

Firelight Newsflash! 10 December 2007

Human Rights Day is celebrated annually across the world on 10 December. Human Rights Day 2007 marks the start of a year-long commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948-2008). The theme for the anniversary, "*Dignity and justice for all of us,*" reinforces the vision of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Dignity and justice are not a luxury or a hope. The UDHR and its core values - inherent human dignity, non-discrimination, equality, fairness and universality - apply to everyone, everywhere and always. Human Rights are universal, enduring and vibrant, and concern us all.

At Firelight, we recognize how our grantee-partners are working to protect the rights of children and their caregivers every day. Through the services you provide, the community action you facilitate, or through the advocacy voice you have, your efforts to defend a child's right to health, education, family care, and more are vital to ensuring a peaceful future for us all! Keep on!

To access the Declaration in over 360 languages, see:

<http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/navigate/alpha.htm>

To access more information on human rights, see:

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources.asp>

Survival is the First Freedom: Applying Democracy and Governance Approaches to HIV/AIDS Work

This tool kit aims to provide a collection of tools for use in applying democracy and governance approaches to HIV/AIDS work. It was produced to assist efforts to scale up responses to the pandemic and increase access to prevention and care services through collaboration at individual, community and national levels. This tool kit is designed for use by donor organisations, civil society, government and the private sector. According to the publisher, ultimately the aim is to develop a dynamic website so that users can add new tools to create an ever-expanding and up-to-date learning tool.

The tool kit is organised around key democracy and governance concepts that have direct application to specific needs in HIV/AIDS programming. The tool kit is divided into the following sections:

- Democratic principles and practices
- Rule of law
- Increasing citizens participation

- Increasing capacity
- Enhanced flow of information

Specific tools for relating these focus areas with HIV/AIDS work are included at the end of each section.

To download:

http://www.pacttz.org/downloads/survival_is_the_first_freedom.pdf

African Commission: Mentions of Child Rights in State Party Reports (news)

<http://www.crin.org/resources/infodetail.asp?id=15732>

African States which have ratified the [African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child](#) are obligated to report to the [African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child](#) on measures they have taken to implement the Charter's provisions. They must do this two years after ratifying the Charter and every three years thereafter. However, the Committee began its work in 2001 and as at December 2006, only four countries had submitted their initial reports: **Egypt, Mauritius, Rwanda and Nigeria.**

To access a copy of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, visit:

<http://www.crin.org/Law/instrument.asp?InstID=1015>

Corruption Fighters' Tool Kit: Civil society experiences and emerging strategies

http://www.transparency.org/tools/e_toolkit

The Corruption Fighters' Tool Kit is a compendium of practical civil society anti-corruption experiences described in concrete and accessible language. It presents innovative anti-corruption tools developed and implemented by Transparency International National Chapters and other civil society organizations from around the world.

The publication highlights the potential of civil society to create mechanisms for monitoring public institutions and to demand and promote accountable and responsive public administration. The Corruption Fighter's Tool Kit, and its Special Edition: Teaching Integrity to Youth, offer the reader a dynamic, ever-growing, collection of tools. Together they will provide ideas and inspiration to their readers.

At present, the Corruption Fighters' Tool Kit includes 46 exciting tools from around the world. Learn how TI Bangladesh uses theatre as a means to raise awareness about corruption and how TI Peru is testing the new Peruvian access to information law, among many other tools created by civil society organizations.

The Special Edition 2004: Teaching Integrity to Youth includes 11 additional tools of youth anti-corruption education and provides many illustrations, cartoons and photographs which accompany the text.

[Corruption Fighters' Tool Kit Special Edition 2004](#) Teaching Integrity to Youth in 11 countries

[Corruption Fighters' Tool Kit 2002 – 2003](#) Civil society experiences and emerging strategies

[Corruption Fighters' Tool Kit 2001](#) The first ever Corruption Fighters' Tool Kit (October 2001) describes 27 anti-corruption tools.

[Tools to Support Transparency in Local Governance](#) Urban Governance Toolkit Series, March 2004

Anti-Corruption Capacity Building Initiative

This Toolkit provides simple explanations of good governance. The toolkit also outlines the steps Civil Society Organizations can take to combat corruption and ensure positive governance is taking place in their communities.

To download:

http://www.pacttz.org/downloads/anti_corruption_toolkit.pdf

SOUTH AFRICA: No registration, no benefits [news] 6 December 2007 - CRINMAIL 939

[JOHANNESBURG, 4 December 2007] - An innovative outreach programme that uses local schools as the point of entry into South Africa's poorest communities is helping tens of thousands of impoverished rural people obtain previously inaccessible grants and services.

Many South Africans have been unable to access services because they do not have an identity document, which places citizens on the national database. The outreach programme, created and implemented by the Durban-based Media in Education Trust (MiET), a non-governmental organisation focusing on rural development, helps to bridge this gap by assisting school children and their families to obtain identity documents.

The Schools as Centres of Care and Support (SCCS) programme, funded mainly by the Dutch government and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, identifies and helps a district's most vulnerable children and adults via the school system. So far the programme has been implemented in the under-resourced parts of North West and KwaZulu-Natal provinces.

According to UNICEF the births of only half the children in South Africa's more than 280 municipalities have been registered, and a birth certificate is required to obtain an identity document.

Under grant regulations, people applying for old age pensions, disability and child support grants, and various forms of medical aid, must have a 13-digit bar-coded identity document and/or a birth certificate. Adults seeking formal employment are also required to have an identity document so they can be registered for tax purposes.

Since the end of apartheid, provincial government departments have struggled to extend basic services and healthcare that would improve the lives of the poor; rural women remain the most vulnerable segment of the population.

One of the main stumbling blocks to alleviating poverty is the difficulty many South Africans have in accessing the official identity papers required to apply for government assistance. The child support grant is one such form of assistance that has helped struggling rural families. As of April 2007, more than eight million South African children under the age of 14 were benefiting from a R200 (US\$30) monthly grant to caregivers earning less than R800 (US\$115) per month.

Pilot project

The initiative is based on the premise that most rural communities have been decimated by HIV/AIDS and poverty to such an extent that the school is often the only remaining reliable institution, and is therefore the best way of reaching a community's most vulnerable people.

Participating schools are grouped into clusters of eight and placed under the guidance of a paid MiET coordinator. One of the initiative's main elements is using the local people's knowledge of their own communities.

Teachers and locals are asked to join coordinated groups of volunteers that identify children in need at schools and the adults they live with. According to Maureen King, the SCCS's North West provincial manager, while community members were keen participants from the outset, the uptake among departmental officials was initially slow due to their already large workloads. However, there has been a surge in participation over the past 12 months.

Julie van Wyk, director of curriculum and development services in the Department of Education in North West, said that establishing exactly who and where the vulnerable children were had always been one of their biggest challenges.

"The knowing has always been the difficult part for us: knowing which community needs what. The North West is rural and people live in small out-of-the-way

places, so knowing who is at risk and who is not is not always easy."

Future

The initiative has proved so successful that four of South Africa's neighbouring countries - Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi and Swaziland - have entered into a partnership with MiET to develop similar programmes.

But the future of South Africa's SCCS initiative is shadowed by doubt, as MiET only has funding until 2009 to establish the programme in 1,192 primary schools in the two provinces.

"We are busy capacitating people, but there is only money until 2009. What will happen then?" said Aubrey Kgobokoe, a SCCS training coordinator in North West. "It should be rolled out in all schools, so that teenagers will also benefit. Are we going to have to leave those who have yet to benefit to fend for themselves?"

[Source: IRIN News; <http://www.irinnews.org>]

Further information

[UN: Drive for birth and death registrations](#) (31 October 2007)
[Count me In! The Global Campaign for Universal Birth Registration](#)
