 32 organizations endorsing this publication,



Kerry Olson, Founder and President, Firelight Foundation





# A Call to Help

## *Africa Is Being Ravaged by HIV/AIDS and Children Are Paying the Greatest Price*

**A**s HIV/AIDS takes the lives of mothers and fathers across Sub-Saharan Africa, millions of children lose a primary source of their support, guidance, and unconditional love. For every orphaned child, many more are made vulnerable as family members become ill, vital resources are depleted, and children themselves are at risk of HIV-infection. In a region where more than half of the population lives on less than one dollar per day and access to life-saving medications is limited, the impact of AIDS on children and families is devastating.

Over 12 million children in Sub-Saharan Africa under the age of 18 have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS. The total number of children in Sub-Saharan Africa orphaned by any cause, including famine, disease, conflict and HIV/AIDS, is over 40 million. **This is an orphan crisis without historical precedent.** Most of these children continue to live with a surviving parent or their extended family members. Many of these families are living in poverty and are struggling to provide. This crisis calls for a broad-based and compassionate response that helps families and communities to meet the needs of orphans and vulnerable children.

## *People of Faith Are Called to Respond*

Religious groups have a deep commitment to serving the poor, the sick, and the vulnerable. The teachings of all faiths call upon individuals to respond to human suffering and the needs of vulnerable children. As donors and as direct service providers, people of faith have a critical role to play in addressing the HIV/AIDS crisis and its impact on children in Africa. The question that we must all ask is, "How can we respond in ways that best support children's needs and rights while addressing the immense challenges that poverty and HIV/AIDS present?"

## *Who Are Orphans and Vulnerable Children?*

We use the phrase "orphans and vulnerable children" to describe all of those children who have lost one or both parents from any cause or have been determined by their community members to be in greatest need. In the case of HIV/AIDS, children often face the greatest difficulties before they become orphans, as their parents become too ill to care for them. When programs target "AIDS orphans" only, they create problems by both privileging and stigmatizing the children receiving the services. It is important for organizations to evaluate and assist all children with serious hardships, such as children living in extreme poverty, orphaned by other causes, caring for ailing parents, or suffering from illness or disabilities.

## *The Impact of HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa*

- ▲ Home to 12% of the world's population, Sub-Saharan Africa is home to over 65% of all people living with HIV.
- ▲ In 2007, nearly 23 million men, women, and children in the region were HIV positive.
- ▲ Nearly 9 out of 10 children who are HIV positive today are from African countries.
- ▲ Of the children currently under the age of 18 orphaned by HIV/AIDS worldwide, close to 80% live in Sub-Saharan Africa.



## ***Is Building More Orphanages the Answer?***

The sheer number of orphaned and vulnerable children is overwhelming. Many well-meaning donors are funding orphanages as a solution to the problem. However, orphanages are expensive and can only reach small numbers of children. Research by the World Bank in Tanzania, for example, found the cost of operating orphanages to be six times higher than the cost of caring for children in the community. Most importantly, orphanages separate children from family and community life. They often fail to meet children's developmental needs and do not prepare them for adult life in the larger society. While institutions can serve as a temporary and last-resort response for children with no other means of support, they are not a recommended long-term solution. The most promising solutions must look to more sustainable alternatives that focus on preventing the conditions that lead to the need for institutional care.

*Most donors have a concrete image of what an orphanage looks like. An orphanage is a physical place that can be seen, touched, and visited. In contrast, most donors are not familiar with the programs that help keep children in families. These preventive programs are harder to immediately see and describe, but their benefits can be far greater and they are able to reach many more children.*

Many African countries and international organizations recognize the shortcomings of orphanages and discourage their use. They recognize that children may be placed in orphanages by family members who want to care for them but lack the means to do so. Orphanages can become a way to access food, clothing, and an education, when what is really needed is to make these necessities available within the community. When an orphanage is treated as the primary solution, it can weaken a community's motivation to address orphan issues and divert resources away from the family-based solutions that are better for children.

## ***Family and Community Safety Nets Need Support***

A common thread that runs through Africa's diverse cultures is that of extended family members stepping in to provide orphans with a nurturing home and a family, which children need in order to grow into healthy adults. Given the scale and scope of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, it is remarkable that most of the children who have been orphaned continue to be cared for by extended family members. But this safety net is becoming less reliable as more and more caregivers die. Family and community resources are stretched to the breaking point and are in need of support.

## ***What Is in the Best Interests of the Child?***

In the complex puzzle posed by HIV/AIDS, there are no easy answers. Children need to be protected from neglect, abuse, and the deprivation of their basic needs. Whether they are in family homes or in institutional care, orphans and vulnerable children require extra monitoring and support to ensure their wellbeing. They need loving and consistent care, access to health services, good nutrition, education, and interaction with local community life, no matter where they live.

## ***Who Are the Caregivers?***

It is estimated that well over 90% of orphaned children in Sub-Saharan Africa are cared for by extended family members or by other families in their communities. Primary caregivers include a surviving parent, grandmothers, aunts and uncles, older siblings, and neighbors who act as "foster" parents, often without the involvement of an outside agent. Many families taking in children are impoverished themselves and in need of support. Grandparents are caring for between 20 and 60 percent of orphans, depending on the region. As they suffer the loss of their adult children to HIV/AIDS, they lose their support system for old age while caring for increasing numbers of grandchildren.

*"I lost my parents to AIDS and then my auntie followed. I was then taken and adopted by an [orphanage] where I have lived for the last 5 years. I hate this place. It is an institution not a home. I wish I was left with my poor grandmother with just assistance for care. Today I have lost touch with most of my relatives. We live in homes named by numbers and the so called house mothers...We as children need real love from our relatives not people paid to love us...How can a child be adopted by just an organization?"*

~From a letter sent to the Firelight Foundation by a 14-year old youth in Tanzania





# Supporting Family & Comm

*The family is the most important source of love, attention, emotional support, material sustenance, and moral guidance in a child's life. The most important thing that faith-based organizations can do is to help ensure that every child has a family that is able to provide the nurturing and care that every child needs.*



## ***Children Grow Best in Families***

Children who are cared for by families within communities are more likely to thrive than those in orphanages. Children growing up in families generally receive the kind of love, attention, and care essential to their wellbeing. The daily life and close relationships within a family lay the foundation for a child's social and emotional development, self-image, and sense of belonging. As children interact with members of their households and the wider community, they absorb the patterns and values of their culture and develop the language, customs, and skills they will need in their adult lives.

## ***Grassroots Responses Strengthen Families and Communities***

The best way to serve vulnerable children is to strengthen the capacity of families and communities to care for them. Extended family members and other caregivers in the community who are willing to take in children often lack the resources to do so. Many faith-based and other community organizations address this issue by providing households with support to meet the material, educational, and emotional needs of children. These local solutions help ensure that every child has a family, while also protecting children from mistreatment or abuse. When the safety net of care is strengthened, fewer children are neglected, abandoned, or placed within institutional care.

*"When I first went into AIDS work I was asked to open an orphanage and refused. My basic feeling is that if the money went to the families and homes of people raising orphans, children experiencing this basic security — not to mention the spiritual and moral support of those who love them and claim them as their own — will become more well-rounded members of society in the future."*

~Sister Marion Hughes  
Maryknoll Sisters, Tanzania

# unity Care



## **Grassroots Solutions Help Communities Address Their Own Needs**

Grassroots efforts to support children and families mobilize local resources, inspire community ownership, and build community strength in a variety of ways. Most community and faith-based organizations have lean budgets and minimal, if any, paid staff. Motivated by compassion, goodwill, and seeing children in need of help, volunteers — often neighbors and members of the community themselves — are the backbone of many grassroots efforts. Many volunteers are also poor, and it is important to ensure that they receive training opportunities, recognition, and other types of support.

*“Community members are taking up the challenge by sustaining life and giving love — providing home-based care and visitation. Moreover, they are providing hours of their time without compensation and donating their own scarce resources...as good neighbors and caring people, they have responded to the inhumane gap in access to care and support in poor communities.”*

~Esther Mwaura Muiro, GROOTS, Kenya

## **Many Different Organizations Support Children and Families**

Grassroots responses vary greatly in their size and in the scope and scale of their services. In their simplest form, community organizations are small informal groups that have come together to address a local need. Among them are the many thousands of faith-based groups and congregations that are providing assistance to vulnerable children in their communities. As groups expand, they may hire staff and seek outside funding. Local faith-based groups may receive support through their religious networks at the district, national, and international levels. In addition, a growing number of larger non-governmental organizations work closely with communities to encourage and support local efforts. Collectively, this diverse group of organizations is working at the ground level to ensure that hundreds of thousands of children receive support and remain in family care.

## **Local Programs Grow in Response to Real Needs**

Examining how different community and faith-based groups identify priorities demonstrates that there is no single right way to do things. Problems are best addressed when the people most directly involved in a situation develop their own solutions, while also being able to draw on successful practices gleaned from other resources. The approaches and activities used vary as each group determines the form of assistance that best meets the needs of its population. Many groups start by providing one type of assistance, and then add on services as they see the need.

## **A Variety of Activities Offer the Best Results**

Grassroots and faith-based groups provide different programs and activities to strengthen family and community care for orphans and vulnerable children. While each individual group may serve a relatively small population, the collective force of these local initiatives is tremendous. The following pages highlight a range of strategies that have been shown to be effective. Stories and examples from organizations that are making a difference in the lives of children provide an illustration of these strategies in action.

## **Faith-Based Organizations**

It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of faith throughout Africa, where some two million churches, mosques, and other religious groups blanket the continent. The term “faith-based organization” (FBO) is used to describe groups with religious affiliations or established by communities of faith. They include congregations, their coordinating bodies, mission hospitals and schools, and faith-driven non-governmental and community-based organizations. FBOs offer some of the most extensive, best organized, and most viable networks of community organizations throughout Africa. They play a significant — though often under-recognized — role in responding to the health, education, and social welfare needs of children and families.

## **Kisumu Urban Apostolate Programme – Pandipieri, Kisumu, Kenya**

Started by missionary Hans Burgman and community members to serve the shanty areas of Kisumu, Pandipieri began as a health program for the poor and later added an education program for street children. As the impact of HIV/AIDS spread, Pandipieri responded by expanding its programs. Serving a community with a 27% HIV prevalence rate, Pandipieri now offers over 20 different programs reaching thousands of adults and children, including education support, vocational training for youth, a health center and a mobile clinic, home-based care services, income-generating activities, and psychosocial services and pastoral care. While exceptional in its scale and scope, Pandipieri's progression from a small organization offering a single program to a more comprehensive service provider follows a course that is shared by other community organizations that have received outside support to help them grow.



# Strategies to Support Family & Community Care for Orphans & Vulnerable Children

## Raising Community Awareness and Inspiring Action

### ***Making Children a Priority***

Community and faith-based groups inspire others to take action by raising awareness about the needs of vulnerable children. Despite the overwhelming impact of HIV/AIDS, many individuals are willing to step forward and help when they are given the necessary information and support. A common approach is to form “orphan and vulnerable child care committees” that bring together a cross section of the community or members of congregations to identify children in need and to develop a plan of action.

*In villages and communities across Africa, local groups work together to respond to the needs of orphans and vulnerable children.*

### ***Joint Efforts Strengthen Responses***

Community organizations that mobilize action for children increase their reach and effectiveness when they work together with other groups. Some faith-based organizations play a leadership role in creating inter-denominational or inter-faith responses. These efforts provide local congregations and groups with greater access to information, resources, and other types of support.

### ***The Diocese of Southern Highlands of the Anglican Church of Tanzania, Mbeya, Tanzania***

The Diocese of Southern Highlands trained community volunteers to conduct a house-to-house survey to identify orphans and other vulnerable children in their region. Once they had accurate information, they mobilized community members, including clergy and church members, to gather and distribute clothing, food, and other resources. The Diocese also offers education assistance and health care services to children in the greatest need.

### ***The Dananai Centre, Murambinda, Zimbabwe***

Dananai, which means “unconditional love,” was started by members of Murambinda Mission Hospital staff and the community in response to the growing problem of HIV/AIDS. Working closely with local leaders and volunteers, Dananai established Village Care Groups to mobilize help for orphans, vulnerable children, and people living with HIV/AIDS. The groups meet regularly to identify children according to their level of need and to develop strategies to support them. Dananai also convened a children’s forum, providing children with an opportunity to discuss their rights and express their needs. Youth in the program say, “*The community now has a positive attitude toward us...due to the community mobilization workshops.*”

### ***Zimbabwe Orphans through Extended Hands (ZOE)***

Since 1993, ZOE has worked closely with all denominations, especially Pentecostal, Baptist, and independent church groups, to provide services to all vulnerable children, regardless of their religious affiliation. Volunteers from the various religious groups work together to provide children and their caregivers with assistance such as regular home visits, food and clothing, social, emotional, and spiritual support, and income-generating activities. While external funding is also needed, all of the projects are funded largely through congregational collections. Between 2001 and 2005, ZOE’s network grew from 19 initiatives involving 109 churches to 60 initiatives involving 600 churches. This included an increase from 247 volunteers supporting some 3,500 children to 2,000 volunteers supporting over 60,000 vulnerable children.

### ***Zambia Interfaith Networking Group on HIV/AIDS (ZINGO)***

ZINGO was formed in 1997 to help religious communities become more involved in HIV/AIDS activities. Its membership is made up of seven national religious bodies representing the Bahai, Hindu, and Islamic faiths, as well as Evangelical, Independent, Episcopal, and other Christian denominations. ZINGO identifies local congregations that are working with orphans and vulnerable children and provides them with financial support, training, and materials. They establish inter-religious committees and leadership teams at the district level to coordinate activities, plan program strategies, and engage in joint advocacy to increase support for vulnerable children and people living with HIV/AIDS. ZINGO extends its reach and advocacy efforts through a national weekly radio program.





### **Knowledge Informs Responsible Action**

When people believe that HIV/AIDS is contracted from simple social contact or is caused by an evil curse, they are often afraid to take in or assist children who have lost their parents to the disease. Once people are educated about HIV/AIDS and encouraged to discuss it openly and honestly, children affected by HIV/AIDS are more likely to be accepted and cared for. Community and faith-based organizations address this issue in a variety of ways. Many work to reduce stigma by establishing HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention campaigns and support for people living with HIV/AIDS. A growing number of groups provide family life and human sexuality education. Working within the culture and values of their communities, they use peer educators to promote prevention and address the myths about HIV/AIDS. These programs help ensure that children and their families receive the acceptance and support crucial to their survival.



### **Empowering Youth**

Youth, especially young women, are at the highest risk of becoming infected with HIV. Youth participation is crucial to the success of community efforts to create awareness, reduce discrimination, increase voluntary HIV testing, and encourage responsible behaviors that help prevent the spread of the disease. Youth are the best at reaching other youth. Community and faith-based organizations are promoting youth involvement through peer education programs, peer counseling, youth-led awareness campaigns, and youth leadership training.



### **Ts'osane Support Group, Maseru, Lesotho**

When widowed Thakane Ts'osane took her ill sister-in-law to the hospital, nurses and doctors were reluctant to touch the sick woman. She died two days later and Mrs. Ts'osane had to tell her brother that his wife had died of AIDS. At that time, there were no counseling services to help the dying and their families or to provide assistance to the children left behind. Mrs. Ts'osane decided to find a way to help people in this situation by starting a support group. She also initiated awareness campaigns to reduce the fear and stigma that prevented people from helping HIV-infected and -affected children.

These information sessions helped to save the life of Matsebo. Turned away by both her uncle and other relatives when she developed AIDS, Matsebo was found on the side of the road, weak and helpless. The support group found her a home in the community and took her to the hospital for an HIV test and medication. Matsebo and others like her are now given help because people have more accurate information and have witnessed Ts'osane group members valuing the lives of those who are affected by HIV/AIDS.

### **Youth Alive Club, Apac District, Uganda**

The Youth Alive Club is a faith-based organization that operates in Uganda and 14 other African countries. The clubs use peer educators to teach life skills and to help young people avoid contracting HIV/AIDS so that they might live to fulfill their dreams and ambitions. Working in communities and in schools, the clubs provide a forum for young people to openly discuss HIV/AIDS and its effects. Youth Alive uses a variety of outreach methods to promote healthy lifestyles, faith and values, and positive behavioral change. Youth Alive includes the wider community in its outreach. This has led to behavior change among parents, as well as youth. Their activities include workshops, video shows, sports events, and music, dance, and drama festivals. As a result of these efforts, "youth are able to identify the risky behaviors they have been exposed to, what they can do to avoid them, and appreciate the complexity of HIV/AIDS."

# Strategies to Support Family & Community Care for Orphans & Vulnerable Children

## Helping Caregivers and Youth Sustain Livelihoods

### **Helping Caregivers Provide for Children**

Poverty prevents families from being able to take in children in need. Many community and faith-based groups create income-generating activities for caregivers, offering microcredit loans and small business training. Some of the most successful programs are locally run with support from non-governmental or professional organizations specializing in microfinance. These programs provide caregivers with the skills and the start-up capital to engage in livelihoods that will help feed, clothe, and pay the school fees for the children in their care. Other organizations provide agricultural supplies such as seeds, tools, and livestock to families in rural areas. Congregations and local organizations often provide material resources such as food, blankets, and clothing to families in which the heads of households are too ill or too old to work. Many programs recruit community volunteers to help build or repair homes and work in community gardens.

### **Rural Economic Enhancement Programme (REEP), Butula, Kenya**

REEP's success in strengthening family care for vulnerable children rests upon its decision to invest in long-term solutions that improve livelihoods and inspire hope. Working in partnership with a local bank, REEP structured a revolving loan fund with more than 200 caregivers and youth as shareholders. They receive training in bookkeeping and other skills to help them set up small businesses, and then are given small loans as start-up capital. Staff members help each trainee identify a business based on his or her abilities and what the market can support. Participants join support groups and receive ongoing technical support. As a result of this carefully designed program, many members are taking care of themselves and their families. Their individual stories highlight the effectiveness of economic empowerment at the community level.

Mercelyne, the oldest of five children who lost both their parents to HIV/AIDS, was forced to leave school to care for her siblings. The US\$26 she makes in an average week with her knitting business takes care of her family's needs and pays school fees for her younger siblings.

Elizabeth took in her brother's six children upon his death from HIV/AIDS. She is able to care for all of the children with the profits from her market stall where she sells spare bicycle parts.

REEP enabled Florence, a widow, to resist pressure to be inherited by her brother-in-law, a traditional practice that is difficult to avoid when women lack financial means. With her profits from her housewares kiosk and small-scale farming, she is putting one of her children through secondary school while supporting her family.

### **Teso Islamic Development Organization (TIDO), Soroti, Uganda**

TIDO operates in displaced people's camps, as well as in the rural Soroti district, providing care and support to people affected by HIV/AIDS. Although constantly challenged by the insecurity of life in the camps, TIDO trains home-based caregivers, provides psychosocial support, and enables income-generating activities among families caring for orphans and vulnerable children. The organization has also supplied 140 caregivers with livestock, which helps them provide for their families.

One such beneficiary is Abdu Idi, a peasant farmer who is living with HIV/AIDS. When his youngest daughter turned six, she began to attend Soroti Islamic Primary School, and TIDO provided her family with a heifer to help them pay for her education. Abdu Idi's wife received training in animal care and management. He notes, "This project is very important to the community because it has disseminated information on HIV/AIDS and supported [people living with HIV/AIDS], orphans, and vulnerable children to improve on their livelihood and their household's income."





### ***Vocational Education for Youth***

As parents become ill and die, their eldest daughters and sons often must take on the responsibility of providing for their families. When young people learn marketable trades, they can provide for themselves or their families without becoming vulnerable to prostitution, labor exploitation, and other dangerous activities. Community and faith-based organizations assist youth with the tools for economic survival and independence by offering vocational education, apprenticeships, and skills training.

*Vocational training and small business loans help caregivers and youth provide for themselves and their families.*

### ***Supporting Child-Headed Households***

The need to hold on to family property and to keep siblings together after their parents have died sometimes results in households that are headed by youth. Although child-headed households are somewhat rare, these families are especially vulnerable and require extra protection and support. In addition to vocational training and assistance with earning a livelihood, these youth need help coping with the emotional and social burdens of their loss and the extra responsibilities they have taken on.



### ***Centre Pour l'Amour des Jeunes (CPAJ), Kigali, Rwanda***

The 1994 genocide and rising rates of HIV/AIDS resulted in a large number of children living on the streets of Kigali. The Presbyterian Church of Rwanda started the Centre Pour l'Amour des Jeunes, the "Center for the Love of Young People," to help street children. The CPAJ compound sits just outside Kigali's center, not far from the city's municipal dump. Its proximity to the dump is strategic, as CPAJ does most of its outreach work among the street children who salvage scraps from this rubbish heap. CPAJ operates a transitional boarding school and training facility where street children attend classes, pursue vocational training, and receive counseling aimed at reunifying them with their families.

When CPAJ realized that many street children leave their households in an effort to relieve the economic burden on their struggling caregivers, they developed a series of income-generating programs. Older youth spend a month observing workshops and then choose among ten vocational training programs, including carpentry, metalworking, baking, hairdressing, and masonry. They also learn literacy skills and bookkeeping. When youth are reunited or placed with families, they receive a female goat and are visited by CPAJ staff periodically. After their goats have birthed twice, the youth share their assets by giving one of the baby goats to another family.

### ***Nkundabana: Chosen to Care, Church World Service, Rwanda***

Fostering community compassion for children in orphan-headed households is a cornerstone of the Church World Service-sponsored "Giving Hope" program of the YWCA in Rwanda. Youth who head households are organized into small support groups. Each group selects a youth leader and chooses an older person to be their Nkundabana ("one who loves children"), or foster grandparent. Because African tradition honors the elderly, these volunteer grandparents bring immediate dignity and respect to their roles. Through their counsel, encouragement, and practical assistance, Nkundabana help young people achieve the education, livelihood, and social skills essential to their self-sufficiency.

When Miriam, a volunteer with the "Giving Hope" program, was asked by a group of young people to become their foster grandmother, she told them how she had helped another group learn to read. "We don't want your reading and writing. We want your heart," the youth answered. She has now been working with that group for three years. Among other activities, they have started a seedling nursery together. The youth transplant the seedlings into their own fields, as well as communal fields, providing a food and income source for themselves and others.



# Strategies to Support Family & Community Care for Orphans & Vulnerable Children

## Providing Home-Based Care, Health & Daycare Services

### ***Home-Based Care Reduces the Burden on Households***

People who are ill with AIDS are vulnerable to social isolation, depression, and the inability to care for their family's basic needs. Children are often forced to leave school to care for their dying parents. A widespread response is home-based care, which provides trained volunteers to visit the homes of the ill. Family-centered home-based care focuses on the needs of the entire household, including children. Home-based care volunteers assist with a range of needs, including food preparation, household chores, hygiene, and basic medical care. They teach family members how to care for the ill while protecting themselves from the risk of infection. They offer emotional and spiritual support to the suffering, relieve youth so they can attend classes, and monitor the needs of children within the households they serve. Home-based care workers are also well placed to help parents make plans for how and by whom their children will be cared for after their deaths.


### ***Bwafwano Community Home-Based Care Organization, Lusaka, Zambia***

Bwafwano ("helping one another") was started in response to increasing numbers of HIV/AIDS and TB patients in an impoverished area of Lusaka. High HIV prevalence rates and limited public health facilities made home-based care a key strategy for meeting the needs of the community. Today Bwafwano has grown to one of the most far-reaching home-based care providers in Zambia, serving people living with AIDS and vulnerable children in both urban areas and rural settlements. Bwafwano employs a team approach using more than 450 providers who specialize in care for the ill and dying, support for vulnerable children, and psychosocial counseling. In addition, Bwafwano's 37 Orphan and Vulnerable Children Community Committees help mobilize and coordinate the community response.

Jean Mwelwa is one of Bwafwano's home-based care providers who identifies and registers vulnerable children during home visits. Her careful assessment of the home environment, including the availability of food and the children's health and school status, is combined with information from community members. This information is used to determine the services that are provided to the children. Children who are ill receive basic nursing care from a home-based care worker, or are referred to the Bwafwano Community Clinic if more extensive medical treatment is necessary. Counseling is provided to both guardians and children. Those who have dropped out of school are referred to the Bwafwano Community School or are sponsored to attend government schools. Community committees work together with home-based care providers to provide food and other services to the children in greatest need.



*Programs that ease the burden on caregivers—such as home-based care, daycare services, and support groups—reduce the risk that children will be neglected, abandoned, or placed in orphanages.*

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark skin and short hair, wearing a colorful patterned shawl. She is holding a young child whose head is visible in the foreground. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

*When parents receive life-saving medications, they can care for their children into the future.*

### ***Prolonging the Life of People Living with HIV***

It is critical that antiretroviral drug treatment to prevent mother-to-child transmission and to treat HIV infection becomes widely available in Africa. Until it does, the HIV/AIDS-related death toll will continue to rise at an alarming rate, leaving increasing numbers of children orphaned, in need of care, and at risk of HIV infection themselves. Community and faith-based groups can play an important role at the local level in the promotion of these life-saving medications. They can educate the public to mobilize advocacy for treatment access, identify the people most in need of immediate treatment support, and help ensure that people receiving treatment adhere to the recommended regimen. They often provide the emotional support needed to make treatment successful. In addition, they link people living with HIV to local health clinics that offer nutritional support and supply medicines to treat illnesses such as pneumonia, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and malaria.

### ***Addressing Caregivers' Needs Helps Children Remain in Families***

It is difficult for caregivers to work or attend school when they are caring for children who are young or have special needs. Caregivers who are elderly or ill often require respite. Daycare programs provide caregivers with time to attend to other needs while giving children opportunities to play and learn. Support groups give caregivers the opportunity to share their hardships and learn about how to better meet the emotional and developmental needs of children. Programs that ease the burden on caregivers reduce the risk that children will be neglected, abandoned, or placed in an orphanage.

### ***Kara Counseling and Training Trust, Lusaka, Zambia***

Kara's daycare program offers comfort to sick children in need of health care and nurturing. It also offers their family members great comfort, knowing that they can continue working while their children are looked after during the day. In addition, Kara teaches caregivers of sick children how to better care for them at home. Children who are too sick to travel to the daycare center, or whose families are no longer able to care for them, can be admitted on a short-term basis to Kara's hospice, one of Zambia's few inpatient options for poor and terminally ill children. There they receive needed health and pastoral care, as well as learning and play opportunities.

### ***AIDS Outreach Nyakato, Mwanza, Tanzania***

Emmanuel James is a 35-year-old volunteer with AIDS Outreach Nyakato, a faith-based organization in Mwanza, Tanzania. In 2004, his wife got sick, took their children, and returned to her parents' home where she later died. Ill and destitute himself, Emmanuel did not know what to do. He was introduced to the AIDS Outreach Nyakato Center, which took him to be tested at the voluntary counseling and testing center. He found out he was HIV positive and had a dangerously weakened immune system. The Nyakato staff took him to a clinic where he received antiretroviral treatment. At the start of his treatment he weighed 48 kilograms (106 lbs). Six months later he weighed 61 kilograms (135 lbs). Emmanuel has used his renewed strength to help others, providing outreach services to children and adults who are HIV positive. Emmanuel says, "I am like a book in the community. I was so sick and now I am a volunteer reaching out to other people who are isolated and sick like I was...I thank God who has given me courage."

### ***Ngwangwa Orphan Care and Chitukuko Group, Balaka, Malawi***

Ngwangwa Orphan Care and Chitukuko Group was started by a group of parents who had either lost children to HIV/AIDS or had taken orphans into their homes. They conducted a needs assessment of 32 villages that identified over 3,000 orphans in their region. In response, they initiated several activities, including village-based daycare centers, communal gardens to benefit vulnerable children, and an education committee to keep children in schools. Ngwangwa also offers caregivers counseling and training in child development.

Daycare centers are run by volunteers in their own homes, with the support and oversight of village HIV/AIDS committees. Ngwangwa supports the centers by providing training and play materials. One meal is provided to children each day. The centers are open for at least four hours daily, allowing caregivers to work.

# Strategies to Support Family & Community Care for Orphans & Vulnerable Children

## Ensuring the Right to an Education

### **Helping Children Stay in School**

An education is a child's future. One of the most distressing effects of HIV/AIDS is the increasing number of children who must leave school because their parents or caregivers cannot pay their school fees. Even in African countries where primary education is free, the costs of uniforms, textbooks, supplies, and exam fees — all necessary to participate — are beyond the means of impoverished families. The cost of secondary school is much higher, and in many regions often entails boarding fees. Children who are not in school are at greater risk for HIV infection, labor exploitation, and abandonment. Parents and caregivers sometimes place children in orphanages as a way to access education. Community organizations help children stay in school by covering the cost of school fees, uniforms, and books, or by negotiating with local schools to reduce or eliminate fees. Hunger and emotional distress can also prevent children from being able to participate in school. Programs that take a more holistic approach provide children with the food and the counseling they need to be able to learn.

### **Farm Orphan Support Trust (FOST), Harare, Zimbabwe**

FOST has found that working with schools is a good way to reach marginalized communities. The organization is helping over 6,500 children attend school, mainly by providing a block grant to support each school as a whole, rather than paying school fees for individual children. This approach has enabled FOST to provide many more children with education support, as fees are waived in exchange for the overall grant. In addition, FOST has trained teachers in psychosocial support, sensitizing them to the needs of children whose lives have been disrupted by HIV/AIDS.

*"It is important to recognize teachers as key partners in the care of orphans and vulnerable children. A teacher's attitude can do much towards acceptance, or rejection and stigmatization, of an orphan in a classroom. Teachers need to be trained in recognizing the behavioral problems associated with unresolved grief. They need to be supported in attending to the psychosocial needs of vulnerable children."*

~Dr. Sue Parry  
Ecumenical HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa  
and FOST Founder, Zimbabwe

*"Education is so strongly predictive of better knowledge, safer behavior and reduced infection rates that it has been described as the 'social vaccine'...it may be the single most effective preventive weapon against HIV/AIDS."*

~Global Campaign for Education

### **Advocating for Free Primary Education**

Primary school education is a right for all girls and boys, and as such should be provided by governments free of charge. The international community has declared that free primary education should be available to all by 2015, as a Millennium Development Goal. Elimination of formal school fees is necessary, but not sufficient. Even in those African countries where primary education is currently "free," restrictive fees to cover the costs of uniforms, textbooks, and exams often still apply. Faith-based organizations around the world can play an important role in advocating for the universal and unrestricted right to an education. Community-based groups can also join with other civil society organizations within their countries to advocate for removal of both formal and informal school fees.





### **Protecting Girls' Rights to Education**

Girls can suffer the loss of education because of their increased caretaking responsibilities at home. Programs to keep girls in school recognize that the more education young women have, the more likely they are to avoid HIV infection, marry later, send their own children to school, and earn an income, enabling them to break the cycle of poverty.

*"I am where I am today because the Girl Child Network believed in me and supported me to go further in my education. I think educating girls, like me, is important because it not only helps one individual, it affects the lives of my siblings, other women in my village, and future generations of women to believe in themselves and know that they can do more for themselves, their families, and their children."*

~From a girl who received school support through the Girl Child Network of Zimbabwe



### **Catholic AIDS Action (CAA), Windhoek, Namibia**

Nangula's life has not been easy. When her parents became sick, she often had to leave school in order to care for them. When they died, she missed a year of school because her elderly grandmother could not afford the school fees for her or her siblings. While Nangula's story is typical in Namibia, she is fortunate in one respect. A neighbor referred her to Catholic AIDS Action, which made sure that she and her siblings could attend school once again. They also receive after-school tutoring and food from the local CAA soup kitchen. As the cold weather set in, every member of Nangula's household was given a winter blanket. Volunteers also visit the grandmother regularly. Catholic AIDS Action pays for school fees and buys uniforms for hundreds of children like Nangula. The organization also helps them with school supplies, emotional support, clothing, and other needs. Volunteers monitor children's wellbeing and provide additional support to caregivers through home visits.

*Many community and faith-based organizations work to ensure access to education, for girls as well as boys.*



# Strategies to Support Family & Community Care for Orphans & Vulnerable Children

## Supporting Children's Social and Emotional Needs

### ***Paying Attention to Children's Social and Emotional Needs***

Orphans and vulnerable children have emotional and social needs that can be devastating if left unmet. They need help to cope with the trauma of witnessing their parents' deaths and the possible separation from their siblings. Many youth face overwhelming family responsibilities after their parents are gone. Younger children require extra support to regain their sense of security. Community and faith-based organizations play a critical role in supporting the healing process and nurturing children's resilience. Bereavement counseling and peer support groups give young people the opportunity to express their feelings and to talk with others in similar situations. Bringing groups together to pray, sing, and worship offers spiritual renewal and support. Recreation, sports, and arts programs allow children to play and learn. Children's needs differ according to their development, and the best programs tailor their activities to the ages and stages of the children they serve.

*"Faith, prayer, and fellowship offer comfort to children whose lives are filled with sorrow... When they join in prayer with others facing similar hardships, their spirits are uplifted, helping to reduce anxiety and depression. When you add prayer, faith, and social support in equal measures, you restore hope!"*

~Jean Webster  
Zimbabwe Orphans through Extended Hands (ZOE)

*"When a parent is sick, life becomes difficult for children — there's nothing to laugh or smile about because in the whole house everything is serious and sad. Giving children the opportunity to be in an environment where they can just be children and play and laugh helps them cope later at home."*

~Siphelile Kaseke  
Staff at Salvation Army's Masiye Camp  
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

### ***Rob Smetherham Bereavement Service for Children (RSBSC), Hilton, South Africa***

RSBSC is a faith-inspired organization that offers psychosocial support to bereaved children, especially those affected by HIV/AIDS. Given the lack of services in rural areas, RSBSC decided *"there is a need to look for creative ways of supporting the community in helping children cope with their losses and changed circumstances."* Play is a child's natural way to communicate, and RSBSC uses play therapy to help children work through their grief. They have developed a community-based model to raise awareness, build relationships, and provide therapeutic playgroups for children in rural areas. RSBSC also helps adults to deal with their own grief, which in turn allows them to better address the needs of children. The program offers training so that communities are able to provide bereavement interventions on their own. Staff members monitor the locally run groups and assist them in evaluating the impact of their services for several months before they exit the community.





## Claiming Their Personal History

Children who lose their parents also lose a vital connection to their personal history and heritage. A child's emotional and spiritual health is supported when parents are able to share their memories, family history, and future wishes with their children before they die. Many groups use memory books or boxes — collections of stories, family mementos, and other items — as tools for initiating an honest dialogue between parents and children. The memory books help parents give clear instructions for guardianship and distribution of property after they die and provide children with an opportunity for talking about their fears, hopes, and preferences for their future care.

*It is vital that children have a say in the decision about where and with whom they will live if their parents are no longer able to care for them. Children's choices are often based first and foremost on their feelings of being loved and accepted, while adults are often more concerned about a potential caregiver's ability to meet material needs.*

## Listening to Children

It is important to listen to the voices of children, respond to their concerns, and involve them in decisions that affect their lives. Children are “the experts in their own lives” and often bring valuable ideas, information, and viewpoints that adults may overlook. When children are included in decision-making, they feel a greater sense of ownership and are less fearful about what the future holds. The most effective programs recognize the right of children to participate in ways appropriate to their age and maturity. Community organizations foster participation by including youth in leadership roles, providing ways for children to share their observations and opinions, and being responsive to the needs expressed by the children themselves.

## What Children Hope For

The Dananai Centre in Zimbabwe asked 112 orphans and vulnerable children to participate in a brainstorming session. Other than food, clothing, shelter, and school fees, the children expressed the following needs:

- ▲ to be accepted and loved like other children
- ▲ to play
- ▲ to go to school like other children
- ▲ not to be laughed at because of poor clothes
- ▲ not to be robbed of their belongings when their parents die



## South Coast Hospice (SCH), Port Shepstone, South Africa

South Coast Hospice developed a community-based care program in response to the growing number of AIDS patients at their hospice facility. With HIV prevalence rates as high as 33%, SCH realized that many children would be orphaned and set out to provide these children with ongoing psychosocial support before the death of their parents. Their children's program includes home visits from trained community caregivers, who are supported by a social worker. A key activity is the use of memory boxes to help parents living with HIV disclose their HIV status to their children and to prepare their children for the possibility of their deaths in a supportive way. Parents, children, and in some cases, future guardians—if already identified—create the memory box together. The process helps parents to establish guardianship arrangements and provides documentation of important family history, identity documents, and precious memories such as photographs and a letter from the parent. The children paint the boxes and share their feelings and experiences through their art and words. The memory boxes become a cherished keepsake and a source of comfort and connection to their loved ones.

## Nehemiah Project, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Nehemiah is the City Pentecostal Assembly Church's response to children affected by HIV/AIDS in Sauerstown, a marginalized community bordering urban Bulawayo. Nehemiah works with schools as an entry point for mobilizing support and reaching youth. Over 160 children, ages 3 to 18, participate in their different Kid's Club activities. Youth serve on “children's committees,” which advise Nehemiah staff on programming. Their input is taken seriously and helps guide program decisions. For example, Nehemiah revised their Kid's Club curriculum when children expressed that they wanted activities that were better tailored to specific skill levels and age groups.





# Strategies to Support Family & Community Care for Orphans & Vulnerable Children

## Protecting Children from Abuse

### **Preventing Gender-Based Discrimination and Violence**

In African countries, HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects girls and women. In the most severely affected regions, five girls are infected for every one infected boy between the ages of 15 and 19. Social inequality and their roles as caretakers put girls at greater risk for dropping out of school. Economic dependence lowers their status in society and makes them more vulnerable to exploitation, early marriage, sexual abuse, and HIV infection. Girls who have been orphaned are especially at risk. Many community groups raise awareness around these issues and work to strengthen and protect the rights of girls and women. They give girls and young women tools to resist unsafe sex and sexual abuse. Some programs offer shelter, medical treatment, counseling, and legal advice to girls who have been abused.

### **Ensuring Children's Safety and Wellbeing**

Community and faith-based organizations play an important role in supporting the safety and wellbeing of children within family care. They may help screen and monitor foster family placements to make sure children are not mistreated or neglected. Workshops and training in parenting skills help caregivers to better understand and meet children's needs. Awareness campaigns in schools, churches, and other community centers aimed at recognizing and preventing child abuse help make the protection of children a shared responsibility and concern. While the care of children most often falls onto the shoulders of women, it is also vitally important to nurture men's roles as caregivers, teachers, and mentors.

### **The Girl Child Network (GCN), Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe**

*"To me, death was the better option to choose than life. But only before I learned of the Girl Child Network..."* The life stories of the girls assisted by the Girl Child Network are tragic and all too common. Founded by high school teacher Betty Makoni, a survivor of childhood abuse herself, the organization works to combat child sexual abuse in high density, farming, and rural communities. Through "Girls Empowerment Villages" and "Girl Child Clubs," GCN's support includes both treatment and prevention. The Villages provide a safe space where girls from rural areas receive medical care, legal aid, and counseling as they recover from abuse. GCN's advocacy and outreach help create safer communities by raising awareness and promoting community-wide prevention. The Clubs give youth skills to address the challenges they face in their homes, schools, and communities. Girls meet regularly to share with and support one another, and to learn about their rights and how to access services and opportunities. Starting with a single club, the organization has established more than 100 clubs with over 20,000 members across Zimbabwe.

### **Fatherhood Project, Dalbridge, South Africa**

The Fatherhood Project was initiated in response to increasing cases of child abuse in South Africa, the high rates of absence of men from households, and the growing need for caregivers due to orphanhood and HIV/AIDS. The project works to increase men's protection and care of children through raising awareness and providing information. As part of their advocacy campaign, The Fatherhood Project created a traveling exhibit featuring 120 photographs depicting men in caring and protective relationships with children. The exhibition features photos taken by children and students, as well as by professional photographers. The project also provides workshops, seminars, and lectures in partnership with community leaders and local and national organizations.



*Protecting children from abuse and neglect is a community-wide responsibility. It is vital to nurture men's, as well as women's, roles as caregivers, teachers, and mentors.*

### ***Protecting Children's Legal Rights Safeguards Their Future***

Orphaned children are at high risk of being separated from their siblings, losing their rights to education and family property, and being mistreated by caregivers who do not have their best interests at heart. Some groups address these risks by offering programs that help both adults and children understand and protect their legal rights. They may help parents write wills or record spoken wills to ensure the best possible care for their children after their deaths. Some groups help children get the legal identification they need to protect their rights to their family's land and to an education. They may walk children through the legal process of reporting and prosecuting abuse, or help families access the social services to which they are entitled. Some organizations engage in advocacy to change local and national customs and laws to ensure that children receive the protection, education, and care that is every child's birthright.

### ***Law and Development Association (LADA), Monze, Zambia***

LADA works in a rural area where property grabbing, widow inheritance, child abuse, and early forced marriages are common. They provide free legal advice and assistance to about 70 people each week. LADA's efforts have tremendously reduced property theft, helping many orphans and widows secure their right to property, including land, pensions, and other family items. Their approach involves the entire community—they train chiefs, village headmen, local court justices, police officers, and members of the community in women's and children's rights, referral options, and other services. Community paralegal volunteers run legal centers and refer complicated cases to the police, the courts, and to LADA staff for prosecution and legal representation. A special effort is made to include women in the leadership. LADA's "paralegal kids" program trains children in their rights and empowers them to report abuse directly to the police or LADA members.

### ***Masiye Camp Mobile Law Clinic, Salvation Army, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe***

When Masiye Camp discovered that many orphans and vulnerable children had difficulty accessing legal, medical, social, and psychological services, they established a Mobile Law Clinic that combines these services and brings them directly to the children. Operating out of a colorful thatched roof trailer, the unit visits Kids Clubs and schools on a rotational basis. The team either gives advice on the spot or refers the matter to an appropriate service provider. Follow-up visits are done by individual paralegals. The Mobile Law Clinic also holds community awareness workshops for adults on the legal, medical, social, and emotional needs of orphans and vulnerable children. A major focus of their legal services is helping children get birth documents, which are needed to access an education and other services.



*Empowering youth to understand  
and protect their legal rights  
is one of the best ways to ensure  
their safety and wellbeing.*



# Twelve Strategies for Supporting Orphaned and Vulnerable Children



Each of the activities described in the previous pages illustrates one or more of the following twelve strategies that support orphaned and vulnerable children. These strategies are based on principles that have been agreed upon and endorsed by a broad constituency of community and faith-based organizations, foundations, and international agencies serving children. They serve as a guide to “best practice” for those who are funding or implementing responses to children in need.

- 1 Focus on the most vulnerable children, not only those orphaned by HIV/AIDS.
- 2 Strengthen the capacity of families and communities to care for children.
- 3 Reduce stigma and discrimination.
- 4 Support HIV prevention and awareness, particularly among youth.
- 5 Strengthen the ability of caregivers and youth to earn livelihoods.
- 6 Provide material assistance to those who are too old or ill to work.



# Orphans & Vulnerable Children



- 7 *Ensure access to health care, life-saving medications, and home-based care.*
- 8 *Provide daycare and other support services that ease the burden on caregivers.*
- 9 *Support schools and ensure access to education, for girls as well as boys.*
- 10 *Support the psychosocial, as well as material, needs of children.*
- 11 *Engage children and youth in the decisions that affect their lives.*
- 12 *Protect children from abuse, gender discrimination, and labor exploitation.*



*These key strategies underlie the work of community- and faith-based organizations effectively responding to the needs of children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS and poverty. However, communities cannot and should not be expected to shoulder this enormous burden alone. Governments have a responsibility to provide basic services, especially in areas such as public health, education, material assistance, and social protection. Community- and faith-based organizations have an important role to play in advocating for—and helping families and children access—these critical services.*



# Institutional Care: A Tempor



*Institutional care is sometimes needed as a temporary response for children who have no other means of support.*

The purpose of this publication is to raise awareness about the importance of family and community-based solutions to the problems faced by orphans and vulnerable children. We hope to move donors, faith-based organizations, and other groups away from reliance on orphanages, which are unable to address the scale of the orphan crisis in Africa and often fail to meet children's developmental and long-term needs. At the same time, we recognize that institutional care is sometimes needed as a temporary response or as a last resort for vulnerable children who have no other means of support. In this section, we explore some of the ways that institutional care can better meet the needs of children. Donors have an important role to play in supporting these efforts.

## ***Institutions as Transitional Homes for Vulnerable Children***

Institutions can offer short-term transitional care for especially vulnerable children, offering them safe shelter and providing for other immediate needs while searches are made for reliable family care. Children who have nowhere else to go, are living on the streets, are victims of sexual or physical violence, or have been abandoned because they have disabilities or are ill with HIV/AIDS often need this type of transitional care. Once crisis intervention and treatment to support recovery are provided, every effort should be made to keep institutional placements short-term.

### ***Millennium Home of Hope, Mpumalanga, South Africa***

The Millennium Home of Hope is a transitional home for orphaned and abandoned infants and young children. Located in the province with the second highest HIV prevalence in South Africa, it was started in response to the lack of services for children who were abandoned by sick or dying parents. Both HIV-infected and -affected children are provided with care in the home for up to four months and then are transitioned into households ("mini Homes of Hope") where foster families care for them.

Millennium quickly learned that they would first need to overcome the stigma of HIV/AIDS and the cultural issue of caring for only blood-related children if they were to successfully recruit foster parents. Over time, community outreach and HIV-awareness activities led to people offering themselves as caregivers to children in need. The organization screens foster parents carefully and trains them in child development, first aid, and nutrition, as well as budgeting and finance. Staff members visit and telephone foster families monthly to ensure that children are thriving and that foster parents are coping well. Millennium's motto is to "give each child a family."



# ary Response



## **Residential Care**

### **Based on Family Models**

Orphanages that serve large numbers of children in a single facility are not able to provide the individualized care that children require. In an effort to address this, some larger institutions are transitioning into smaller group homes modeled on family life. Children live in small, mixed-age-group households with trained “houseparents” who are able to provide more personal and consistent care.

*Once a child has been placed in an institution, every effort should be made to find reliable family care.*

### **Out of Orphanages and Into the Community**

In some regions and communities, efforts are being made to replace orphanages with family-based care. Resources that were once used to maintain institutions are now used to reunite children with their families and, when this is not possible, to recruit, train, and monitor foster parents. Older youth are provided with assistance in areas such as vocational training and setting up households to help them gain independence in the community.



### **Child Protection Society (CPS), Harare, Zimbabwe**

Child Protection Society is one of the Zimbabwe’s oldest child welfare organizations. For many years, CPS operated a large dormitory-style children’s home called Chinyaradzo. In 2002, CPS sought and received funds to convert part of Chinyaradzo into six smaller units based on a family model. In each home, carefully selected and trained houseparents care for eight to ten children ranging in age from infancy to 18 years. The units are totally integrated into the community, with no signage identifying them with CPS. The children attend local schools and play with neighbor children. This approach gives the children an opportunity to build personal relationships, while providing them with greater emotional security and a sense of belonging. Life skills training is offered to help youth prepare for their future in the larger society. Opportunities to develop friendships and mentoring relationships with people in the community are key to the program’s success.

Having observed firsthand the limitations of institutional care, CPS also initiated a community-based program to support children in family care in urban Harare. Subscribing to the ideal that every child should have the right to experience family life, CPS works to promote foster care and actively lobbies against the establishment of orphanages.

### **Jerusalem Children and Community Development Organization (JeCCDO), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

JeCCDO, formerly known as Jerusalem Association Children’s Homes, established four residential institutions in response to the needs of children who were orphaned by civil war, drought, and the resulting famine of 1984. In 1996, the management began a five-year strategic planning and assessment process that led to their decision to de-institutionalize based on a number of factors. Staff observed that youth lacked exposure to community life and had a difficult time sustaining themselves when they left the orphanages. JeCCDO also recognized that the costs of residential care were high, limiting the number of children they could assist.

JeCCDO’s team developed a plan that included a number of creative strategies. Staff went with children to their birthplaces to track down their families and relatives. Some parents, separated from their children for years, had not even realized that they were alive. In cases where reunification was not possible, foster families were found. Families were provided with a small grant to cover resettlement costs for the child. JeCCDO social workers made follow-up visits to the children as they adjusted to their new lives. To date, JeCCDO has reunified and reintegrated nearly 1,000 children into family households. For orphans aged 15 and over in need of independent living arrangements, JeCCDO provided vocational training and income-generating activities along with a small amount of initial capital for each youth. JeCCDO now operates integrated community-based care programs throughout a large part of the country, helping many children and youth remain in family care.

# Institutional Care: A Temporary Res

## **From Response to Prevention**

A growing number of orphanages are taking a dual approach, offering “last resort” residential care to a limited number of children while also engaging in wider efforts to prevent institutionalization through a variety of outreach activities. They work with surrounding villages and communities to strengthen family-based support for orphans and vulnerable children, ensuring that fewer children will need to be placed in institutional care.

## **DAPP Children’s Town, Malambanyama, Zambia**

Founded in 1990, Children’s Town began as an institution providing full-time residential care to youth who were living on the streets in the city of Lusaka. As the number of street children continued to grow due to AIDS, the leadership at Children’s Town realized that a more preventive approach was needed. While still offering residential care to children identified and referred by social services, Children’s Town now works to build the community capacity to care for vulnerable children.

In 2001 Children’s Town launched their Orphans’ Outreach Program, providing support to children within their communities. Community committees are formed to identify orphans and to sensitize the community about children’s needs and rights. Their primary role is to be sure that all orphans are accounted for and receive food, shelter, and education. Other outreach services include counseling and vocational training for youth, as well as economic strengthening activities for caregivers. This approach has shown impressive results: *“In 10 years we’ve supported only a total of 1,400 children (through residential programs), and we currently have 300 children in Children’s Town,”* reports Moses Zulu, former Program Director, *“But since we started the orphan outreach program we are now supporting more than 10,000 children (in their communities).”*

## **Botshabelo Babies Home, Kyalami, South Africa**

Botshabelo, a Tswana word meaning “place of refuge,” was established by the Covenant Life Church to meet the needs of the poor. Botshabelo operates a Children’s Home for orphaned and abandoned children, some of whom are HIV-positive. From the beginning, the program has worked to reunite children with family members and, when this is not possible, to arrange for adoption. Members of the community, including local doctors, school children, and volunteers, donate their time and resources. These community interactions have led to a greater number of foster parents for children. *“Joshua came to Botshabelo as a very sick baby with a poor prognosis. A teenager who volunteered regularly at the home fell in love with him and convinced her family that they should foster him. He has been taken into their home and this little boy has just blossomed.”*

Recognizing that institutional care is not a sustainable solution to the overwhelming numbers of orphans and vulnerable children, Botshabelo expanded its services to implement community-based programs. They opened a Home Based Care program to minister to those with HIV and TB. They have also begun a Community Based Childcare Program to support child care providers, enabling them to better meet the needs of the children within their community.

## **Strengthening Community Ties**

Regardless of their size or structure, it is important for existing institutions to bring the community into the lives of the children they serve. For example, children can attend neighborhood schools, participate in local celebrations and events, interact with community volunteers and mentors, and engage in apprenticeships and other activities. When orphanages strengthen community ties in these ways, children are better prepared for life outside the institution and the potential for local families to open their homes is increased.

*Most institutions across the globe fail to prepare young people for independent life in the wider community...Children need both the quality of personal care in order for them to feel a sense of self-worth and self-confidence, and opportunities and experiences which enable them to acquire a range of social, life and vocational skills to enable them to survive in the world of work and independent living.*

~David Tolfree, *Roots and Roots*

*Apprenticeships connect young people to their communities and provide them with skills they will need in the future.*







**If You Are Considering Funding an Orphanage...**

Evaluate the orphanage for careful admission procedures and basic standards of care (see Resources). Ask if every effort is made to find living relatives before a child is admitted. Work in partnership with the orphanage to encourage and fund efforts to transition children to family care and to strengthen community ties. Help ensure developmentally appropriate care and protection from abuse. Be sensitive to the fact that sending large groups of volunteers to serve as “rotating staff” can interfere with children’s need for consistent caregivers.

*I was visiting an orphanage that received frequent visits from American and British churches. Throughout my stay, children of all ages were seeking emotional and physical attention from outsiders such as myself— holding our hands and sometimes clinging to us. I was concerned because children who have formed healthy attachments are usually more cautious of strangers. I also worried about how easily children that have grown up with a succession of temporary caregivers might be exploited.*

~Geoff Foster, pediatrician, Zimbabwe

**A Donor’s Perspective:**

**Shifting to a More Community-Based Approach**

Save Africa’s Children/Pan African Children’s Fund was founded in 2001 by Bishop Charles E. Blake, pastor of the Church of God in Christ in Los Angeles, California. The church has over 25,000 active members and is one of the largest African-American faith-based organizations providing direct support to African children orphaned and affected by HIV/AIDS. Initially, Save Africa’s Children focused its grantmaking on supporting orphanages, primarily because the funding requests it received were from individuals and organizations involved in institutional care. Over the past three years, Save Africa’s Children has shifted toward a more community-based approach, both in their overall funding program and in the specific requests that they receive. Executive Director Diana Aubourg says, “As a donor organization, Save Africa’s Children has become keenly aware of the need to partner with sustainable efforts that draw from the resources located within the community.”

In 2005, a range of grassroots initiatives were funded, including churches and community-based organizations that run feeding programs, community schools, day care centers, home-based care, and income-generating programs for caregivers of orphans and vulnerable children. Save Africa’s Children still provides some funds to residential care programs, but seeks to support institutions that strengthen families and support communities.



*When orphanages step up family placements and engage in community outreach, they often require additional donor support. Their shift in focus requires additional staffing, training, and program services. Once children are relocated into the community, the costs to support them are greatly reduced.*

# How to Direct Your Resources

**H**elping families and communities care for orphans and vulnerable children requires a thoughtful and respectful response on the part of donors. Community and faith-based organizations serving children vary greatly in their level of capacity, range of programs, and funding needs. Once they become established with a track record of effective work and stronger administrative capacity, they are in a solid position to receive outside support. There are many ways to donate to organizations working at the grassroots level, where every donation counts. The following paragraphs offer some suggestions to guide donor giving.

## ***Donate Through Experienced Intermediaries***

It is best to channel donations through mediating organizations already involved with communities caring for orphans and vulnerable children. This ensures that donor giving effectively supports and builds upon existing local efforts. Donors can give to foundations and international agencies that provide grants and other resources to community and faith-based groups serving children. A list of foundations and non-governmental organizations that accept donations to support this work is provided at the end of this document. Faith-based donors can also contact the national or regional offices of their denomination, or other coordinating bodies in their faith communities, to become connected with African organizations within their networks. The following guidelines are intended to help donors evaluate intermediary organizations, or to guide their approach to direct giving, to ensure that contributions will have the greatest impact in supporting family and community-based care.

## ***Support Local Leadership and Community Ownership***

It is essential for donors to respect local leadership and community ownership if communities are to develop the capacity to address their own needs. Local groups know best how to help the children and families in their communities, and devise creative solutions that outside donors would not have considered. Many outside groups and individuals try to supply food or medicines directly to communities without prior consultation.

Unless this is an expressed need, it is not always helpful. Being responsive to the priorities that are determined at the local level helps ensure that funds and other resources are used in the best possible way. When donor support subsidizes, it is the programs that are truly owned by the community that are most likely to survive.



*In the desire to help, care must be taken not to undermine or take over local efforts or to foster external dependency. The goal is to strengthen and work in partnership with local initiatives, which represent a vital and effective response to the needs of orphans and vulnerable children.*



# to Those in Need

## ***Take Responsible Risks when Establishing New Partnerships***

If an organization has community buy-in, a plan of action, a track record of activities, and a body of volunteers, that organization can be a good candidate for funding, even if it has never before received outside funds. Reviewing proposed activities and budgets, consulting with respected individuals and groups that can vouch for an organization, and conducting site visits are all good ways to evaluate a community group for funding. Small initial one-year grants can help a donor see how an organization will manage new funds. Once a relationship is established, multi-year funding enables an organization to plan ahead and build on its programs.

## ***Fund in Amounts that Make Sense for a Community***

Donors need to be sensitive to the ability of community organizations to absorb and utilize funds. The size of grants should be matched to the actual needs and management capabilities of the organization. Small grants in the range of \$500 to \$5,000 can make a tremendous difference to emerging organizations. As organizations increase both their administrative capacity and their range of programs or numbers served, they are able to handle larger grants.

## ***Fund More than Just Project Costs***

It is difficult to run effective programs when all outside funds are restricted only to direct services. As organizations grow, they need money to pay for rent, utilities, staff salaries, and office supplies. Assistance with capital expenses, such as computers and building costs, can help an organization expand. These expenses should remain balanced in relationship to program costs, but covering at least some administrative or capital expenses allows organizations to focus more effectively on assisting those in need.

## ***Provide Support for Documentation and Monitoring***

Organizations need to be able to document their programs, results, and lessons learned so that they can monitor their progress and share their work with peer groups, policy makers, and donors. Documentation takes extra time and resources, and often requires training in new skills. Donor funds to support these activities help ensure that groups can build on their successes and access additional funding to continue their work.

## ***Help Build Capacity***

Many community groups, especially those working in rural areas, have never had the opportunity to network with other organizations. Providing opportunities for different organizations to come together and share their work reduces isolation, increases learning, and enables collaboration on many levels. Management training, workshops, and conference participation help organizations build their administrative and program skills. Donors can provide funds to help community organizations access networks, information, and technical support. There are many African non-governmental organizations experienced in providing technical assistance. It is best to link groups with these organizations, rather than trying to provide direct assistance from the outside.



*The impact of HIV/AIDS in Africa is overwhelming, but it is far from hopeless. There are many ways for donors to make a difference.*



# An Invitation

**T**he devastating impact of HIV/AIDS presents us with one of the greatest moral challenges of our time. With compassion, hope, and courage, grassroots and faith-based organizations have taken a lead role in supporting the growing numbers of children who are orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa. People of faith around the world have the opportunity to act on their beliefs and to respond.

Investing in community and faith-based organizations is one of the most powerful ways that an individual can make a difference in the lives of children and in the response to HIV/AIDS. Yet these local groups—the very source of hope to so many children and families—are often not seen or appreciated by outside funders.

There are thousands of diligent groups working to support families in their efforts to provide children with the loving care, basic material support, and educational opportunities that every child deserves. What these groups lack most are the resources to do so adequately. We invite you to turn faith into action and join us in building a better future for children.



*Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*

(James 2:15–17)

*Uphold the rights of the orphan; defend the cause of the widow.*

(Isaiah 1:17)

*A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families.*

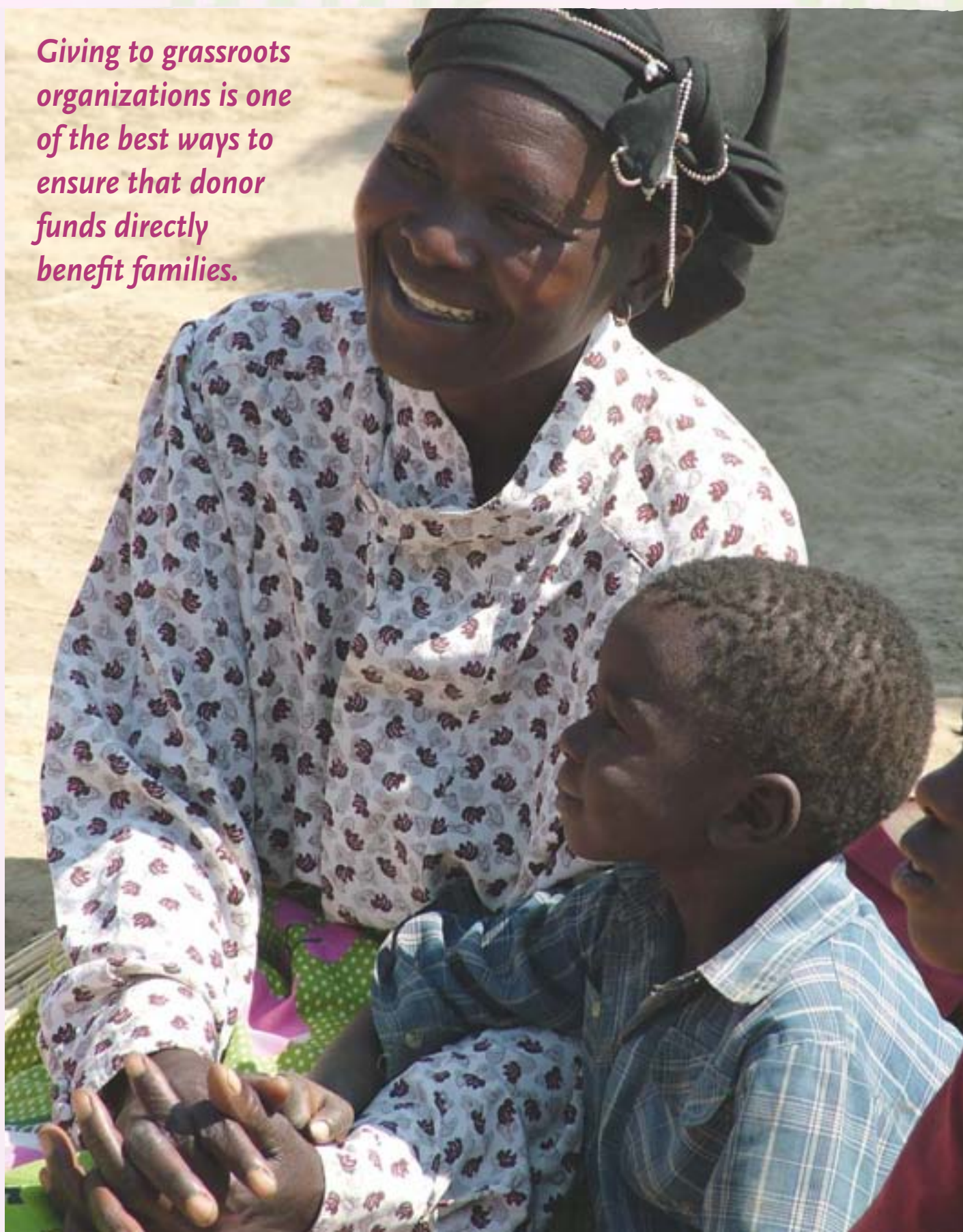
(Psalm 68:6–7)

*It is righteousness to believe in God and...to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans [and] for the needy...and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which you made; and to be firm and patient in suffering and adversity and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-conscious.*

(Sura 2:177)



*Giving to grassroots organizations is one of the best ways to ensure that donor funds directly benefit families.*



# Additional Resources

**M**any of the following resources can be accessed on the Internet. For web site addresses and additional resources, please refer to:

[www.firelightfoundation.org/faithtoaction/resources](http://www.firelightfoundation.org/faithtoaction/resources)

*Africa's Children, A Church Response to Children's Issues in Sub-Saharan Africa.* Frank Dimmock, Presbyterian Church (USA), 2007.

*Africa's Orphaned and Vulnerable Generations: Children affected by AIDS.* UNICEF, 2006.

*Building Resilience: A rights-based approach to children and HIV/AIDS in Africa.* Linda M. Richter and Sharmila Rama, Save the Children Sweden, 2006.

*Children Affected by AIDS, Africa's Orphaned and Vulnerable Generations.* UNICEF, 2006.

*Children and AIDS: Second Stocktaking Report.* UNICEF, 2008.

*Children in Residential Care and Alternatives (Children at Risk Guidelines Vol. 5).* Tearfund, England, 2001. \*

*Children on the Brink 2004: A Joint Report on New Orphan Estimates and Program Strategies.* UNAIDS, UNICEF, and USAID, 2004.

*The Continuum of Care Series.* Better Care Network, 2008.

*Community and Family Models of Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Africa.* Jon E. Singletary, Social Work and Christianity: An International Journal, Fall 2007.

*Empowered by Faith: Collaborating with Faith-Based Organizations to Confront HIV/AIDS.* William L. Sachs, Family Health International, 2007.

*Facing the Crisis: Supporting Children Through Positive Care Options.* David Tolfree, Save the Children UK, 2005.

*A Family is for a Lifetime: A Discussion of the Need for Family Care for Children Impacted by AIDS.* Jan Williamson, The Synergy Project/USAID, 2004.

*The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS.* UNICEF and Expert Working Group of the Global Partners Forum for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, 2004 and *Enhanced Protection for Children Affected by AIDS.* A companion paper to *The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS*, 2007.

*Friends in Need: A Handbook for the Care of Orphans in the Community.* Marion Derbyshire, A Viva Network Publication, 2002.

*A Generation at Risk: The Global Impact of HIV/AIDS on Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Chapter 6, Religion and Responses to Orphans in Africa.* Edited by Geoff Foster, Carol Levine, and John Williamson, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2005.

*Guide to Mobilizing and Strengthening Community-Led Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children.* World Vision International, 2007.

*A Last Resort: The Growing Concern About Children in Residential Care.* International Save the Children Alliance, London, UK, 2003.

*A Matter of Belonging: How faith-based organizations can strengthen families and communities to support orphans and vulnerable children.* A handbook produced by Christian Aid and UNICEF, 2006.





**No Small Issue: Children and Families, Universal Action Now.**

Linda Richter, Plenary Presentation at the XVIIth International AIDS Conference, Mexico City, August 2008, Bernard van Leer Foundation.

**Organizational Capacity Building Manual for Community Based Organizations Supporting Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children.**

World Vision International, 2008.

**Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children Support Toolkit.** International HIV/AIDS Alliance and Family Health International, 2008.

**Roofs and Roots: The Care of Separated Children in the Developing World.**

David Tolfree, Save the Children UK, 1995.\*

**A Sense of Belonging: Case Studies in Positive Care Options for Children.**

David Tolfree, Save the Children UK, 2006.

**Study of the Response by Faith-Based Organizations to Orphans and Vulnerable Children.** Geoff Foster, World Conference of Religions for Peace and UNICEF, New York, 2004.

**What Religious Leaders Can Do About HIV/AIDS.** UNICEF, World Conference of Religions for Peace, and UNAIDS, New York, 2003.

**Where The Heart Is: Meeting the Psychosocial Needs of Young Children in the Context of HIV/AIDS.** Linda Richter, Geoff Foster, and Lorraine Sherr, Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2006.

\*These documents address the issue of basic standards of care within institutions and orphanages.

*Faith-based organizations are making an unprecedented contribution to the care of children and families affected by the global AIDS epidemic. Most are building on the strong foundations of the role of the church, mosque or temple at the heart of the local community by supporting the family to continue to cope with many consequences of HIV/AIDS. From Faith to Action provides helpful and practical guidance to develop this vital work. Richly illustrated by examples of the work being done by many different organizations, it provides an invaluable compendium of ideas and approaches that will be appreciated by members of all faiths. It challenges us all to move away from the “easy option” of placing children in children’s homes and empowers us to develop more imaginative and sustainable approaches that are rooted in the family and community.*

~ David Tolfree  
Author, *Roofs and Roots*

**Sources of Statistics (Page 2)**

**AIDS Epidemic Update.** Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, World Health Organization, New York, December, 2007.

**The Millennium Development Goals Report.** United Nations, 2008.

**The State of Africa’s Children.** UNICEF, 2008.

**The State of the World’s Children.** UNICEF, 2008.

The website of the *Faith Based Outreach Committee of the Better Care Network*, [www.faithbasedcarefororphans.org](http://www.faithbasedcarefororphans.org), serves as a source of information for faith-based groups, churches, and congregations seeking to address the needs of orphans and vulnerable children.



# Endorsers

**F**rom *Faith to Action* was written and published by the Firelight Foundation with financial support and editorial input for the first edition provided by American Jewish World Service, the Bernard van Leer Foundation, Save Africa's Children/Pan African Children's Fund, and UNICEF.

The following 32 organizations have endorsed *From Faith to Action*. While their policies and activities may differ, they all support programs serving orphans and vulnerable children in Sub-Saharan Africa and are committed to a child's right to family-based care. With the exception of the Bernard van Leer Foundation, all of these organizations accept donations to further their work on behalf of children.

## Firelight Foundation

The Firelight Foundation supports and advocates for the needs and rights of children who are orphaned or affected by HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa. We strive to increase the resources available to grassroots organizations that are strengthening the capacity of families and communities to care for children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS.

740 Front Street, Suite 380, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 USA  
(Tel) +1-831-429-8750 (Fax) +1-831-429-2036  
[www.firelightfoundation.org](http://www.firelightfoundation.org)



## American Jewish World Service (AJWS)

American Jewish World Service (AJWS) is an international development organization motivated by Judaism's imperative to pursue justice. AJWS is dedicated to alleviating poverty, hunger and disease among the people of the developing world regardless of race, religion or nationality. Through grants to over 350 grassroots organizations, volunteer service, advocacy and education, AJWS fosters civil society, sustainable development and human rights for all people, while promoting the values and responsibilities of global citizenship within the Jewish community.

45 West 36th Street, New York, NY 10018 USA  
(Tel) +1-212-792-2900  
[www.ajws.org](http://www.ajws.org)



## Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF)

### Bernard van Leer Foundation

BvLF works to improve opportunities for children up to age eight who are growing up in socially and economically difficult circumstances. In addition to grants to organizations serving young children, we provide early childhood development information through our publications and web site to inform policy and practice.

Eisenhowerlaan 156  
P.O. Box 82334, 2508 EH The Hague, The Netherlands  
(Tel) +31-(0)70-3312200 [www.bernardvanleer.org](http://www.bernardvanleer.org)

## Save Africa's Children / Pan African Children's Fund

Save Africa's Children, a program of the Pan African Children's Fund, partners with faith-based and grassroots initiatives that serve orphans and vulnerable children in Africa. We provide financial and material assistance to organizations in Africa directly responding to the needs of the most vulnerable children. We work with U.S. and African churches and denominations to carry out our work.

P.O. Box 8386, Los Angeles, CA 90008 USA  
(Tel) +1-323-733-1048 or 866-313-2722 (Fax) +1-323-735-1141  
[www.saveafricaschildren.org](http://www.saveafricaschildren.org)



## United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Working in over 150 countries, UNICEF helps children survive and thrive by supporting child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence and exploitation. In the area of HIV/AIDS, our work emphasizes prevention, expanded treatment access, and care and support of children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. UNICEF and partners have launched the Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS campaign in 2005 to accelerate the response for children and galvanize a multitude of players behind the issue of children and HIV/AIDS.

3 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017 USA  
(Tel) +1-212-326-7000 (Fax) +1-212-888-7465  
[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)



## Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN)

The Africa Faith and Justice Network, inspired by the Gospel and informed by Catholic Social Teaching, educates and advocates for just relations with Africa. Founded in 1983 by three Catholic missionary congregations, AFJN now represents a wide group of members across the U.S. and Africa working on many issues, including conflict resolution, trade, HIV/AIDS, water, and child soldiers.

125 Michigan Avenue NE, Washington DC 20017 USA  
(Tel) +1-202-884-9780 (Fax) +1-202-884-9774  
[www.afjn.org](http://www.afjn.org)



## ALMITAS

ALMITAS partners with locally run organizations in developing countries who facilitate community and family-based care for orphaned or vulnerable children. ALMITAS is committed to building the capacity of its partners by focusing on business, finance, and management skills, as well as assistance with networking and training for caretakers.

111 E. Hargett Street, Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27601 USA  
(Tel) +1-919-743-4614 (Fax) +1-919-743-2501  
[www.almitas.org](http://www.almitas.org)





### **Better Care Network (BCN)**

The Better Care Network facilitates information exchange around children without adequate family care, and promotes appropriate family and community-based responses. BCN compiles and shares information through a comprehensive website of better care materials, a growing global list-serve, an advisory group of care professionals, and active inter-agency working groups on advocacy and research.

UNICEF - Child Protection Section  
3 UN Plaza - Room 849-1, New York, NY 10017  
(Tel) +1-212-326-7104  
www.bettercarenetwork.org



### **Bright Hope International**

Bright Hope is a Christian relief and development organization committed to serving those in extreme poverty. Working with local Christian leaders who understand the unique issues of their culture, Bright Hope International supports projects that include communities in crisis, care for orphans and vulnerable children, AIDS initiatives, job creation, medical care and agricultural support.

2060 Stonington Ave, Hoffman Estates, IL 60169 USA  
(Tel) +1-224-520-6100 (Fax) +1-847-519-0024  
www.brighthope.org



### **Catholic AIDS Action**

Catholic AIDS Action was founded in 1998 as Namibia's first church-based response to the country's HIV/AIDS crisis. CAA builds on Roman Catholic institutions, other denominations, and local communities to inspire and support programs of HIV infection prevention and care and support to adults and children affected by AIDS.

P.O. Box 11525, Windhoek, Namibia  
(Tel) +264-61-276350  
www.caa.org.na



### **Catholic Relief Services**

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is an international relief and development organization founded in 1943, serving the poor in over 90 countries. CRS provides direct aid to the poor, involves people in their own development, and works to remove the causes of poverty and promote social justice. CRS works in areas such as HIV/AIDS, peace building, agriculture, health, education, and micro-finance.

208 West Fayette, Baltimore, MD 21201 USA  
(Tel) +1-410-625-2220 or 888-277-7575 (Fax) +1-410-685-1635  
www.crs.org



### **Christian Aid**

Christian Aid is an UK- and Ireland-based development agency that works where the need is greatest — irrespective of religion or race. We give help on the ground through 16 overseas offices supporting more than 190 community-based partner organizations working on HIV, including programs for orphans and vulnerable children.

35 Lower Marsh, Waterloo, London SE1 7RL United Kingdom  
(Tel) +44-(0)20-7620-4444 (Fax) +44-(0)20-7620-0719  
www.christian-aid.org



### **Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC)**

In nearly 30 countries around the world the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee works with local agencies that share a Biblical worldview to help men and women and their communities achieve lasting, positive change in the areas of HIV/AIDS prevention and care, community-based care of orphans and vulnerable children, agriculture, maternal and child health, disaster relief, savings and loans programs, and more.

2850 Kalamazoo Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49560 USA  
3475 Mainway, PO Box 5070 STN LCD1, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8 Canada  
(Tel) +1-616-241-1691 (USA), +1-905-336-2920 (Canada) or 800-730-3490  
www.crwrc.org



### **Church World Service**

Church World Service is an ecumenical humanitarian agency that provides emergency relief assistance, social and economic development resources, refugee services, and education and advocacy support to vulnerable people in more than 80 countries around the world.

Social & Economic Development Office  
475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115 USA  
(Tel) +1-212-870-2645 (Fax) +1-212-870-3523  
www.churchworldservice.org



### **Ecumenical HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa of the World Council of Churches**

The Ecumenical HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa, under the World Council of Churches Health and Healing Desk, is a continent-wide enabling structure to facilitate the development of 'the AIDS Competent Church.' It is based on implementation of a Plan of Action adopted by church leaders in Africa and international and African ecumenical organizations at an ecumenical global consultation in Nairobi in 2001.

P.O. Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland  
(Tel) +41-22-791-6111 (Fax) +41-22-791-0361  
www.wcc-coe.org



# Endorsers

## Family Health International

Family Health International (FHI) has been at the forefront of public health research, prevention, and care and treatment in the developing world since 1971. With more than 2,000 staff globally and programs in over 65 countries, FHI works to address the most pressing public health needs of developing countries, which include family planning and reproductive health, child and maternal health, chronic diseases, and infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and avian influenza, all within the context of a broader development framework.

4401 Wilson Blvd., Suite 700, Arlington, VA 22201 USA  
(Tel) +1-703-516-9779 (Fax) +1-703-516-9781



## General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is the not-for-profit humanitarian agency of The United Methodist Church. Since 1940 UMCOR's mission—providing relief in disaster areas, aiding refugees, and confronting the challenge of world hunger and poverty—has helped to heal the hurts of humanity in nearly 100 countries.

475 Riverside Drive, Room 330, New York, NY 10115 USA  
(Tel) +1-212-870-3870 (Fax) +1-212-870-3624  
www.umcor.org



## Global Action for Children (GAC)

Global Action for Children is a nonpartisan, results-oriented coalition mobilizing the political will, financial resources, and sound policies needed to provide comprehensive support to orphans and other vulnerable children and the communities that care for them in developing countries. GAC is committed to ensuring that all children have access to essential health care, education, nutrition, and social protection, in order to develop to their full potential physically, cognitively, and in terms of their social-emotional development.

1413 K Street NW, 16th Floor, Washington, DC 20005 USA  
(Tel) +1-202-589-0808 (Fax) +1-202-589-0588  
www.globalactionforchildren.org



## Global Fund for Children

The Global Fund for Children (GFC) envisions a world where children grow up to be productive, caring citizens of our global society. GFC advances the education and dignity of young people around the world through targeted grantmaking to support and strengthen grassroots organizations that improve the lives of vulnerable children and youth.

1101 Fourteenth Street NW, Suite 420, Washington, DC 20005 USA  
(Tel) +1-202-331-9003 (Fax) +1-202-331-9004  
www.globalfundforchildren.org



## International Health Ministry (IHM), Presbyterian Church, USA (PCUSA)

International Health Ministries partners with churches and institutions in over 30 countries worldwide to facilitate health and community development programs that place priority on the most vulnerable and poorest segments of the population, working to alleviate the causes of ill health and to build healthy communities. IHM also assists in the recruitment and orientation of medical mission personnel and interprets the health programs and priorities of partner churches to PCUSA congregations, to assist those seeking involvement in those programs.

100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396 USA  
(Tel) +1-502-569-5000 (tel and fax)  
www.pcusa.org



## International HIV/AIDS Alliance

The International HIV/AIDS Alliance (the Alliance) is the European Union's largest HIV-focused development organization. We were established in 1993 as an international non-governmental organization to support community action on HIV/AIDS. Since then, we have worked with over 2,000 community-based organizations in over 40 countries, reaching some of the poorest and most vulnerable communities with HIV prevention, care and support, and improved access to treatment.

Queensberry House  
104-106 Queens Road, Brighton BN1 3XF United Kingdom  
(Tel) +44-(0)12-7371-8900 (Fax) +44-(0)12-7371-8901  
www.aidsalliance.org



## Kidzana Ministries

Kidzana Ministries equips people to reach and disciple kids around the world for Christ. Kidzana Ministries works alongside churches, denominations, families, mission agencies, development groups and other networks in communities across the globe to provide locally relevant training for holistic ministry and outreach to children. Kidzana also offers a growing set of children's curriculum resources for use anywhere around the world.

8229 44th Avenue West (Suite G), Mukilteo, WA 98275 USA  
(Tel) +1-425-353-8027 (Fax) +1-425-954-4006  
www.kidzana.org



## Medical Assistance Program (MAP) International

MAP was established 50 years ago to promote total health of individuals and families living in poor communities. We are Christians called to promote Total Health as we respond to needs, build partnerships, do justice and love mercy, work for reconciliation and peace, act with integrity and accountability, pursue excellence, and seek to learn. We promote the Total Health of people living in the world's poorest communities by partnering to provide essential medicine, promote community health development, and prevent and mitigate disease, disaster and other health threats.

2200 Glynco Parkway, Brunswick, GA 31525-6800 USA  
(Tel) +1-912-265-6010 or 800-225-8550 www.map.org





## REPSSI

REPSSI is a regional capacity-building organization, working in 13 countries in East and Southern Africa to enhance the provision of psychosocial care and support to children affected by HIV/AIDS, poverty and conflict. Born out of a regional Think Tank on psychosocial care and support in East and Southern Africa in 2001, REPSSI has grown into a fully-fledged legal entity that plays a vital role in protecting children's wellbeing.

372 Oak Avenue, Atlas Building A, 1st Floor  
Ferndale, Randburg, Johannesburg, South Africa  
(Tel) +27-11-998-5820 (Fax) +27-11-789-6585  
www.repssi.org



## The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is part of the Christian Church, with different practices and way of government. Founded in 1865, we work in all continents in the world. The Salvation Army is known for its belief in the human capacity to respond to any situation once facilitated, and is now a recognized leader in human capacity development.

International Headquarters  
101 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4P 4EP United Kingdom  
(Tel) + 44-(0)20-7332-0101 ext: 8080/1 (Fax) +44-(0)20-7332-8079  
www.salvationarmy.org/health



## Stephen Lewis Foundation

The Stephen Lewis Foundation helps to ease the pain of HIV/AIDS in Africa at the grassroots level. We provide care to women who are ill and struggling to survive; assist orphans and other AIDS affected children; support heroic grandmothers who almost single-handedly care for their orphan grandchildren; and support associations of people living with HIV/AIDS.

260 Spadina Avenue, Suite 501, Toronto, ON M5T 2E4 Canada  
(Tel) +1-416-533-9292 (Fax) +1-416-850-4910  
www.stephenlewisfoundation.org



## Tearfund

Tearfund is a Christian relief and development agency with more than 35 years experience. We work in partnership with over 350 civil society organizations in more than 60 of the world's poorest countries. Reducing vulnerability to HIV and AIDS is one of five strategic priority areas. Tearfund focuses on enabling its partners to respond effectively to HIV and AIDS and to increase the impact of responses, including responses to orphans and vulnerable children.

100 Church Road, Teddington TW11 8QE United Kingdom  
(Tel) +44-(0)20-8977-9144 (Fax) +44-(0)20-8943-3594  
www.tearfund.org



## Viva Network

Viva is the hub of a global network of Christians passionately concerned for children at risk. Through networks, Viva helps people work together to become more effective in protecting and improving the lives of children through their care. Our work provides vulnerable children with more services of better quality, plus a bigger voice speaking up for their interests.

Unit 8, The Gallery, 54 Marston Street, Oxford, OX4 1LF United Kingdom  
(Tel) +44 1865 811660 (Fax) +44 1865 811661 www.viva.org



## World Concern

World Concern is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to providing life, opportunity, and hope in the most neglected and impoverished places on earth. World Concern has field workers and professionals in 20 countries whose people are under siege by HIV/AIDS, hunger, natural disasters, oppression, war and disease.

19303 Fremont Avenue North, Seattle, Washington 98133 USA  
(Tel) +1-206-546-7201 (Fax) +1-206-546-7269  
www.worldconcern.org



## World Conference of Religions for Peace

Religions for Peace promotes cooperation among the world's religious communities to transform conflict, build peace, and advance sustainable development. We work through our network of affiliated inter-religious councils that are present in 5 regions and 55 countries. Religions for Peace is mobilizing collaboration among religious communities in Africa to address the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS, particularly its impact on children.

777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017 USA  
(Tel) +1-212-687-2163 (Fax) +1-212-983-0566  
www.religionsforpeace.org



## World Relief

In the United States and 24 countries around the world, World Relief, the relief and development arm of the National Association of Evangelicals, works with local churches to create sustainable solutions for the desperately poor. Programs include disaster relief, refugee assistance, AIDS ministries (with community-based care for orphans and vulnerable children), maternal and child health, agriculture, and community banking.

7 East Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21202 USA  
(Tel) +1-443-451-1900 (Fax) +1-443-451-1975 www.worldrelief.org



## World Vision International

World Vision is a Christian relief and development organization dedicated to helping children and their communities worldwide reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty. World Vision serves the poor regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender in more than 90 countries around the world, including 26 in Africa.

800 West Chestnut Avenue, Monrovia, CA 91016-3198 USA  
(Tel) +1-626-303-8811 (Fax) +1-626-301-7786 www.wvi.org



**W**e acknowledge and thank all the organizations that served as examples in *From Faith to Action*. Together, they represent thousands of grassroots organizations working in support of children, families, and communities.

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- Jennifer Lentfer:** Page 24 bottom middle
- Tammy Moody:** Page 15 upper right
- Joop Rubens:** Pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 13 bottom, 20, 22, 26, 28, 29, 35, 37, Front and Back Covers
- Pages 18 and 19:** Karen Ande, Jennifer Anderson-Bähr, Jennifer Astone, Jim Hayes, Jennifer Lentfer, Joop Rubens

# In Support of From Faith to Action

*There are more than 12 million children orphaned by HIV/AIDS in Africa. This is a staggering statistic that we cannot ignore. I have seen first-hand how churches and faith-based groups in Africa are walking their faith by responding with great compassion and care to the needs of children and families. I believe that the Church here in the U.S. has an important role to play in supporting these efforts. We need to remember that every child is loved by God. From Faith to Action is a wonderful resource for all those with a heart for children.*

~ Kay Warren  
Saddleback Church

*Let us keep reminded that vulnerable children (if not properly equipped and empowered) often make vulnerable adults, families and communities. From Faith to Action gives insight into promising practices and intervention models that will help transform millions of orphaned and other vulnerable children into safer, healthier and gainfully skilled youths and leaders against HIV and AIDS in Africa and beyond. From Faith to Action is a must read for all those of us with a mission to strengthen and multiply family and community care for orphans and vulnerable children in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa.*

~ Rev. Canon Gideon Byamugisha  
INERELA+, Kampala, Uganda

*Supporting family and community care for orphans is the way that Christian institutions in America and beyond can make the greatest, most lasting difference. For those serious about the call to care for Africa's orphans, From Faith to Action is an excellent resource, providing clear, useful and practical guidelines.*

~ Steve Haas  
World Vision United States

*I have recommended From Faith to Action to many people who wonder where to begin in responding to the needs of orphans and vulnerable children. This document highlights the importance of partnering with grassroots, faith-based organizations that are committed to family care. From Faith to Action cuts through the misconceptions that often surround this issue and presents important principles in a clear, concise format.*

~ Lynne Hybels  
Willow Creek Community Church

*We have received our copies of From Faith to Action. The respectful but clear caution in terms of institutional care is excellent! It is very well written, easy to read, interesting, and beautifully presented. It presents a picture of people struggling but coping. We see their strength and are encouraged to help out of compassion, not pity. [The] publication makes us feel part of a large group of people all over the world working together to serve children and families. It gives us hope.*

~ Rachel Rozentals-Thresher  
Rob Smetherham Bereavement Service  
for Children, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

*From Faith to Action manages to achieve something that's deceptively difficult and profoundly important. In a clear and readable way, it bridges the gap between the complexity of technical issues and alternatives related to providing appropriate care in various sub-Saharan contexts with the simple fact that a child needs a family.*

~ John Williamson  
USAID/Displaced Children and Orphans Fund

*My wife and I have been blessed with two beautiful sons who became a part of our family through international adoption—we can't imagine our lives without them. However, we still remember the faces of the many children in the orphanage who realistically had little chance of ever being adopted. We often wondered what we could do to invest in the care and nurture of their lives. From Faith to Action helps provide that answer. We are now committed to investing in community and local family care for addressing the needs of orphaned and vulnerable children. I excitedly share From Faith to Action with any person or group who expresses interest in the global needs of children.*

~ John Derrick  
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

*Through our work and experience, we have expanded our scope, seeking sustainable partnerships with community-based programs and shifting our focus from residential care to comprehensive community-driven responses. We have learned that children orphaned and affected by HIV/AIDS need family and community in order to thrive, that the very best and ideal place for a child is in the community. As we allow our faith to guide us in supporting the collective work of our communities, From Faith to Action provides concrete strategies to link both prayer and action. We can respond personally and compassionately, supporting African communities in their efforts to ensure that vulnerable children benefit from protection, health, education, love, and spiritual support.*

~ Bishop Charles E. Blake  
West Angeles Church of God in Christ  
Save Africa's Children







“ For the millions of children across Africa who have been orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS, the promise of the future lies in the compassionate response of families and community members taking action on their behalf. Investing in community-based organizations that strengthen the capacity of families to support children in need is one of the most effective ways a donor can make a direct and real difference. We must never forget the importance of family and community in the life of a child. ”

~ Archbishop Desmond Tutu



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Bernard van Leer Foundation

