

HIV/AIDS

The global HIV/AIDS epidemic is an unprecedented health crisis. Death, sickness and absenteeism continue to devastate millions of families and communities every day.

Sub-Saharan Africa has suffered most severely from the crisis. The region has only 10% of the world's population, but is home to 65% of people living with HIV/AIDS. More than three quarters of the world's HIV/AIDS deaths take place in sub-Saharan Africa, where the disease has orphaned 12 million children.

Like many health challenges, women and young people are particularly vulnerable. New infections are most common among 19 to 24 year olds and girls are at least three times more likely to get the disease than boys of the same age.



AIDS has also created an explosion of tuberculosis (TB) cases, and a recent study suggests people living with HIV are more likely to be infected with, and die from malaria because of their weakened immune systems. Antimalarial treatment is also more likely to fail for them. An integrated approach to manage these three deadly diseases is crucial to improving health in Sub-Saharan Africa.

What AMREF is Doing

AMREF is on the forefront of better managing the relationships between HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB. In Uganda AMREF is training health workers in rural clinics to prevent, diagnose and treat the three diseases while improving health information systems to better gather and analyze health data. AMREF also advocates at the local, national, regional and international levels for a more integrated treatment approach.

All of AMREF's HIV/AIDS programs focus on partnering with communities and local health councils to stop new infections and minimize its impact on people living with the disease. The key to prevention is voluntary counseling and testing (VCT). In Tanzania over half a million people have been tested for HIV at AMREF VCT centres and more than 90 counselors have been trained to provide ongoing monitoring and advice. AMREF also supports AIDS orphans with tuition and free health care and grandparents and other guardians with small business loans to generate income.

AMREF continues to tailor workplace education programs for at-risk groups like truck drivers and mine workers while providing people in slum communities with access to anti retroviral treatments for AIDS. AMREF has designed, documented and advocated for practices that are proven to reduce HIV transmission and improve livelihoods for the most vulnerable communities across Africa.

AMREF Success: Supporting HIV/AIDS Orphans in Uganda

In the Luwero district of northern Uganda more than 10% of the population are orphaned children. Most live in extreme poverty with grandparents who don't have the means to care for them. Others head their own households, responsible for supporting younger siblings. Most orphans can't afford to pay for tuition or health care.

Since 2007 AMREF has been empowering communities in Luwero to achieve better health by helping to better manage the heavy burden of HIV/AIDS and related illnesses.

AMREF has;

- Supported 670 orphans through primary, secondary and vocational schools
- Built 5 hand washing facilities, 4 water tanks and 4 latrines in Luwero schools
- Educated 4,000 young people on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and stigma
- Provided 230 grandparents with micro-credit loans to start small businesses in poultry, pig and pineapple farming as well as opening small retail shops.



Our accomplishments in Luwero include;

- Increasing the number of girls staying in school by 20%
- Improving sanitation for 4,500 students
- Decreasing the number of students with life-threatening water borne disease (typhoid, dysentery and diarrhea) by nearly 50%
- Increasing the savings of five guardian micro-credit associations in Luwero. Members now have the means to provide food and health care to the orphans and vulnerable children they care for.

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