

Report on The National Forum 2000

and National Forum Youth during and after the Conference on War-Affected Children

Conflict and HIV/AIDS

What is working

- International co-operation on finding a medication. A lot of awareness by the media.

The uprising of conflict has led to the destruction of many lives and properties. Children are the most vulnerable in conflicts and they innocently suffer the atrocities of violent conflicts and war.

In Liberia, for example, as well as in Sierra Leone, children have suffered the dangers of civil wars and conflicts. They suffered starvation, rape, lack of medication, displaced and refugee lives; some were left homeless, orphans and early teenage parents. During conflict, people develop and become infected with diseases as a result of rapes, hunger, lack of shelters, lack of medication, and lack of sanitation. The lack of sex education, protection, medication, and the lack of understanding have led to the epidemic of the AIDS virus in Third World countries.

What is not working

- Finding a medication?
- No acknowledgement on the cause from soldiers.
- Not much attention given.
- Education in the army.
- More awareness to everyone around the world.
- Not enough funding.
- Lack of proper sanitation.
- Not everyone has access to condoms.
- Misinformation about the disease (HIV).
- No international law to punish people re prostitution

Action youth can take

- Do workshops in schools by spreading the issue with youth organizations.
- Create awareness tools like videos and spread it around to schools to make sure the youth are aware
- Alcohol /sex films should be prohibited to the forces and government, should stop these good
- Discourage immorality (early sex education from grade 6)

Recommendations

Having identified and discussed the effects of conflicts, we recommend that:

- there should be conflict awareness on the community, national, regional and international level
- there should be immediate intervention by peacekeeping forces (community, national, regional, and international peacekeepers)
- avoiding the involvement of children in violent conflicts and war
- protection of children during conflict
- bringing children out of the conflict zone and settling them in refugee camps during conflicts
- ban the use of sophisticated weapons that pose much more danger in conflicts and war
- both warlords and facilitator of wars should be brought to justice
- when we sense a looming conflict, a neutral third party should bring the two potentially conflicting parties together to discuss a peaceful resolution

Having discussed the issue of HIV/AIDS, we recommend that:

- (important) Start informing sex education as earliest as possible
- fight against bordello, polygamy
- More education for soldiers and strict law to control their actions.
- To have an international policy for each control of using prevention articles and services.
- AIDS TEST COMPULSORY FOR EVERYONE AND MAKE SURE THERE IS NO GOVERNMENT IN THIS AND NO COST
- Sex education should be included in all school curriculums of all countries and of all communities as early as possible.
- Free medical attention facilities should be provided for all AIDS patients in all communities.
- Free care centers should be established for all AIDS patients in all communities.
- Free counseling programs should be provided for all AIDS patients.
- Soldiers should be educated on sexually transmissible diseases and should be under a strict law to control their actions.
- Free AIDS tests should be compulsory for everyone in the military and free for willing civilians.

