



## AAA NEWS BRIEF – FEBRUARY 2009

### HIV/AIDS PREVENTION: LESSONS FROM AFRICAN CSOs

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#### Learn About African Action on AIDS (AAA)

AAA is a tax exempt non-profit organization registered in the USA and operating under section 501(c) 3 of the IRS code. It is also registered in Cameroon (auth. No 00174/A/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SAC). It has special consultative status with the United Nations ECOSOC and the UN Department of Information.

#### AAA Mission Statement

**We** believe that no one is alone. We succeed when the youth we serve become agents of their own change and use their knowledge to change their communities.

**We** reach the youth of sub-saharan Africa whose lives are affected by AIDS.

**We** affirm that tomorrow's responsible parents are the knowledgeable youth of today.

**We** educate youth with the knowledge they need to stay alive, and teach them to share that knowledge with their peers

**We** build extended family support networks in local villages and communities to deliver security, food, education and healthcare to children orphaned by AIDS.

**We** create healthcare awareness by funding women and children's health.

#### HIV/AIDS PREVENTION: WHAT WE LEARN FROM ORGANIZATIONS OF THE AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY

##### ARTICLE ONE: The Coalition of the Families in the Fight Against AIDS and Poverty (COFAL/SP)

More than twenty five years after the world first became aware of AIDS, it is clear that AIDS is still a threat in Sub-Saharan Africa. Its debilitating cycle definitely impedes on many aspects of the continent's development. Unfortunately, the death toll has been so heavy and overwhelming that official policies and strategies have tended to place more emphasis on treatment rather than prevention.

On the other hand, community responses throughout Africa have mirrored their social base and have generally adapted their initiatives to local needs and available resources. In so doing they have focused mostly on prevention and mitigation. **Prevention**, at community level has focused on reducing new infections and containing the epidemic through information, education and campaigns like the AAA JUST KNOW CAMPAIGN - for behavior change; condoms use training and distribution, targeting vulnerable groups. **Mitigation** has mainly focused on poverty reduction, and initiatives reinforcing community capacity to better resist and respond to the epidemic.

The purpose of the series of short articles that will be published in AAA News Briefs in the next twelve months is to highlight local responses of organizations of the African civil society. Many organizations that initiated these responses were not able to pursue their activities for lack of resources. We would like this collective wisdom to inspire other communities even beyond the continent, while honoring the initiators, many of whom are /were partners of AAA.

**COFAL – SP: Coalition des Familles dans la Lutte contre le VIH-SIDA et la Pauvreté.** COFAL/SP was founded by Ms. Kadida Christele Sall. The COFAL/SP is a local association in Burkina Faso that pursues a comprehensive strategy in six areas to assist AIDS impacted communities. 1) Preventive efforts include the free distribution and training on proper condom use-(1)-to targeted HIV high risk groups, HIV awareness education at community centers and during visits to households of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), and family counseling for AIDS affected households. 2) Patient follow-up services utilize home visits to help families overcome fear and stigma, and learn important forms of care, like giving a bath to a PLWHA. 3) Nutritional support is also provided to HIV afflicted households through home visits, during which a nutritionist provides practical advice on proper diet and meal changes to combat prevalent opportunist diseases. 4) Support for AIDS orphans is provided through the collection of clothes, school supplies, and other donations, and COFAL works with various trade associations and other sponsors to provide training and educational opportunities for orphans. 5) COFAL/SP members sponsor HIV-afflicted households, particularly widows, grandparents, and orphans, to receive micro-loans following counseling on Income Generating Activities (IGA). 6) COFAL/SP also provides legal support to AIDS households.

**Compiled by AAA Secretariat and based on knowledge and files accumulated between 2001 and 2005 when COFAL/SP was sponsored by AAA**

- (1) Because condoms were seldom used in Africa at the beginning of the pandemic, mostly in regular legal marriages and other long term relationships, AAA used to and still emphasizes the need to reduce the number of partners

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Picture of  
Burkina Faso  
Orphans