

FOIA MARKER

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Issues - Orphans

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HIV/AIDS:

Action items for efforts focusing on orphans and other vulnerable children

There is concern that recognizing the magnitude of the problem will be so overwhelming that those of us who can help will turn away in despair and hopelessness...

However, there is much that can be done NOW...

- Identify and support the innovative and effective community-based approaches already implemented by families and communities affected by HIV/AIDS. Solutions have been developed, but these need to be strengthened and expanded to more adequately address the current and future needs of children, their families, and their communities.
- In areas where activities have not yet been developed, foster the initiation of community-based approaches to identify and care for its most vulnerable members, including children affected by HIV/AIDS and their families. Encourage the development of the capacity of communities to sustain these efforts as the impact of AIDS continues to take its toll.
- Some regions of the world are just beginning to experience the impact of a growing HIV/AIDS prevalence. In those areas, initiate community-based systems that will begin to recognize and address the growing needs of children and others as the impact of the disease increases.
- Build upon the capacity of children to support themselves. Enable children to stay in school and to learn vocational skills, improving their ability to provide for their own needs - now and in the future.
- Ensure the protection of the most vulnerable children who are neither cared for by family nor community. Essential services include those that include adoption and foster care mechanisms, protection of abused or neglected children, and address the needs of street children and other abandoned children.
- Promote increased understanding and commitment to meet the needs of vulnerable children. Activities should be directed to all children in need, reducing the potential for stigma and discrimination resulting from efforts that focus only on children whose parents died of AIDS or are living with HIV/AIDS.
- In all of these activities, foster an environment of respect and understanding for people infected and affected by the disease, while incorporating efforts to prevent continued transmission for the protection of those who are not yet infected and for the children of tomorrow.
- Support policy interventions that address the rights of women and children, ensure

their access to education and the ability to support themselves, and protect their earnings and investments through equitable property ownership and inheritance laws.

- The enormity of the problem and the scarcity of resources make it imperative to identify effective models of intervention by thorough evaluations and to disseminate the results so that those activities which are most effective can be reproduced in other areas.
- Given the magnitude of the problems created by HIV/AIDS, even relatively low-cost interventions will require significant resources to be implemented at scale. It is essential to increase collaboration among governments, donors, business, non-governmental and community organizations to address the enormous need.