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“Given the long time scale of the epidemic, unless we adopt a family-oriented approach, we will not be in a position to interrupt the cycle of infection, provide treatment to all who need it, and enable affected individuals to be cared for by those who love and feel responsible for them.”

(Richter, Sherr & Desmond, 2008 - JLICA LG1 Integrated Report)

FINALISATION OF LG1 PAPERS

Learning Group 1 papers have been finalised and were released at the end of September. Each paper was reviewed by experts in research, policy, and programme management.

Key findings and recommendations from the LG1 papers have been compiled into an Integrated Report, an advance copy of which is also available

The main conclusions drawn from the report include:

- Family-focused preventive efforts and treatment, care and support services help sustain families as well as expand access to those people most at risk of, and affected by HIV and AIDS.
- Targeting programmes and services exclusively to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS is neither appropriate nor effective. Inappropriate targeting contributes to stigma and discrimination against children and families affected by HIV and AIDS.
- Families provide the best environment for children. However, family and kin receive very little support from governments. This affects the capacity of families to protect children from the worst effects of poverty, deprivation and loss.
- Families must be strengthened through family-focused services and social protection, including income transfers. Given the experience already available, income transfer programmes should be implemented without further delay by bringing together the combined skills of government, civil society organizations and donors.
- An extensive review demonstrated that the problems experienced by children and families in low-prevalence and concentrated epidemics are very much like those experienced by children and families in high-prevalence environments.

The papers and integrated report are available at the HSRC LG1 website

<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/JLICA-84.phtml> and the JLICA website

<http://www.jlica.org/index.php>

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THE XVII INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE IN MEXICO CITY 3-8 AUGUST 2008

The XVII International AIDS Conference was held in Mexico City from 3-8 August 2008, attended by an estimated 22000 delegates from over 175 countries. This conference provides opportunities every two years for the presentation of important new scientific research and for dialogue on the major challenges facing the global response to AIDS.

The following relevant messages from the conference were extracted:

- **The shift towards comprehensive HIV prevention** - various prevention strategies need to be implemented if behaviour change is to be achieved, and there is a need for the integration of biomedical, behavioural and structural responses to the epidemic.
- **The shift away from individualised to family-oriented interventions**—this was a key message of JLICA with respect to the response to children.
- **The inclusion of cash transfers into the global agenda** - Professor Linda Richter's presentation has led to discussion about how to include income transfers in HIV and AIDS support among many of the large donors.
- **Realization of the limitations on randomized control designs and RCT's** - there is increasing realization of the need to use multiple data sets and methodologies in understanding the effects of interventions.
- **HIV stigma is still a challenge in many settings** - HIV stigma interventions are still limited in many settings and few interventions have been conducted.

Abstracts from the conference are available on the official conference website

http://www.aids2008-abstracts.org/aids2008_book_vol1_web.pdf

http://www.aids2008-abstracts.org/aids2008_book_vol2_web.pdf

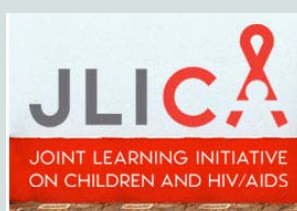
BEYOND THE ORPHAN CRISIS

Peter Bell, the global co-chair of JLICA, moderated this session entitled *Beyond the Orphan Crisis: Findings of the Joint Learning Initiative on Children and HIV/AIDS (JLICA)* on 6 August at the AIDS Conference. Speakers included Agnes Binagwaho, Julio Frenk, Jim Kim and Lorraine Sherr. The presentations dealt with key findings of the Initiative to date, and also challenged the current paradigms on how to improve the lives of children and young people affected by the epidemic. Realities and misconceptions concerning the lives of children affected by HIV/AIDS were also looked at and the need for innovative, family-centered approaches were stressed.

Podcasts of this and other events at the conference can be found at <http://www.kaisernet.org/aids2008/podcast.cfm>



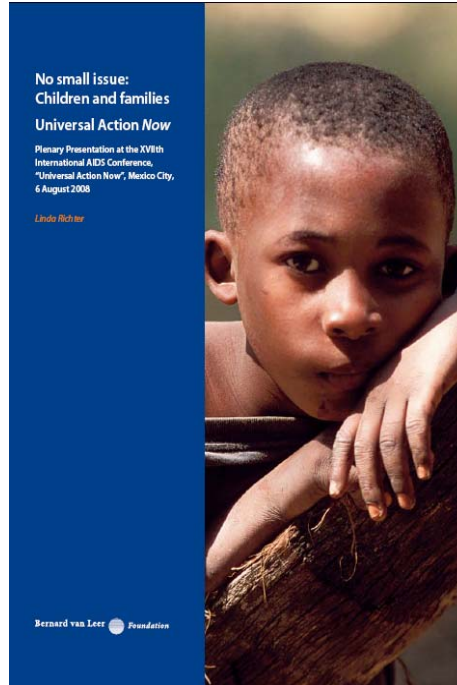
LEARNING GROUP 1



NO SMALL ISSUE: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

JLICA Learning Group 1 Co-Chair, Professor Linda Richter (Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa), delivered the first plenary address on the epidemic's impact on children's wellbeing in the AIDS Conference's 23-year history. The plenary entitled, *No small issue: Children and families*, argues that children and families have been severely neglected in our responses to HIV and AIDS. Professor Richter issued a call for large-scale, integrated and national responses, characterized by social protection enabled by basic income security and by universal access to essential services such as health, education and social welfare.

The plenary is available on the HSRC LG1 website
<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/JLICA-81.phtml>



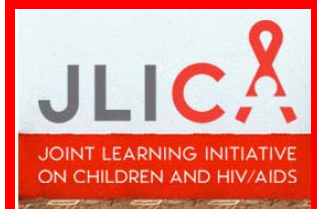
“Children affected by HIV and AIDS, and the families that care for them, are enduring terrible suffering and deprivation. This suffering is largely needless. It is needless because it results, in the main, from our failure to prevent infection among, and treat, both adults and children. It also results from our failure to assist the poorest families to deal with the social and economic disruptions brought by the epidemic.”

(Richter, 2008 - Plenary speech)

FRESH EVIDENCE FOR ACTION ON CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

Peter Bell, Agnes Binagwaho, Jim Kim, Geoff Foster and Linda Richter, were part of a plenary session on 2 August, at the pre-conference Children's Symposium, "Children and HIV/AIDS: Action How, Action Now," organized by the Theresa Group and the Coalition on Children and Affected by AIDS (CCABA). The session entitled, *Fresh Evidence for Action on Children's Wellbeing: A Conversation with the Joint Learning Initiative on Children and HIV/AIDS (JLICA)* presented findings from JLICA research in areas such as family-centered social protection strategies; innovative approaches to channeling resources to community-based organizations; and models of integrated, family-centered services. The interactive session, moderated by Helene Gayle, President and CEO of CARE USA, reflected the spirit of joint learning through a structured conversation format which engaged panelists and audience members in a discussion of JLICA findings and their implications for action on behalf of children.

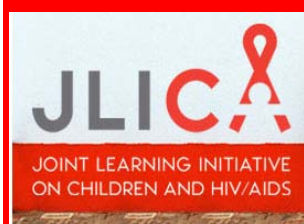
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"We have a long history of social protection in Ireland and as our Taoiseach, Brian Cowen said yesterday, social protection, particularly universal access to health and education, coupled with cash transfers, transformed the economic landscape of Ireland over time. More recently, Eastern and Southern Africa and South American governments, civil society and other stakeholders are increasingly engaging in the provision of social protection to vulnerable households, including those affected by HIV. That is why the Government's White Paper on overseas aid recognises the role of social protection in protecting households and communities from risks and vulnerabilities."

- Closing speech at the GPF on 7 October 2008 by Mr Peter Power, TD, Minister of State for Overseas Development

LEARNING GROUP 1



EVENTS

- RIATT CHILDREN'S CONFERENCE - GLOBAL PARTNER'S FORUM

The government of Tanzania together with the Regional Inter-Agency Task Team on Children Affected by AIDS (RIATT) hosted a conference entitled **Getting it Right for Children: Moving towards Universal Access, Prevention, Care and Treatment for Children affected by HIV and AIDS** from 29 September–1 October 2008 in Dar es Salaam, to discuss and identify gaps in the international research agenda related to children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. Several presentations on JLICA were made at this conference, including a plenary presentation by Professor Linda Richter. Child participation was especially strong, and young people from country teams demonstrated their capacity to engage with the issues and to put forward recommendations on how the challenges faced by children and youth could be addressed.

The **4th Global Partners Forum on Children affected by HIV and AIDS** was held at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham in Dublin, Ireland, on the 6th and 7th October 2008, co-hosted by Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs, and UNICEF. This meeting brings together leaders in government, civil society and UN agencies to review global progress, set global priorities, and make commitments for children affected by HIV and AIDS. JLICA was prominently featured at the meeting, and evidence submitted by JLICA contributed substantially to the consensual communiqué issued at the close of the meeting. The papers presented at the meeting can be accessed at http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/development_aids.asp

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES (LG1) CO-CHAIRS



Professor Linda Richter is the Executive Director of the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development Programme at the Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa. She has over 30 years of experience in child and adolescent research, as well as programmatic experiences relevant to children affected by HIV and AIDS.

For more information visit:

<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/strengtheningfamilies>

www.jlica.org



Professor Lorraine Sherr is the Head of the Health Psychology Unit at the Royal Free and University College Medical school. She has been involved in HIV infection work and studying psychological aspects of the disease for the past 25 years.

For more information visit:

<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/strengtheningfamilies>

www.jlica.org