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Abstract

Commission on Population and Development (CPD)

"The Effect of HIV/AIDS on the Population in Sub-Saharan Africa"

Introduction

The Commission on Population and Development debates the effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa. We will focus on the following topics:

- Women living with HIV/AIDS and the problem of Mother to child transmission (MTCT)
- Protecting and Supporting AIDS Orphans
- Reducing HIV/AIDS Stigma and Discrimination

In the end of the discussion we want to compile a resolution containing reasonable suggestions for the international community on improving the situation in sub-Saharan Africa.

Commission on Population and Development

A Population Commission was established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 3 (III) of 3 October 1946. In its resolution 49/128 of 19 December 1994, the General Assembly decided that the Commission should be renamed the Commission on Population and Development. In the same resolution, the Assembly decided that it, the Council and the Commission should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that would play the primary role in the follow-up to the implementation of the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and that the Commission, as a functional commission assisting the Council, would monitor, review and assess the implementation of the Program of Action at the national, regional and international levels and advise the Council thereon.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region most heavily affected by HIV worldwide, accounting for two thirds (67%) of all people living with HIV and for three quarters (75%) of AIDS deaths in 2007.

Women and HIV/AIDS

We will also discuss gender related issues of HIV/AIDS. For women living with HIV/AIDS has usually more severe consequences as for men, since women in some countries don't have access to the health care systems and are underprivileged in legal matters.

Protecting and Supporting AIDS Orphans

Worldwide, it is estimated that more than 15 million children under 18 have been orphaned as a result of AIDS. Around 11.4 million of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa. The loss of a parent to AIDS can have serious consequences for a child's access to basic necessities such as shelter, food, clothing, health and education. They suffer the death of their parent(s) and the emotional trauma that results with little or no support. Often AIDS orphans are not only completely on their own but also responsible for their younger siblings, in a lot of cases driving them to the streets to work, beg or seek food. Apart from that AIDS orphans are often stigmatized by society. Often children who have lost their parents to AIDS are assumed to be HIV positive themselves, adding to the likelihood that they will face stigma and discrimination and may be denied access to schooling and health care.

Reducing HIV/AIDS Stigma and Discrimination

In many countries and communities, the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS and the resulting discrimination can be as devastating as the illness itself: abandonment by spouse and/or family, social ostracism, job and property loss, school expulsion, denial of medical services, lack of care and support, and violence. These consequences, or fear of them, mean that people are less likely to come in for HIV testing, disclose their HIV status to others, adopt HIV preventive behavior, or access treatment, care and support. Stigma and discrimination disproportionately affect women and girls. Women tend to experience greater stigma and discrimination than men, are more likely to experience its harshest and most damaging forms, and have fewer resources for coping with it.