



CENTRE D'ETUDE ET DE RECHERCHE MEDECINS D'AFRIQUE

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Research, Training & Scientific Resources for the Socio-Medical Development of Africa

Ref : CERMA2002E4

Assessment of the social situation AIDS orphans in Brazzaville

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International Conference on AIDS (Int Conf AIDS), 2002 Jul 7-12, Brazzaville, Congo.

Abstract (n° WePeE6588)

BACKGROUND: The phenomenon of AIDS orphans is a well known disaster linked to HIV/AIDS. The loss of parents make children undergo oppressive losses, particularly in developing countries weakened by poverty, wars and AIDS. Our aim was to assess the importance of the phenomenon in Brazzaville and to appreciate the social repercussion on the child. It is link on "Caring of AIDS orphans" program of NGO MEDECINS D'AFRIQUE sponsored by UNICEF-CONGO.

METHODS: We have listed the adults death due to AIDS recorded in Brazzaville hospitals between January 1998 to September 2001. Families of these old patients were inquired and visited. We have searched the partners' situation and number of children of less than 18 years. Age, sex, schooling, tutor's situation were precised for each child.

RESULTS: On an amount of 1622 cases of deaths due to AIDS recorded, 1293 families have been visited. 3377 orphans were listed, 244 (7.2%) were under 5 years old, 2004 (59.4%) between 5 to 14 and 1129 (33.4%) between 15 to 18. Average age of orphans was 11.7 +/- 4.4, with 1668 boys (49.3%) and 1709 girls (50.7%). The majority of orphans were received by close parents: 3156 (93.4%) vs. 27 (0.8%) lodged in orphanages. 194 orphans of less than 18 years became heads of families. New tutors were jobless or retired in 1964 cases (58.2%), tutors of 945 orphans have average wages with at least 6 persons in charge. The average number of persons in charge by family was 7.5 +/- 5.2. Among 3133 orphans in scholar age, 2578 (52.3%) were still at school. A school delay at least two classes was noticed to 41.2%, 799 children have abandoned school and have asked a support of the project.

CONCLUSION: The phenomenon of AIDS orphans constitutes a real social crisis. The one of parents' loss for AIDS decreases accessibility to basic social services for many children, increasing so invulnerability in front of AIDS.

Keywords:

HIV/AIDS, AIDS orphans, Evaluation Studies, Child Rearing, Congo, Brazzaville