

ZAMBIA ORPHANS OF AIDS UK  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
14 AUGUST 2008  
CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Zambia is one of the African countries hardest hit by HIV/AIDS, leaving an estimated one million children orphaned. In a country where about 70 percent of the population lives in extreme poverty, extended families and communities are struggling to cope, and the number of family elders is in decline.

Many households have no adults left and are held together by children, some as young as eleven. Many of those children and their siblings are themselves HIV positive.

In response to the enormous crisis, a group of Zambians and friends living in the USA came together in 2000 to form Zambia Orphans of Aids as a non-profit voluntary organisation in Washington DC to raise money to support orphans and their communities. In 2003 ZOAZ was registered as a charity in Zambia to identify projects in Zambia and to supervise the disbursement of money.

In 2005, it was suggested that a similar group to that in the USA be established in the UK where there is a more substantial network of people who have connections with and a commitment to Zambia, thereby opening up a second source of funding. ZOA UK was registered as a charity ( Charity No 1116460) in October 2006 and I was privileged to be asked to be its Chairman.

ZOA UK's mission is to help as many orphans of AIDS reach their potential as possible. We help orphans and the communities supporting them in a number of ways:

- supporting orphans so they can complete their schooling in a country where secondary education is still not free
- helping school leavers acquire skills for the world of work
- funding communities so they can generate more income through business and agricultural projects
- coping with the social consequences of HIV/AIDS by funding counselling for orphans, bereavement counselling for surviving family members, protecting young girls in particular from abuse and sexual exploitation.

Our Annual Report and Accounts shows that in the 16 months to the end of 2007, we raised over £50,000, a truly remarkable achievement? .We are aiming to exceed that figure in 2008. With that money we have supported 8 projects and are helping over 700 orphans. In the first half of 2008 we have approved a further 5 projects.

The inescapable reality is that, despite expenditure in Zambia on HIV/AIDS of over \$200 million a year, the number of new infections and the prevalence rate have remained high. Anti-retroviral treatment is becoming more widely available

and is prolonging lives, but the proportion of those getting treatment who could benefit is still small. But most troubling of all is that the number of orphans is still growing and, as one of our Patrons Fr Michael Kelly pointed out in his address to the ZOAZ Annual Meeting, the share of the money spent on the problems and suffering of orphans was only about 5 percent of the total.

So the work to be done by the ZOA family and by other charities working in the same field is literally limitless. We now aim to expand our fundraising efforts, supplementing the donations from the friends and networks who have been supporting us so generously.

We need to become more professional if we are to approach a wider range of charities and trusts, and more effective in identifying and assessing projects, disbursing money, and seeing that it is properly spent. But in doing so we must not lose the commitment and energy which being a voluntary organisation generates. We will also be looking for opportunities to work in partnership with churches, local community groups and other charities.

We aim to ensure that as far as possible our costs for fundraising and overseeing the projects we support are covered by sponsors and donations from the trustees so that we can offer the assurance that the money we raise will indeed go to benefit the children of Zambia.

I am grateful to my fellow trustees, our members and friends who have been very generous in their support, whether in terms of money or time. I am confident we can expand those efforts and, in doing so, continue to improve the lives of young people in Zambia.

Lord Turnbull  
August 2008