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UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

ECA/ACGD/MR/SA/2004

**REPORT OF MISSION
To
SOUTH AFRICA**

02-09 June 2004

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JUNE 2004

**GOOD PRACTICE CASES IN THE CARE OF HIV/AIDS ORPHANS,
SOUTH AFRICA MISSION REPORT: 2-9 JUNE 2004**

INTRODUCTION:

1. The African Centre for Gender and Development is one of the key partners in implementing CHGA's research agenda, contributing especially to documenting best practice cases in dealing with the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and children. In a meeting of the COMMISSIONERS held in Maputo, it was agreed that the impact of HIV/AIDS on gender, as well as the orphan crisis in Africa would be highlighted. In order to highlight the impact of the pandemic, and make recommendations on what actions are to be taken, the ACGD will be documenting best practice cases based on available data, commissioned country papers, and direct field observations of different approaches and practices that have been established to deal with the impacts of HIV/AIDS on gender and vulnerable children in several countries. The countries that have been selected for direct field studies are Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and South Africa. Field visits have already been undertaken in Uganda and Kenya.
2. The objective of the mission was to visit selected projects in South Africa, in order to identify best case practice in support of HIV/AIDS orphans that can be profiled for the CHGA report. In South Africa, visits were made to projects initiated by the National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW) office in Durban, KwaZulu Natal (KZN) province, and to the offices of the National Children's Rights Committee (NCRC) in Braamfontein, Gauteng Province. In KZN visits were made to child-headed and grandmother households, to female headed households where the head of household is an HIV/AIDS patient, to the local school and the local Juvenile court. A group discussion was also organised and attended by the child and youth care workers as well as their supervisors. The details of the projects will be profiled in the CHGA best practice cases, however, in this report, some of the aspects of the best practices are highlighted.

3. Highlights of Findings.

3.1 The National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW)

- Established thirty years ago, the NACCW is a professional association that was set up to redress the negative impacts of apartheid on the care of children in South Africa. Today, the association has nine provincial offices under a National Directorate. KZN, with its status of high HIV/AIDS infection rate also has a high number of orphans. For example, statistics of 2001 show that there were 400 000 HIV/AIDS orphans in schools in KZN alone. As an association, the NACCW advocates for better delivery services for children. Because of the high numbers of orphans, in KZN, the provincial office of the NACCW has initiated a project "Isibindi" to support HIV/AIDS orphans.
- The Isibindi (creating circles of care) is a model project designed specifically to meet the needs of child-headed households and vulnerable families affected by HIV/AIDS. Currently, there are 233 children in 127 child headed households and 37 vulnerable families (i.e. those with terminally ill parents, in the care of aged grandparents or that of teenagers) that are being taken care of under this initiative. The main objective of the project is to "facilitate the creation of safe and caring communities for children at risk, with specific attention to families made fragile and vulnerable by the impact of HIV/AIDS, especially child-headed households". Today, the project is being implemented in one district but there are discussions for replication in other areas in partnerships with government departments. Under the project, teams of community based child and youth care workers, supervisors and managers work together with a range of volunteers to offer an integrated support system to orphans and vulnerable families. The support services range from child-care to nursing care, supervising school children's homework and house works, as well as advocacy for fair treatment of children in the school system.
- Some of the reasons that the Isibindi project stands out as good practice case are that:
 - Children are maintained in their community/family environment
 - Children retain ownership of their property, and have access to their support funds, even if access to the funds is a long process

- There is a professional support system, in which trained child and youth care workers take lead.
- Perhaps the major lesson from this project is that the support of orphans and other vulnerable families can only be effective if it adopts an integrated systems approach. In this case, the school system, the judicial and provincial government system, and other childcare institutions are all active partners in implementing the Isibindi. It is a truly community project.

3.2 National Children's Rights Commission (NCRC). The children's commission is a nongovernmental organisation that was created in 1990 as part of the liberation movement's strategy to protect children from state sponsored terrorism. NCRC was established especially to mobilise advocacy for promotion and protection of children's rights in South Africa. The Commission has, in the past, focussed on creating a positive policy environment, through the establishment of a national children's legislature and policy framework for protection of children's rights. NCRC has initiated a project for reintegration of children in child headed-households into extended family systems. The project is based on the traditional concepts of the family, where all children were integrated in one or another extended family. The goal of the pilot project is to reintegrate 50 child-headed households in Limpopo province into their extended families. It is based on the conviction of the project managers in NCRC children should not have to live on their own. The most important lessons from this project are:

- Community mobilisation and support are important process in a programme for vulnerable children,
- Reintegration of children into extended families as a process needs to be studied, so that the barriers to reintegration are clearly understood and addressed.
- Children's views are very important in defining their needs.

Way forward.

The projects will be profiled as examples of good/bad practice cases in the care of orphans, to form part of the CHGA report.



ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
COMMISSION ECONOMIQUE POUR L'AFRIQUE

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM -MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

To: Mr. Robert Okello, Director
A: OPC

Date: 2 August 2004
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Through: Josephine Ouedraogo, Director *Josephine Ouedraogo*
S/C De: African Center for Gender and Development (ACGD)

Ref.: ACGD/08/04/0387

From: Hilda M. Tadria, Regional Advisor
De: ACGD *H. Tadria*

Subject: Mission Report to South Africa – 02-09 June 2004
Objet:

Please find attached herewith my mission report undertaken in South Africa from 02 - 09 June 2004