

# International Kanner

Center for International Social Work Studies

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## ***World Aids Day - December 1<sup>st</sup>***

### **“Live and let live”**

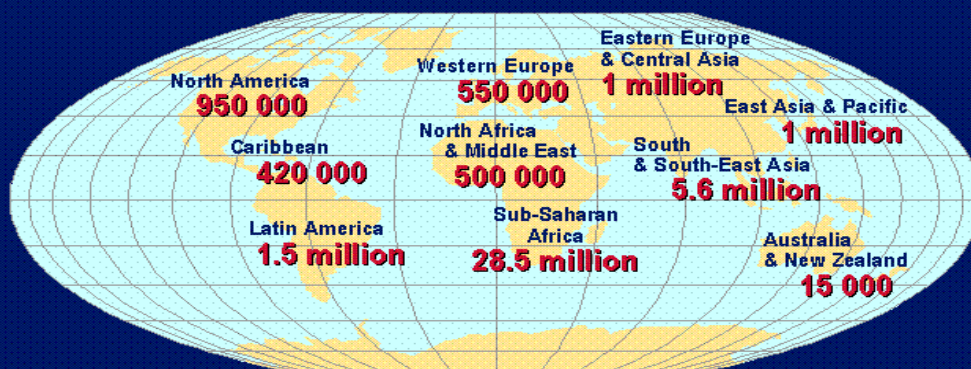
The slogan for 2002-2003 World AIDS Campaign is “Live and let live” which will focus on eliminating stigma and discrimination. The World AIDS Campaign brings world attention to specific issues in HIV/AIDS prevention and care. “Stigma and discrimination are the major obstacles to effective HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Fear of discrimination may prevent people from seeking treatment for AIDS or from acknowledging their HIV status publicly. People with, or suspected of having, HIV may be turned away from health care services, denied housing and employment, shunned by their friends and colleagues, turned down for insurance coverage or refused entry into foreign countries. In some cases, they may be evicted from home by their families, divorced by their spouses, and suffer physical violence or even murder. The stigma attached to HIV/AIDS may extend into the next generation, placing an emotional burden on children who may also be trying to cope with the death of their parents from AIDS. With its focus on stigma and discrimination, the Campaign will encourage people to break the silence and the barriers to effective HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Only by confronting stigma and discrimination will the fight against HIV/AIDS be won” (UNAIDS).

**Websites:** [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org) – [Who.org](http://www.who.org) – [Unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org) – [Ncih.org](http://www.ncih.org) – [Aidsuganda.org](http://www.aidsuganda.org)

### **AIDS – A GLOBAL ISSUE**

According to a new UNAIDS and World Health Organization update on the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, the number of people living with HIV in the world today has risen to 42 million from 40 million at end 2001. Five million people were newly-infected and 3.1 million people were killed by the disease in 2002 (<http://www.unaids.org/>).

### **Adults and children estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS as of end 2001**



**Total: 40 million**

# What does UNAIDS do?

The UNAIDS serves as the advocate for global action against HIV/AIDS. The UNAIDS' mission is to guide, strengthen and support these collective efforts. Among the efforts are: preventing the spread of HIV; providing care and support for those infected and affected by the disease; reducing the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS; and easing the socioeconomic and human impact of the epidemic.

The World Health Organization (WHO) assumed the lead responsibility on AIDS in the United Nations (UN) and helped countries set up crucial national AIDS programmes. In the mid-1990s, the epidemic started to spread at a devastating pace, and in 1996 the decision was made to combine the knowledge, resources and scope of six UN bodies, to form the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS—UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—were joined by UNDCP in April 1999 and by ILO in October 2001 (UNAIDS).

## *The impact of HIV/AIDS around the world*

More than 60 million people have been infected with HIV since the epidemic began two decades ago. In 2001, it claimed an estimated 3 million lives. The projected toll is greatest in sub-Saharan Africa where 55 million additional deaths can be expected. The average life expectancy in sub-Saharan Africa is currently 47 years. Without AIDS, it would have been 62 years. Life expectancy at birth in Botswana (which, at 38.8%, has the highest adult prevalence rate in the world) has dropped below 40 years—a level not seen in that country since before 1950. The under-five mortality rates of seven countries in sub-Saharan Africa have increased by 20–40%, due to HIV/AIDS. The number of excess AIDS-related deaths among South Africans aged 15–34 is projected to peak in 2010–2015, with an estimated 17 times as many deaths as there would have been in the absence of AIDS. In Lesotho, for example, it is estimated that a person who turned 15 in 2000 has a 74% chance of becoming infected with HIV by his or her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. Even in Guyana, where adult prevalence is a comparatively low 2.7%, the probability of contracting HIV between the ages of 15 and 50 in 2000–2035 is 19% (UNAIDS).

## *Social work implications*

More people living below the poverty line when households lose their breadwinners. The cost of health care and funerals use up all their savings. Research shows that, in two-thirds of Zambian families where the father died, monthly income fell by more than 80%. A study of three countries (Burkina Faso, Rwanda and Uganda) has calculated that AIDS will increase the percentage of people living in extreme poverty from 45% in 2000 to 51% in 2015. In Botswana, per capita household income for the poorest quarter is expected to fall by 13%, while every income-earner in this category can expect to take on four more dependants (UNAIDS). Women are almost invariably left bearing even bigger burdens—as workers, caregivers, educators and mothers. The loss of assets and productive workers severely affects households' capacities to produce and purchase food. Some 20% of rural families in Burkina Faso are estimated to have reduced their agricultural work or even abandoned their farms because of AIDS. In Ethiopia, AIDS-affected households were found to spend between 11.6 and 16.4 hours per week performing agricultural work, compared with a mean of 33.6 hours for non-AIDS-affected households (UNAIDS).

## **The impact on education**

AIDS in Africa leaves millions of children orphans, and many schools are forced to close because of the death of their teachers. In countries like Zambia for example, one-fifth of the adults are infected with HIV (Hartford Courant). A decline in school enrolment is one of the most visible effects of the epidemic, the number of primary school pupils in 2010 will shrink by 24% in Zimbabwe, 14% in Kenya and 12% in Uganda. A study in Manicaland, Zimbabwe, found that 19% of male teachers and almost 29% of female teachers were infected with HIV. Nationwide AIDS-related deaths among South African teachers rose by more than 40% in 2000–2001. The loss of teachers can be especially devastating in rural communities where schools depend heavily on only one or two (UNAIDS).