AIDS in Africa – Placard U

AIDS is a major public health concern and cause of death in many parts of Africa. 1/3 adults are impacted by AIDS. Although the continent is home to about 15.2% of the world’s population, Sub Saharan Africa alone accounted for an estimated 69% of all people living with HIV and 70% of all AIDS deaths in 2011. Though the death count is high, there have been efforts to decrease those infected as well as the number of deaths due to the HIV virus. The number of people in Africa receiving anti-retroviral treatment rose from 1 million to 7.1 million people in the last few years. As of 2013, these efforts have lead to a 32% decrease in total AIDS-related deaths on the continent. The number of newly infected people has also dropped on the continent by 33%.

Causes of AIDS in Africa:

* Infected mother to her baby before birth
* Old school tribal rituals
* Lack of education about health & transmission
* Multiple partners due to families living hundreds of miles apart because that is where the jobs are located
* Using a needle with infected blood (mainly used for drugs)
* Having any contact with infected blood or body fluids
* Poverty, lack of access to prevention
* Myths about how disease is spread

In sub-Saharan Africa, people with HIV-related diseases occupy more than half of all hospital beds. Large numbers of healthcare professionals are being directly affected by the epidemic. Botswana, for example, lost 17% of its healthcare workforce due to AIDS between 1999 and 2005. The impact of HIV and AIDS on households can be very severe. It is often the poorest sectors(parts) of society that are most vulnerable. In many cases, AIDS causes the household to dissolve, as parents die and children are sent to relatives for care and upbringing.

AIDS strips families of their assets and income earners, further impoverishing the poor. The epidemic adds to food insecurity in many areas, as agricultural work is neglected or abandoned due to household illness. It was calculated in 2006 that by 2020, Malawi's agricultural workforce will be 14% smaller than it would have been without HIV and AIDS. In other countries, the reduction is likely to be over 20%.

The burden falls on the women. Upon a family member becoming ill, the role of women as care providers, income-earners and housekeepers is stepped up. They are often forced to step into roles outside their homes as well. Older people are also heavily affected by the epidemic; many have to care for their sick children or look after orphaned grandchildren. Due to the amount of time spent caring for dependents, older people may become isolated from their peers and experience loneliness.

 It is hard to emphasize the trauma and hardship that children are forced to bear. As parents and family members become ill, children take on more responsibility to earn an income, produce food, and care for family members. More children have been orphaned by AIDS in Africa than anywhere else. Many children are now raised by their extended families and some are even left on their own in child-headed households. HIV and AIDS are having a devastating effect on the already inadequate supply of teachers in African countries.... The illness or death of teachers is especially devastating in rural areas where schools depend heavily on only one or two teachers.



