

## A Global Pandemic

- **About 33 million people globally are living with HIV or AIDS** (nearly the population of Canada).
- **Last year, more than 2.5 million people were newly infected with HIV.**
- More than 28 million have already died of AIDS.
- **The pandemic is the greatest medical, social and economic challenge the world as a whole now faces.**
- AIDS is primarily a disease of the poor; 95 percent of all people living with HIV in the world live in developing countries. While improved medical treatment and drug therapies are extending the lives of Americans and others from wealthy countries who live with HIV, **worldwide, only 28 percent of the 7.1 million people who need anti-retroviral therapy for AIDS receive it.** Sadly, only 17 percent of the 780,000 children in the world who need treatment receive it, much lower than the global average.<sup>1</sup>

## AIDS and Children

- **Children are the top priority in World Vision's HIV and AIDS response.**
- **Those most affected by HIV/AIDS are the children:**
  - A generation -- **more than 15 million -- has been orphaned (lost one or both parents) to AIDS.** That's the current number, not a cumulative total.
  - By 2010, the number of children orphaned by AIDS will be more than 20 million, according to United Nations estimates. Africa alone will have nearly 16 million children who have been orphaned. When you add that to the 37 million orphans from other causes (including malaria, tuberculosis, malnutrition, and war), that's 1 out of every 8 African children who will have lost one or both parents. In the five countries (Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe) where the crisis is expected to be most acute, 1 in 5 children will be an orphan in 2010.
  - **In the United States and other developed countries, there are more than 400 adults for every orphan; in nine African countries, there soon will be fewer than 6 adults for every orphan.** And some of those adults will be too ill to make a meaningful contribution to their care.
  - Children are suffering the loss of parents, teachers, community members and peers as a result of the pandemic. The tragic loss of key adults who once provided stability and protection has resulted in a rapid increase of children who are malnourished, forced to drop out of school and exploited for cheap labor.

## AIDS in Africa

- Sub-Saharan Africa, home to just 12% of the world's population, accounts for two out of every three people living with HIV, and **three in four AIDS-related deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa.**
- More than **90 % of the world's HIV-infected children live in sub-Saharan Africa.**
- More than **2/3 of the world's HIV-infected population live in sub-Saharan Africa.**
- The number of children orphaned by AIDS in Africa – already more than 11 million – is growing five times faster than the total number of children on the continent.
- **Women and girls are particularly susceptible to the virus.** Bound by cultural traditions that afford them a lower social standing than men, they often cannot control the

sexual behavior of their husbands. Also, poverty drives many women to seek income as sex workers.

- By 2020, Africa will have lost almost 12 percent of its labor force – or 58 million people – to AIDS.

### World Vision and AIDS

- Today, World Vision has **AIDS programs in more than 60 nations**, many of those in sub-Saharan Africa. In size, scope and duration of its response, WV is a leader among humanitarian organizations battling the pandemic.
- **895,000 children received values-based HIV-prevention training** last year.
- Nearly **850,000 orphaned and vulnerable children and 69,000 chronically ill adults received care and assistance** in 22 African countries.
- **12,000 church leaders from 9,300 congregations were mobilized** to respond to the AIDS crisis.
- World Vision has made AIDS prevention, care and advocacy a top priority. **WV started its AIDS work in 1990, helping orphans in Rakai, Uganda.** Other early programs included serving Romanian children infected with the AIDS virus and providing support for Thai women and girls trying to escape prostitution.
- In December 2000, World Vision launched the **Hope Initiative**, a global effort focused on high prevalence and high-risk countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, and the Middle East and Eastern Europe. World Vision's holistic approach combines responses to HIV/AIDS with existing work in child health, microenterprise development, agriculture and education.
- HIV/AIDS awareness is also a significant part of WV's Area Development Programs, which provide long-term aid to communities in pursuit of self-sufficiency, and **promote sustainable transformation by tackling the root causes of poverty.**
- World Vision **advocates for funding** to help address the needs of children affected by AIDS, including lobbying for 10 percent of the US government's AIDS funding to be allocated for children's needs. Such advocacy by World Vision and other Christian leaders and groups is credited with Mr. Bush's 2003 decision to enact the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and maintaining these vital components when the program was reauthorized in July 2008.

*World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender. Visit [www.worldvision.org/press](http://www.worldvision.org/press).*

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\*Numbers/statistics gathered from UNICEF's "Africa's Orphaned and Vulnerable Generations," as well as UNAIDS' "Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic (07)," "AIDS Epidemic Update Dec 06," and the World Health Organization 2007.