

## Community Based Care for Children Affected by HIV and AIDS

Papua New Guinea

Session – Children and AIDS at the 9<sup>th</sup> ICAAP Symposium

## Children & AIDS in Papua New Guinea

- Due to a range of factors, including poverty, approximately 30 per cent of children are considered to be at risk of HIV infection
- Limited data available on the protection, care and support services currently reaching children
- 1.61 per cent HIV prevalence estimated in 2007
- In 2007, it was estimated that 1,727 children were living with HIV and that 3,730 children were orphaned from AIDS-related causes
- PNG is facing a critical child protection situation - approximately 75 per cent of children and women experience violence in their home

## National response to children affected by AIDS

- Government has mainstreamed HIV into a systems approach to child protection through the *National Strategy for the Protection, Care and Support of Children Vulnerable to Violence, Abuse, Exploitation and Neglect in the Context of the HIV Epidemic in Papua New Guinea (Most Vulnerable Children)*
- The goal is to *improve the wellbeing of children vulnerable to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect by increasing their access to essential services in the areas of protection, education and health and by strengthening family, community, civil society and Government, child protection systems*

## National response to children affected by AIDS (2)

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
1. Social protection	1. Strengthen capacity of families
2. Legal protection and justice	2. Mobilise and support community based responses
3. Extended community-care in the community	3. Ensure access to essential services
4. Human Services coordination	4. Increase Government leadership for protection
	5. Raise awareness to create supportive environments

## Models for care and support (1)

- The Catholic Diocese of Kundiawa identifies children affected by HIV and AIDS and other vulnerable children and provides community-based outreach, monitoring and additional care and support where needed through trained child protection volunteers
- Care centres provide additional resources for communities and service access point for vulnerable children – *not* an orphanage
- Programme delivers integrated protection, care and support through an adaptable, community-based approach with strong participatory focus

## Models for care and support (2)

- Data collection strong element to programme – maintains comprehensive data on child's situation and needs, and their progress
- Vulnerable children are being supported through volunteers very cost-effectively – USD 7,000 per annum for 50 children
- The care centres are built by the community using bush materials – the only programme cost is for maintenance support, costing USD 500 per annum per centre

## Gembogl Resource Centre



## Impact of intervention on children

- Through Gembogl Resource Centre, which is the most established community programme, approximately 50 children are currently receiving quarterly monitoring visits by child protection volunteers over the past 12 months
- Of children supported through the Gembogl Resource Centre, 88 per cent of school-age children are in school – school fee assistance provided through the Diocese to approximately 50 per cent of children; 60 per cent report good or very good treatment by guardians

## Programme Strengths

- The programme is one of a package of services offered by the Diocese, including health, HIV and education – integrating programme into an established FBO structure facilitates coordination and harmonisation
- The programme is sustainable as it leaves children where they are, only provides the support they need, and engages and builds the capacity of the community to address issues that arise

## The Way Forward

- The programme will be developed this year into a Centre of Excellence to promote replication of this approach
- Planning is underway for scaling up of the programme throughout Simbu Province in 2010
- Government to assist to disseminate good practice to other service providers
- While the programme is still in its infancy, it shows promise and the Government will continue to monitor its implementation and support its strengths