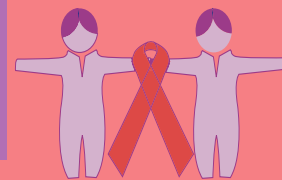




# OVC UPDATE



## ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Issue 1

August 2001

### 15 Countries Endorse OVC Programming Principles in Lusaka

Eighty delegates from 15 countries in East and southern Africa met in Lusaka, Zambia to discuss the orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) situation in the region. This meeting, co-funded and co-organized by UNICEF and USAID, investigated ways to build community capacity to respond to the needs of OVCs and to scale up activities to reach a far greater number of children. The main issues considered were leadership, care and support, expanding the number and quality of organizations assisting OVCs, getting resources to the base, expanding the role of education systems, and strengthening participation of children, families and communities. By the end of the meeting the entire delegation endorsed the draft document *Principles to Guide Programming for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children*. More importantly, participants developed country-specific action plans that will be used as a framework for action following the meeting.

*A report of the workshop along with a set of CDs is available from UNICEF and [pmcdermott@afri-sd.org](mailto:pmcdermott@afri-sd.org)*

### USAID and UNICEF Increase Collaboration

USAID and UNICEF met in March to discuss opportunities to strengthen collaboration specifically in the areas of OVC and mother-to-child transmission (MTCT). USAID/UNICEF agreed to follow up jointly on the recommendations from the Lusaka OVC meeting, to co-sponsor and co-host a West Africa OVC consultation, and to prepare and disseminate program guidelines, tool kits, and program briefs. UNICEF agreed to convene the inter-agency task team (IATT) on OVCs widening its membership to include USAID and others, and to collaborate on holding round-table sessions on OVCs at the various special sessions of the UN and other forthcoming HIV/AIDS meetings.

*A note of the meeting and agreed action points is available from [pmcdermott@afri-sd.org](mailto:pmcdermott@afri-sd.org)*

### OVC Programming Principles Distributed for Comment

Led by USAID and UNICEF, a draft paper "*Principles to Guide Programming for Orphans and other Children affected by HIV/AIDS*" has been developed. The document aims to accelerate a process to build consensus on guiding principles for an expanded response to children affected by HIV/AIDS. The original document, distributed and discussed at the International Conference on HIV/AIDS held in Durban, South Africa in July 2000, was updated and discussed at the UNICEF/USAID sponsored East and Southern Africa Regional Workshop on Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Lusaka in November 2000. The current version has been further updated, widely distributed, and discussed at a number of regional HIV/AIDS meetings.

*Copies of the latest draft are available from Mark Connolly, UNICEF: [mconnolly@unicef.org](mailto:mconnolly@unicef.org)*

### OVC Guidelines for USAID Missions Developed

Under the leadership of Linda Sussman, draft OVC guidelines for USAID Missions are almost complete. The OVC guidelines for USAID Missions will provide an overview of USAID involvement to date and an update on current funding levels and outline some key considerations in programming for OVCs. The increased advocacy around children affected by HIV/AIDS and the significant increase in USG funding for HIV/AIDS have prompted several USAID Missions to support OVC activities. USAID has been at the forefront in quantifying both the scale and magnitude of the problems of children affected by HIV through publications such as *Children on the Brink*. Similarly, USAID has led the development of a set of principles and program guidelines to assist in directing the global response.

*A copy of the current draft of the guidelines has been distributed for comments and is available from [lsussman@usaid.gov](mailto:lsussman@usaid.gov)*

## Addressing the Needs of Children Affected by HIV/AIDS: USAID's Report to Congress

Congress requested USAID to report on actions to expand access to food and education for children affected by HIV/AIDS. The report argues that improving OVC's access to food and education is an important goal of many USAID initiatives targeting orphans and vulnerable children, but this access must be part of a holistic approach (including support for and strengthening of entire communities to care for the most vulnerable children better). As the agency scales up its response to children affected by HIV/AIDS, both care and support initiatives targeting children must be implemented in tandem with prevention efforts.

*The Report to Congress is available from [lsussman@usaid.gov](mailto:lsussman@usaid.gov)*

## Informal Donors Technical Group

For some years a small group of like-minded Donors/UN agencies, led by USAID/Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF) have met informally around the issue of vulnerable children and HIV/AIDS. This group, known as the informal donor technical group, has also organized a number of thematic consultative meetings for a wider audience, often referred to as the Town Hall meetings. The group recently expanded its membership considerably and at the last meeting began a discussion on the role, the membership, and the terms of reference of the group. The meetings generally alternate between Washington and New York. The July meeting discussed OVC satellite sessions at forthcoming international conferences and the need to increase donor participation in the technical working group.

*John Williamson can provide background on work of the group: [J.Williamson@mindspring.com](mailto:J.Williamson@mindspring.com)*

## North American PVO Working Group on Orphans and Vulnerable Children

USAID has been discussing the need to re-establish the North American Orphans and Vulnerable Children's working group with Plan International and the Christian Children's Fund. This group would act as an OVC advocacy body, particularly in Africa. It would mobilize resources, share information, act as a network, monitor US government efforts on OVCs, create alliances and coalitions around the issue, and partner with African NGOs, etc. The working group was officially launched at the Global Health Council's annual meeting on

May 29 and has since met twice to define its role and responsibilities and to select a steering committee. Details of the meetings are posted on the CABA web site.

*For more information contact Marie-Christine Anastasi at Plan: [anastasm@childreach.org](mailto:anastasm@childreach.org)*

## Key OVC Indicators Developed

A set of key indicators for OVCs is currently being developed as part of the overall monitoring and evaluation plan for USAID's Expanded Response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. A draft guidance document will present and explain the key indicators that USAID will use from FY 2001 in its programming for orphans and vulnerable children. This should standardize reporting, allow information to be aggregated, and provide a more discernable measure of progress and impact.

In early 2001, USAID's Global Bureau organized a technical meeting to begin to determine a set of basic indicators that can be used to measure the level of achievement of the international goal of "By 2003 develop and by 2005 implement national policies and strategies to build and strengthen governmental, family, and community capacities. A copy of the draft guidance note on indicators for USAID OVC programs is available.

USAID OVC indicator development is complimentary to the wider UNAIDS-led effort on monitoring and evaluation. The development of global OVC indicators is expected to be one of the main tasks of the UNICEF-chaired inter-agency task team on OVCs.

*Contact John Novak, [jnovak@usaid.gov](mailto:jnovak@usaid.gov) or Mark Lorey, [mark.lorey@prodigy.net](mailto:mark.lorey@prodigy.net)*

## Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children; What Role for Social Protection?

The World Bank convened a meeting on OVCs and social protection June 6-7 in Washington, DC. This meeting examined the magnitude of the OVC problem and the extent of the response to date. In its invitation to the meeting, the World Bank stated that "traditional mechanisms for helping children have been overwhelmed and there is a need for new public action. Many agencies are responding with a wide range of interventions but no country has yet mounted a response sufficient to the problem. One factor slowing an appropriate response is that there is yet little firm evidence

about the magnitude of the problem and private responses; for public interventions we have little information on costs, impacts, targeting, administrative requirements, sustainability or replicability; there is little consensus on what mix of interventions is desirable, who should implement them and how they can be sustained.”

A wide range of people participated from a number of countries, especially North America. Major issues highlighted at the meeting were: vulnerability and risk, targeting, what is known and areas requiring further research, and the need to focus interventions on strengthening community responses and capacities.

*The World Bank is preparing a report of the meeting:  
Contact [Mgrosh@worldbank.org](mailto:Mgrosh@worldbank.org)*

## **United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on HIV/AIDS**

The United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS was the first time that a health-related issue was discussed by a special session of the General Assembly and follows the historic meetings of the Security Council on HIV/AIDS over the last year. The key outcome of UNGASS was the unanimous endorsement by all member states of the Declaration of Commitment of an agreed global response to HIV/AIDS. The Declaration calls for enhanced coordination in the fight against HIV/AIDS and an intensification of national, regional, and international efforts to combat the pandemic in a comprehensive manner. The Declaration builds on previous regional and global commitments and sets clear measurable targets. Paragraphs 65, 66, and 67 of the Declaration deal with children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS and stress that States should develop national OVC policies by 2003 and implement them by 2005. It also calls for non-discrimination, for full and equal enjoyment of human rights, and for the international community to direct special attention to sub-Saharan Africa.

*The Declaration of Commitment can be found on the UNAIDS web site: [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org).*

## **Inter-Agency OVC Task Team**

Within the UNAIDS co-sponsors, UNICEF has taken the lead on issues relating to OVCs. With the arrival of Mark Stirling as the principal HIV/AIDS advisor, UNICEF has agreed to chair the inter-agency task team (IATT) on issues related to orphans and vulnerable children and to open the IATT to other non-UN groups such as USAID. The first scheduled IATT meeting is planned for August 15 in New York.

*Contact Mark Connolly UNICEF [mconnolly@unicef.org](mailto:mconnolly@unicef.org) for details of forthcoming meetings.*

## **USAID Cross-Agency OVC Briefing**

An informal USAID OVC meeting was held May 31 to advise all sections of the agency on the latest developments and initiatives on orphans and vulnerable children. Linda Sussman, Global Bureau-HIV/AIDS, John Williamson DCOE, and Peter McDermott, Africa Bureau-HIV/AIDS made presentations. Other participants from Education, Conflict, Economic Development, and Bureau for Humanitarian Response and a number of implementing organizations updated the group on OVC activities in their sectors. The meeting participants agreed to the following actions: to hold more regular information meetings between all groups active on the OVC issue, to review the latest CSD guidelines given concerns over language related to community and multi-sector activities, and to hold specific meetings on technical subjects related to OVCs.

*For more information on the meeting contact [lsussman@usaid.gov](mailto:lsussman@usaid.gov).*

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