


JLICA  JOINT LEARNING INITIATIVE
ON CHILDREN AND HIV/AIDS



Photo Credits Front and Back Covers: ©Alain Wicht at FXB International. Inside Front Cover: Top and Middle—Laurie Wen; Bottom—Chryssa Panoussiadoo/FXB International. Pages 2 and 3: Geoff Oliver Bugbee/FXB International. Page 4: Laurie Wen. Pages 6 and 7: Charly Rappo/FXB International. Pages 8, 9 and 10: Laurie Wen. Inside Back Cover: Top and Bottom—Laurie Wen; Middle—Geoff Oliver Bugbee/FXB International.

<http://www.jlica.org>



The Joint Learning
Initiative on
Children and
HIV/AIDS





Addressing the Deepening Impact of HIV on Children and Young People

HIV/AIDS has affected the lives of tens of millions of children and adolescents and is placing millions more young people at risk. More than two million children were living with HIV in 2007, and more than a thousand children are newly infected with HIV every day.¹

This is just one aspect of HIV's impact on children, however. In the most severely affected regions of the world, the effects of the epidemic are measured not only in individual lives, but also in the disruption HIV causes to families, communities, schools, health services, livelihoods and economies — disruptions that profoundly affect the lives of children.

While the global response to AIDS has accelerated, too little has been done to meet the needs of children, families and communities confronting the combined effects of AIDS and poverty. Today, as in the past, families and communities bear both the overwhelming burden of care associated with HIV, as well as up to 90 percent of the cost, in regions where the disease has had the greatest impact.² This burden can devastate families and communities, and the life chances of children and youth.

What efforts do exist to address young people's needs are often hindered by uncertainty about what policies and interventions work best for children, as well as poor coordination among institutions and groups working on their behalf. Rarely are policies and interventions sensitive to the needs of children within the context of the families and communities in which they live.



The Joint Learning Initiative on Children and HIV/AIDS (JLICA)

The Joint Learning Initiative on Children and HIV/AIDS (JLICA) is an independent, interdisciplinary, time-limited network of policy-makers, practitioners, community leaders, activists, researchers and people living with HIV. Chaired by Agnes Binagwaho, M.D., Executive Secretary of Rwanda's National AIDS Control Commission and Peter Bell, President Emeritus of CARE USA, JLICA is working to increase global responses to the needs of HIV-affected children, their families and communities.

JLICA was founded in October, 2006 to promote a new focus on children's wellbeing — not only as a humanitarian imperative, but also as a crucial step to strengthen the contribution of AIDS programming to countries' broader health systems and development goals.

Over its two-year programme of action, JLICA is working to mobilize evidence, encourage fresh

“JLICA’s focused programme of investigation and advocacy will provide the information and evidence needed to significantly improve the global response to HIV and young people.”

—Agnes Binagwaho, M.D., Executive Secretary, Rwanda’s National AIDS Control Commission, and JLICA Co-Chair



thinking, disseminate practical operational knowledge and make clear, actionable recommendations on programmes and policies to protect and support children affected by HIV/AIDS. JLICA does not seek to supplant the efforts of many dedicated and effective organizations working on behalf of children, but rather to provide an independent, collaborative analysis of what is working, and what needs to change, in the global response.

JLICA believes that families and communities care best for children and must remain at the heart of the AIDS response. The extraordinary response of families and communities to the epidemic, however, must not excuse governments from addressing the enormous challenges to children posed by HIV.

JLICA research and recommendations focus global attention on the need to: strengthen and integrate key services such as education, health care and social assistance for children; enhance the capacity of families and communities to support the health and development of children; and address the chronic poverty that prevents many families from accessing the services they desperately need.



“The response to HIV/AIDS cannot be effective in the long-term if it does not respond squarely to the impact on children. Otherwise, we are allowing future cycles of vulnerability to this terrible epidemic to continue and grow.”

—Peter Bell, Senior Research Fellow,
Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations, Harvard University;
President Emeritus, CARE USA; and JLICA Co-Chair

We Can Do Better for Children

The heart of JLICA's efforts is found in its four interdisciplinary Learning Groups (LGs), which review existing research; conduct strategic studies in under-researched areas; organize public forums and reports; and disseminate best practices to stimulate innovative thinking, problem-solving and the development of effective policies and programmes for children. JLICA Learning Groups:

- **Generate the most comprehensive body of evidence on children and HIV available** by compiling and assessing the experiences of implementers and beneficiaries of programmes and policies serving children
- **Spotlight effective responses** by analyzing these experiences; prioritizing the strategies that make sense in different epidemiological, cultural and social contexts; and determining which policies and programmes can best be adapted for larger scale implementation in low-income settings
- **Expand space for new thinking** by connecting people and ideas across sectors and disciplines, and engaging new expertise to promote innovative approaches and enhance problem solving
- **Advance action** by questioning assumptions, shifting the frame of global debates and building consensus on what needs to be done, how and by whom. LGs formulate clear recommendations on priority actions for governments and other stakeholders and work with partners to accelerate their implementation
- **Mobilize advocates** for broader action on child and family health and development that builds on common interests and creates benefits related to HIV/AIDS and beyond



JLICA's Four
Interdisciplinary
Learning Groups
are Addressing the
Following Priority
Issues:



Learning Group 1

Strengthening Families

Chaired by Linda Richter (Human Sciences Research Council) and Lorraine Sherr (University College London), LG1 focuses on the challenge of how to strengthen family capacity to support and provide for children, as well as protect children from HIV infection and the worst effects of poverty and social disruption. LG1 examines questions such as:

- What are the best social protection strategies for families in extremely resource-constrained environments?
- How can HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support programmes help to strengthen families?
- What are the likely economic and social costs if high-burden countries fail to support families?



Learning Group 2 Community Action

Chaired by Geoff Foster (Family AIDS Caring Trust) and Madhu Deshmukh (CARE USA), LG 2 addresses the need for documentation of, and greater technical and financial support for, community responses to HIV impact on children. LG 2 examines questions such as:

- How can external financial and technical support be most effectively channelled to strengthen community responses to children and families affected by poverty and HIV/AIDS?
- How can community groups best target cash transfers to strengthen household coping in the face of poverty and HIV/AIDS?
- How can policy and programming on children affected by HIV/AIDS be made more accountable to children and youth?



Learning Group 3

Expanding Access to Services and Protecting Human Rights

LG 3 is co-chaired by Jim Yong Kim (François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard University) and Lydia Mungherera (Mama's Club and The AIDS Support Organization). The group examines barriers to the delivery of essential health, education and social protection services for children. LG 3 examines questions such as:

- What obstacles slow the effective implementation of services and how can they be overcome?
- How should prevention of mother-to-child transmission services be linked with early child development interventions?
- How can services be effectively integrated to address children's needs, while also strengthening the primary response role of families and communities?



Learning Group 4

Social and Economic Policies

Chaired by Alex de Waal (Social Science Research Council) and Masuma Mamdani (Research on Poverty Alleviation), LG 4 documents the policy changes and new resources that governments and international institutions will need in order to implement social and economic policies that will effectively protect children affected by HIV/AIDS. LG 4 is also investigating HIV prevention among adolescents and older children, with a focus on gender issues, sexuality and the predictors of HIV exposure. LG 4 examines questions such as:

- What political factors influence the adoption of good policies for children?
- What are the resource implications of achieving social protection policies and programmes for children, and how can policies be designed to maximize the opportunities for success?
- How can policies and programmes for young people better reflect our growing understanding of the role of gender and sexuality in HIV risk?

JLICA Timeline and Deliverables

JLICA's comprehensive programme of research will result in the publication of a series of papers in major journals and on the JLICA website (<http://www.jlica.org>). JLICA will promote the broadest possible distribution and discussion of its research findings, with the goal of supporting current efforts for children and promoting the development and implementation of a 21st century advocacy agenda for children affected by HIV, their families and communities.

JLICA-commissioned papers will be published beginning in Spring, 2008. Papers will address topics such as family demographic changes in regions heavily burdened by HIV; harnessing the untapped potential of faith-based organizations in meeting children's needs in Africa; integrated delivery models for key services that benefit children affected by HIV/AIDS; and the macroeconomic feasibility of providing social protection packages for children and families in low-income countries. Throughout 2008, JLICA Learning Group representatives will be presenting research findings and encouraging debate at leading conferences and meetings of researchers, advocates, policy-makers, practitioners and people living with HIV.

JLICA's final report and recommendations will be issued at the end of the Initiative's mandate in late 2008.



Our Partners

The list of JLICA partners and collaborators is growing every day. JLICA founding partners include:

- Association François-Xavier Bagnoud — FXB International
- Bernard van Leer Foundation
- Global Equity Initiative, Harvard University
- United Nations Children’s Fund

Other JLICA contributors include:

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard University
- Irish Aid
- Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- UK Department for International Development

JLICA institutional partners include:

- CARE
- Coalition for Children Affected by HIV/AIDS
- Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
- Inter-Agency Task Team on Children and HIV/AIDS
- Family AIDS Caring Trust, Zimbabwe
- Family Health International
- Global AIDS Alliance
- Global Action for Children
- Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
- Partners In Health
- Protecting Families Against AIDS, Uganda
- RENEWAL project of the International Food Policy Research Institute
- Research On Poverty Alleviation, Tanzania
- Social Science Research Council, New York
- The AIDS Support Organization, Uganda

1 UNAIDS, WHO. AIDS Epidemic Update, 2007.

2 Foster, Geoff. *Bottlenecks and Drip-feeds: Channelling resources to communities responding to orphans and vulnerable children in southern Africa*. Save the Children, 2005.

