



## AAA NEWS BRIEF – JANUARY 2008

### ASK THE DOCTOR: Why does African Action on AIDS emphasize hand washing as prevention for HIV/AIDS!!!

#### 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.

#### AAA's work is based on 3 programmes:

##### “JUST KNOW” Campaign emphasizes

- Knowledge of one's body
- Knowledge that leads to behaviour change
- Knowledge that helps to visualize a future without AIDS

##### “Health before Wealth” Concept promotes

- Safe potable water and sanitation (wells, latrines, hand washing stations in schools)
- Income generating activities (IGA) -- treated mosquito nets and Sur'Eau – a liquid that purifies water) to create a fund for women's health in rural areas.

“**Women's economic autonomy**” through our **Scholarships Programme**. This scholarship enables each teenage orphan girl to complete at least a secondary, general or technical education that will lead to her financial and economic autonomy, greatly reducing the risk of being infected with HIV through sexual abuse and violence.

#### Contacts:

USA	Europe	Cameroon
Ruth Bamela Engo <i>President</i> African Action on AIDS 511 Avenue of the Americas #302 New York, NY 10011, USA E-Mail: <a href="mailto:ruthengo@aol.com">ruthengo@aol.com</a>	Herta P. Kaschitz <i>AAA Representative in Vienna</i> Schottenfeldgasse 20/9 1070 Vienna, Austria E-Mail: <a href="mailto:hpkaschitz@aol.com">hpkaschitz@aol.com</a>	Theodore L. Tangie <i>Chief, AAA Yaoundé Office</i> B.P. 4340, Yaoundé Cameroon E-Mail: <a href="mailto:longtchi@yahoo.com">longtchi@yahoo.com</a>

#### Information of Hand washing in HIV/AIDS prevention

**Q:** Why does the program emphasize hand washing as prevention for HIV/AIDS?

**A:** Hand-washing is emphasized because contracting HIV/AIDS is a 2 part process- first becoming infected with the virus and then becoming ill because of it.

First of all:

- The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is spread via direct contact with infected blood or sexual intercourse with an infected person.
- The acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is the illness that most people infected with HIV develop, usually many years after being infected with HIV.

While:

- We do not know all the factors that trigger the AIDS illness, [we DO know that] the process of having other infections plays a role.
- Hand washing is a very important part of preventing other infections.
- Hand washing is important for everyone, but especially so for people who are HIV infected or who have developed AIDS.

We want to prevent both occurrence of the infection and progression to illness!

**Cathy Eisner Falvo, MD, MPH**  
*One of AAA's Medical Advisers*



#### AAA Activities in the Field

**HAPPY, HEALTHY NEW YEAR 2008!**  
**To all our partners**