



AAA e-NEWS BRIEF –MARCH 2013

HIV/AIDS PREVENTION: ORPHAN GIRLS’ SCHOLARSHIP

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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. No00174/A/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SAC). It has special consultative status with the United Nations ECOSOC and the UN Department of Information.

AAA’s work is based on 3 programmes:

“JUST KNOW” Campaign emphasizes:

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

“Health before Wealth” Concept promotes:

- Testing for HIV
- Clean hands (hand washing stations)
- Clean water (drinking stations)
- Dignified toilets
- Fighting against Malaria (treated mosquito bed nets)
- Vaccination
- Anti worms medicine
- Mouth hygiene

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

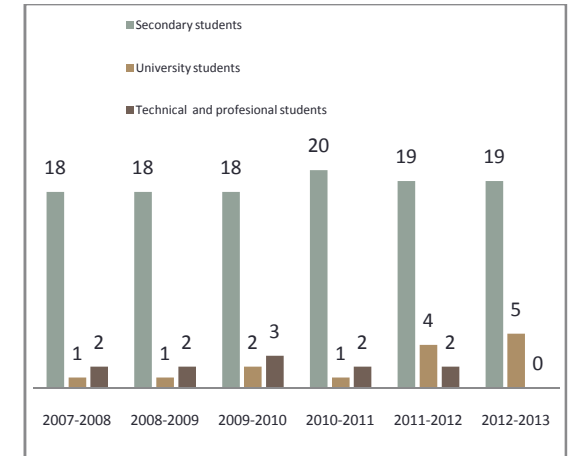
A-Rationale of the scholarship: African Action on AIDS’s work is based on three programmes, the most important being: WOMEN’S ECONOMIC AUTONOMY. Through Batonga Foundation, the Center for Peace through Culture and AAA contributions, a scholarship was created six years ago. The objective of the scholarship was to increase the pool of vulnerable girls eligible for continuing into University and/or Technical/Professional Education in Cameroon. This orientation leads beneficiaries to financial and economic autonomy, while greatly reducing their risk of being infected with HIV/AIDS through sexual abuse and violence based on economic needs. Indeed, and according to EDS-MICS 2011, from 15-19 years of age, 2% of women are seropositive. This percentage rapidly grows to 10% at age 35-39, while that of the general population of women evolves at 5, 6%. These numbers must be compared to the level of national infection of both men and women of same age which is 4, 3%.

Based on this reality AAA has provided a steady opportunity for at least 18 vulnerable girls to attend secondary education (see table 1 below) and regularly enter University or Technical/ Professional education each year since 2007.

B- AAA Concepts leading the selection of beneficiaries of the Scholarship are: a) Give preference to total orphans (have lost father and mother); b) When possible place sisters who have been separated by the death of their parents in same schools; c) A new girl is enrolled only if we have the means to support her education in at least one whole level of education (i.e secondary, technical or university); d) Same importance given to school education and life skills in the community; d) Use both formal school and life education as tools for individual and community success, to ensure a minimum common humanity level for all community members.

C-Conclusion and lessons learned: From the above stated rationale, we learn at least 2 lessons:

- The first positive and general lesson learned is that: When vulnerable girls are placed in good conditions to pursue education and when they are encouraged to work with endurance and without fear, they succeed!
- The second lesson more related to the project, is that the present entry level needs to be maintained or preferably increased, to get a steady entry of vulnerable girls in higher education, in a situation where only 6% of men and 3% women enter University (EDS-MICS -2011)



	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Graduated from secondary school	0	1	2	4	2
Graduated from University	0	0	1	1	1
Graduated from professional school	0	0	2	0	2

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