

# 2<sup>ND</sup> DIOCESAN HIV/AIDS MEETING REPORT



HELD AT RONGO PASTORAL CENTRE  
ON 14 JULY 2006

## INTRODUCTION

The second HIV/AIDS Diocesan meeting was organized by the Diocese of Homa-bay under the Most. Rev Bishop Philip Anyolo in collaboration with St. Camillus Karungu under their Administrator, Fr.Emilio Balliana. This was a follow-up of the first meeting that took place in May 2005.

The theme of the meeting was, *“What is our Church doing to fight HIV/AIDS and its effects?”* Statistics from different parts of the Diocese suggests very high prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS. The main objective of the meeting was to present the projects and activities implemented and geared towards fighting and containing HIV/AIDS in the diocese. The meeting would also involve sharing the achievements and challenges that have been experienced in the fight against HIV/AIDS in our diocese.

### **Aims & Objectives of the meeting:**

- To discuss the HIV/AIDS situation in the Diocese
- To present the Projects already implemented in the Diocese to combat HIV/AIDS
- Discuss on the HAPPEN Diocesan Project
- Discuss on how to improve and strengthen the already existing projects
- To present other intervention measures to uplift the living standards of the people
- To create new project proposals for implementation
- Charter a way forward for the HIV/AIDS fight in the diocese

### **PRELIMINARIES**

The meeting began by Fr. Emilio the co-rdinator of the meeting welcoming everyone to the meeting to share in the discussion today on the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic in our diocese. This was followed by the PLWHA prayer recited by everyone. The gospel according to Mathew (10:7-15) was then proclaimed.

*The Most Rev. Bishop John F. Kinney from St. Cloud Minnesota USA* then



addressed the meeting saying that as a delegation, they were very happy to join the meeting to respond to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In the Catholic Church, there is a Bishop in every Diocese to make sure that all of us are in touch with Jesus. The Bishop then reminded the meeting that today was the Feast of St. Camillus. During the year 1500, St. Camillus was

dedicated to serving the sick with mercy and compassion. He was a saint who saw Jesus within the sick and rather than escape from the sick, he was with them. He then asked, “What would Jesus Christ say to us lay people, Deacons, and Priests to do about the people living with HIV/AIDS?”

Therefore, today, are we with those people suffering from HIV/AIDS the way Jesus wants us to be? What more does Jesus want us to do for our fellow brothers? He wants us to show love and compassion.

**The Most Rev. Bishop. Philip S. Anyolo** talked of the situation of HIV/AIDS in the diocese. We should make resolutions to help the suffering people. He asked, "Is Jesus not in that person who is sick and suffering?" the face of HIV/AIDS is the face of Christ. Therefore, he asked the people to work together as Jesus would; he is using us to do his work for him. The whole diocese was asked to join hands, minds, souls and hearts to combat the issue.

**Fr. Emilio**, preaching about the proclaimed gospel, said that there are four things that Jesus reminds us to do in the reading, cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Among all these duties, we realize that none of us can raise the dead nor drive out demons. But we can cure the sick and cleanse the lepers. As Christians, we are all called to cure the sick and this is our duty especially in our Diocese where we have so many sick people. We are announcing the gospel to sick people, who don't have hope for tomorrow. We are called to take care of our flock spiritually, and physically.

On this note, we realize that most of the parishes in the Diocese don't have any programs or projects to combat HIV/AIDS and yet AIDS was detected 25 years ago. He reminded the meeting that the greatest sin is the sin of omission, we see the critical situation, but we do nothing to help.

He added that the government has given out statistics to the effect that the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS has gone down from 14% to 6% in the last year, and this is not true. The government has to justify to the donors that the money that they are giving is being used. Therefore, they are just giving out statistics to please the donors and get more funding. In reality, the rate is still the same as last year. Therefore, we cannot turn our backs and close our eyes to the situation. We have to implement projects that can help the situation.

As an example, he called 9 of the HIV + children from St. Camillus Dala Kiye orphanage to come forward and they presented a poem on poverty in Africa. He emphasized that we could all join hands to make it work, if only we are willing to try, the children were a clear testimony that we can all join hands to change the lives of the Orphans and Vulnerable Children in our community.

## **PRESENTATIONS OF THE EXISTING PROJECTS IN THE DIOCESE**

### ***OYUGIS INTEGRATED PROJECT (OIP) by Sr. Rose***

Sr. Rose gave a brief history of the project as having been started in 1996 by the Novices of Brothers of Mercy in an informal way. The project was implemented in 5 phases:

1. Working with HIV/AIDS patients through home visits, cleaning wounds
2. Helping them to start an Income Generating Activity (IGA), free water and library services.
3. Home Based Care program focused on medical services
4. Care to orphans and their caregivers also to include widows and widowers.
5. Involve the community to work together in the project to improve their lives.

The project is managed by the Church through 5 departments namely: Medical, Youth, Agriculture, Social & Administration

### ***HAPPEN PROJECT by Polycarp Otete***

The name HAPPEN stands for **HIV/AIDS Prevention Protection & Empowerment Network**. The project was started early this year and was aimed at school going pupils to instill hope through information on sexual health. Their main objective is to give information to these children to help them in life skills and good decision making. Their approach adopts life skills which needs more practice and is different from the teaching methodology used in the education curriculum.

The project has two full time workers, volunteers, deanery co-ordinators and field facilitators. The project has trained 198 volunteers, 127 schools have been visited and out of these schools, 85 peer educators have been trained.

### ***Achievements***

1. 198 volunteers trained
2. 127 schools contacted
3. 85 schools trained with 2,125 peer educators
4. Good communication has been established in schools where the project has gained ground especially between the youth and their teachers and between the youth and their fellows.
5. There is reduced stigma and discrimination towards children affected or infected in those schools where HAPPEN activities have been taken place.

### ***ART PROJECT – ST. CAMILLUS KARUNGU by Patrick Alando***

The project started in August 2004 supported by CRS through PEPFAR funding. The project aims at giving sustainable, durable and quality care to HIV positive clients. The project has 18 staff running the project.

Currently 1,114 clients have been enrolled into the project with 470 on ARVs and out of those on drugs, 45 are children. The project target area is Nyatike division. The criterion for inclusion and exclusion in the project includes:



- Being HIV positive
- Have to be from the targeted Geographical area
- Willingness to adhere
- Disclosure
- No history of default in another ART program
- Reliable adherence social support

### ***Achievements include:***

- Reduced morbidity and mortality rate
- Stigma and discrimination has reduced
- Creation of awareness
- Set up of 3 mobile clinics
- Improved quality of life for those on ART

- Formation of support groups
- Capacity building for staffs and CHV

### ***ART PROJECT – ST. JOSEPH OMBO M. HOSPITAL***

The project started in August 2004 and has a staff of 24 people. The catchment area includes Migori division and its environs

1. Number on ARVs 450 of which 10 are children
2. General enrolment 960

#### ***Achievements***

- Reduced stigma
- Reduced morbidity & mortality rate
- Improved quality health care
- Capacity building for staff

### ***MACALDER BABY HOME***

The project is managed by the Ivrea Sisters in Macalder and is situated 33km from Migori town. The project started in year 2000 because of the many problems resulting from high mortality rate of parents caused by HIV related illness, TB, early pregnancies.

#### ***Aims of the institution:***

Since the children admitted in this institution lack trust, love and care, the sisters aim to:



- Create an enabling environment where all the basic needs and rights of a child can be realized
- Develop positive attitudes and values in these children
- To facilitate an interaction between the child and the parent/guardian in preparation for the future responsibilities of the same.

#### ***Terms of admission include:***

- Having lost the mother or both parents
- Being a resident of Migori district
- In case the father can not provide the basic needs of the child
- The parent presents the original death certificate of the mother, a letter from the area chief to certify

The sisters contribute to the growth and the well-being of the orphans through medical care, basic needs (clothing & shelter), family warmth and love, spiritual nourishment and assessment after leaving the Baby Home.

#### ***Achievements***

1. The institution has managed to house 48 orphans since it started
2. 9 children have been released to join their own families

3. 22 children are currently at the Baby Home.
4. The sisters have been able to contain and treat most of the illnesses

***HOPE & LIFE PROJECT- ST. CAMILLUS – KARUNGU by Teresa Abudho***

The project has 750 members and its main aim is to sustain a network of PLWHA to support each other through acceptance and spiritually. Its activities include:

- Home visits
- Group therapy
- HIV Counseling
- Sensitization
- Starting Income Generating Activities
- Collaboration with other organized groups

***DR. TEREASA SIMONS – Delegate from St. Cloud Minnesota USA***

*The delegation from St. Cloud USA is visiting Homa-bay Diocese.*

Dr. Tereasa informed the meeting that St. Cloud is a rural community in Minnesota in the USA. They have very little experience with HIV/AIDS in their community. They believe that AIDS is mostly found in the big cities. They have a hospital in their community with a capacity of 350 beds but it is very rare to find an AIDS case. The few cases that they encounter are of young people who go to look for work in the big cities and then come back home to their parents infected with AIDS. Therefore, they were all very happy to share information with the diocese on HIV/AIDS since this was a reality.

*\*The delegation was then excused from the meeting since they were going to attend another meeting elsewhere\**

***ASUMBI ST. FRANCIS HELP AGE PROGRAM – ASUMBI***

The program was started in 1996 under the Catholic Church by the Fransiscan Sister of St. Joseph. The project targets poor and elderly people who have been left to take of orphans by uplifting their living standards in their homesteads. The program also offers orphan support through provision of medical care & uniforms.

***Objectives***

- Ensure 200 needy elderly people are provided with good shelter, sanitations, medical care, food and clothing.
- Try to eradicate poverty among the aged by providing free grain seeds for planting in two seasons every year.
- Provide basic skills to orphans on garment making
- To implement IGA for sustainability
- Create more awareness in the





- community on ageing, HIV/AIDS & orphans
- Try to give basic support to OVCs

### ***ASUMBI HEALTH CENTRE - VCT***

The centre was started last year in October. The centre focuses on providing Out Patient services and VCT. There is a very good turnout of people from the community for counseling. This is the biggest challenge since the centre has only 2 trained VCT Counselors.

### ***ST. FRANCIS ORPHANS & HIV+ CHILDREN PROJECT***

The project was launched in 2002 after an extensive survey was done to determine the situation. The project covers 4 districts, Homa-bay, Rongo, Rachuonyo and Migori districts.

*The project works with groups of 30 people in all the districts.*

- Migori 66 groups
- Rongo 34 groups
- Homa – bay 16 groups
- Rachuonyo 11 groups

There are a total of 1, 830 families under the project and are headed by parents, single parents, grandparents, children or relatives. The project collaborates with NGOs and Labalu. Their head office is situated in Homa-bay.

Fr. George Kizito thanked the Kenya Catholic Secretariat – Education department which organized training for teachers at Rongo from 5 different schools. The teachers were trained on how to teach the pupils about sexuality, HIV/AIDS awareness, behavior change and drug abuse. It was a good and timely training which went a long way in empowering the youth to take control of their lives through making good decisions.

The meeting was also informed about a meeting on HIV/AIDS & DISABILITY which will take place this year in August in Canada. This is owing to the fact that even the disabled people are infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. It was suggested that some projects should be implemented specifically to target the disabled people living with HIV/AIDS.

### **PROGRESS & ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE DIOCESE**

- Implementation of HAPPEN project as an all Diocesan Project
- Facilitation of awareness about HIV/IDS through sensitization in schools
- Collaboration with NGOs within some parishes to implement projects
- Reduced stigma and discrimination towards HIV positive people (PLWHA)
- Implementation of a number of projects targeting orphans and vulnerable children

### **CHALLENGES FACED IN MOST PROJECTS IN THE DIOCESE**

- Lack of funding which limits the success of the projects
- Lack of adequate qualified staff to run the projects
- Poor infrastructure within the diocese hindering progress
- Lack of dedicated people to join and run the projects
- Poor collaboration from some Parish Priests

## **PROPOSED INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

After all the presentations of the various projects within the diocese were made, it was time to answer this very pertinent question, “Have we achieved something since our last meeting? Unfortunately, very little has been done. In fact, some parishes have done totally nothing towards the fight against HIV/AIDS in the diocese. Therefore, everyone was called upon to give suggestions of practical activities that can be implemented to uplift the living standards of the people.

- Exploit the available resources within our diocese
- Plant trees, fruits and vegetables (Mwarubaine, pawpaw)
- Change attitude to work harder to change society
- Starting an Income Generating Activity can boost PLWHA offering empowerment economically
- Distribution of seeds for planting, Poultry farming & Keeping domestic animals like goats and sheep that can produce easily
- Form groups within the diocese to receive donor funding /Micro financing
- Start patient support groups of PLWHA to empower and share
- To be dedicated in the fight against HIV/AIDS
- Celebration of World AIDS Day on 1<sup>st</sup> of December every year to create awareness
- Celebration of the Day of the African Child every year on 16<sup>th</sup> June to address the plight of the OVCs in our society

## **CONCLUSION**

A reminder from Fr. Emilio that there was still a lot to be done in the fight against HIV/AIDS. As a diocese, we should work hard and use the available resources to the fullest to make our lives better..

The meeting was reminded that since the last meeting, each parish was supposed to submit to Fr. Emilio their addresses. Since then, some parishes have not remitted the addresses. Therefore, they were reminded to submit their addresses today without failure so that the Diocese Directory can be compiled and printed.

The Most Rev. Bishop Philip S. Anyolo then closed the meeting by saying that next year, on 14<sup>th</sup> July, the same meeting will be held. This will be as a follow-up of the current meeting to look at what has been achieved since now. He advised that there should be better collaboration among the parishes in diocese to avoid repetition of projects but to have diverse projects to help in the fight against poverty, HIV/AIDS & stigma.

He added that each year on 14<sup>th</sup> July, the day of the Feast of St. Camillus the Patron of the Sick and those who nurse them, we are going to make it the day of HIV/AIDS awareness in the Diocese. In future, he is going to make it a command for all to attend the meeting.





After the closing prayer by Bishop Philip, the participants broke for lunch

**LIST OF ATTENDANTS:**

1. BISHOP PHILIP ANYOLO	HOMA-BAY DIOCESE
2. BISHOP JOHN F. KINNEY	ST. CLOUD
3. FR. EMILIO BALLIANA	ST. CAMILLUS
4. FR. TOM J. MBOYA	HOMA-BAY
5. SR. EDITH SMAO	RAPOGI
6. SR. LEOCARDIA M. JOSEPH	MACALDER
7. CIRONE ELISA	MACALDER
8. SR. ROSETTA MACHUMA	KISII
9. LAURA BROKER	ST. CLOUD
10. SR. MARY MONICA	ASUMBI
11. FR. JACOB P. O	OYUGIS
12. TEREASA SIMONS	ST. CLOUD
13. LYNNAE HEMMING	ST. CLOUD
14. LISA STERN	ST. CLOUD
15. SUE HEATH	ST. CLOUD
16. SR. EVELINDA S. LACANIBO	OYUGIS
17. JOAN A. JUMA	OYUGIS
18. CALVINCE JEREMIAH	OYUGIS
19. SR. MARY EDWARD	RODI
20. SR. VINCENTIA ACHIENG	RONGO
21. SR. AMATA SHITAKAH	KADONGO
22. CARILUS A. OKIDI	HOMA-BAY
23. RIVARESTUS OKUMU	OMBO -MIGORI
24. RICHARD APAMO	HOMA-BAY
25. SR. AGNES FRANCISCA	HOMA-BAY
26. SR. PAULO	RONGO
27. SR. SAVIO	RONGO
28. MARK O. OJUANG	ASUMBI
29. NANCY AKINYI	RONGO
30. OCHOLA P.J. P ODERA	SUNA
31. JOHN ODHIAMBO OTIENO	RONGO
32. MAURICE OYOLLA	RAPOGI
33. POLYCARP OTETE	RONGO
34. TERESA ABUDHO	KARUNGU
35. SR. MARIA AOLO	ASUMBI
36. SR. RAPHAEL MURUNGA	RONGO
37. SR. GRACE SANGRA	RONGO
38. ALLEN KOOP	ST. CLOUD
39. EVA A. KOEP	ST. CLOUD
40. PETER	ST. CLOUD
41. MARY LOU	ST. CLOUD
42. ED JARISTI	ST. CLOUD
43. KATERI MANCINI	ST. CLOUD
44. AMBER CHRISTIE	ST. CLOUD
45. FR WILLIAM VOS	ST. CLOUD
46. AGNES KITHIKII	CRS – KENYA
47. JOYCE GATURU	KARUNGU
48. PATRICK ALANDO	KARUNGU
49. FR. CHRISTOPHER WASONGA	MIROGI
50. FR. PAUL OGALLO	ASUMBI
51. SR. MARY IDAH AJWANG	RONGO
52. FR. WALTER OKOTH	KADONGO
53. PATRICK OJUNGU	RONGO
54. BARTHEZ	FRANCE
55. FR. FELIX OCHIENG	RAPOGI
56. JOYCE OCHIENG	SUNA
57. BR. POLYCARP K. OTIENO	KARUNGU
58. GEORGE ORERO	HOMA-BAY
59. CHARLES OBIERO	HOMA-BAY
60. FR. MATHEW BURRA	ISIBANIA
61. FR. JULIUS MORARA	KARUNGU

62. JULIAN PISTONE  
 63. JUDITH A. ONYANGO  
 64. BR. RICHARD NGUVA  
 65. RICHARD MAGWANGA  
 66. FR. GREGORY OMBOK  
 67. FR. ANTONY OYAMO  
 68. FR. GEOGE KIZITO OTIENO  
 69. FR. VALENTINE MIYOMA  
 70. MARIA ONYANGO  
 71. LUCAS WASONGA  
 72. PERCILLA ADHIAMBO  
 73. DARIA MONIQUE  
 74. JERUSHA OUMA  
 75. SR. JACINTA AKINYI  
 76. JULIUS OCHOLA ODAK  
 77. SR. ROSE NGACHA  
 78. BR. JOHN KARUNGAI  
 79. SR JUSTINE, PRR  
 80. SR. GAUDENCIA WANYONYI  
 81. SR. MARIA NATEPEKA  
 82. SR. JUDITH ADONGO  
 83. SR. JANE MBORI  
 84. DICKSON ATONGA  
 85. SR. MARY FRANCES  
 86. FR.PAT R. KAILA  
 87. FR. KENNEDY NYUMBA  
 88. DISMAS OGALO  
 89. FR. GEORGE OCHOLA  
 90. FR. RONALD BARASA  
 91. SR. GETRUDE  
 92. SR. HENDRICA ANTHONY  
 93. FR. BENARD OWINO  
 94. FR. SILVANE JUMA  
 95. PAUL OSODO  
 96. LINO BATTAN  
 97. FR. LUCIO GALBIATI  
 98. DALA KIYE CHILDREN

U.K  
 KARUNGU  
 KARUNGU  
 KADONGO  
 KANDIEGE  
 KEHANCHA  
 AWENDO  
 RONGO  
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 AWENDO  
 KISII  
 HOMA-BAY  
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 MAGUNGA  
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