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### CONTACT US

ACET, PO Box 588,  
Brentford TW7 9BA

Telephone:  
+44(0)20 8568 7770

Email:  
enquiries@acet-international.org

Website:  
www.acet-international.org

Registered Charity No: 299293  
Company No: 2245302

# Ignorance costs lives!

UNAIDS, the United Nations HIV and AIDS body has declared that the growth of the HIV pandemic is slowing down and the availability of essential anti retroviral drugs is increasing. Education about the risks of HIV and the dangers of AIDS is being offered in more and more communities.

And yet, the threat of HIV and AIDS is far from over with new tragedies being played out every day. In the last minute, four more people around the world have died of AIDS. For every person starting ARV (antiretroviral) treatment two people are being newly infected. Too often those infected and affected are completely unaware of the risks they face until it is too late. For them ignorance really can cost lives.

Pictured is Liweti, a mother of four from rural Zimbabwe, for whom discovery that she was HIV positive was so nearly a death sentence.

ACET has been at the forefront of the Christian response to HIV and AIDS for over 20 years. We are proud of what has been achieved so far and our hope is that Liweti's story becomes the norm. Supported by local ACET funded teams, she received the life saving ARV treatment she urgently needed. Six years on from her diagnosis she continues to enjoy good health and she has the courage to tell her



Liweti, an example of courage born of hope

story to others still living in ignorance of the dangers of HIV and AIDS. We hope you will enjoy reading more stories from our work in this edition of ACET in Action.

However, despite stories like Liweti's, so much more remains to be done and the need for action is urgent. Over 7,500 people are newly diagnosed with HIV today and every day. Please continue to be part of ACET's response, both in prayer and financial support. Please respond today using the form enclosed.

[www.acet-international.org](http://www.acet-international.org)

Don't forget to check out a wealth of information, stories and news about ACET's work, it's well worth a visit.

**Donate**  
ONLINE NOW



With one year to go until the Olympics, thousands of sportsmen and women are already totally focused on lifting that precious medal. Everything they do is aimed at winning gold.

I like to think of ACET in a similar way. Our whole focus is tackling HIV and AIDS and we believe passionately they can be beaten. We dream of the day when we will be able to declare that HIV and AIDS is no more. We know it can be done, one life at a time!

We are, of course, a long way from that goal but we know we are making progress. We are encouraged by many reports we receive from around the world that show the part ACET teams are playing in this success.

In this newsletter we have included stories from ACET in Africa, where the pandemic is at its worst and our workers and volunteers are in the front line.

ACET now has programmes tackling HIV and AIDS in five countries in Africa, but the influence of the work spreads far further. Our programmes in Uganda and DRC have been recognised as 'centres of excellence' by development agencies such as Tearfund and Solidarité Protestante in Belgium and by other charities. Our trainers are much in demand and have run training programmes for church and community leaders in more than 15 other African countries.

No athlete these days can achieve the dream of Olympic glory without a team around them and here at ACET we know we cannot realise our dream without our team, which includes you, our supporters. Thank you for the part you play in the work.

*Peter Fabian*  
Chief Executive

## Breaking the link in the DR Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was one of the first sub-Saharan African countries to recognise HIV and AIDS when its first cases were registered in 1983. The country now has a widespread epidemic with a prevalence as high as 20% among vulnerable groups including women who have suffered sexual violence.

With relative stability in recent years things have begun to improve and ACET DR Congo, founded in 2006, is leading groundbreaking work with local churches and schools. Mother to baby infection with HIV is both very common and largely preventable with simple treatment. ACET has set up voluntary testing centres for pregnant women, often in local churches. These centres offer free testing with treatment and counselling to those who discover they are HIV positive. This helps to break the HIV



Counselling before an HIV test

transmission link between mother and child. So far over 1,000 women have come forward to use the service and where necessary referrals are made to specialist medical facilities.

### How to turn £20 into £100

ACET DR Congo has secured a major grant from Solidarité Protestante in Belgium which will cover 80% of the costs of the growing education programme in schools and churches. This is given on condition ACET raises the remaining 20%. So for every £20 you donate we can release £100 (or £105 with gift aid) for HIV prevention work in Central Africa.

**Donate**  
ONLINE NOW

## Reaching out in troubled Nigeria



Jos community HIV prevention team

ACET Nigeria educators are working in many of the villages in Plateau State, Nigeria which has been in the news recently because of the tensions between Christians and Muslims. To date all our workers and volunteers remain safe and continue their work in these communities despite the violence.

### Dorcas' story

*'I learnt of the training by ACET Nigeria and I decided to go and have a HIV test... I was afraid that I will be positive... because of my life style, I did the test and I was told that I have HIV. The knowledge of HIV I had was that I will die if I test Positive to HIV.'*

*'But after I was counselled by a member of ACET Nigeria I finally realized that there is hope.'*

*'I know that ACET Nigeria will help me and build me up as they have started.'*

**Donate**  
ONLINE NOW

£10 will pay for 10 HIV testing kits which can help save lives

# TUMAINI CHILDREN'S HOME - (U)



## Friends raise more than £250,000

The Friends of ACET Uganda (FAU) have raised this amazing total since they came together to support ACET's work in 2000.

Coordinated by Robert and Margaret Mortimer, FAU have played a major role in rebuilding and transforming Nakulabye Junior School from a few wooden shacks in a Kampala slum into a new school with 600 children, making it a beacon of hope for the future. [Read more www.acet-international.org](http://www.acet-international.org)

### Tumaini Children's Home

FAU also supports the Tumaini Children's Home for 72 children, many of them AIDS orphans, run by Pastor Nicholas and his wife Sister Maria. 'Tumaini' is the Swahili for 'hope' and that is what this home really gives children from a nearby slum area of Kakira near Jinja.

The children have very few possessions but they are happy and well looked after. Education is vital for them and two classes have been started and these are attracting support from the local community. However the orphanage struggles to find the £340 needed every week to feed all the children.

**Donate**  
ONLINE NOW

£5 will feed one of the children at Tumaini for a week!

### HOPE

Giving 'hope' is the key word for much of ACET's work in Uganda. In the north near the Sudan border ACET works with over 5,000 orphans and vulnerable children in the area which was, until 5 years ago, ravaged by fighting for 20 years. Now there is peace and ACET is working to help rebuild communities. Robert Mortimer says, "When I visited last year I was

*deeply moved by the appreciation members of the community showed for the training given by ACET."*



Esther, pictured above (second left) with others from the community trained by ACET, said: 'This morning, when I heard you were coming, I left my garden (piece of cultivated land) in a hurry to see the people who have given me hope in life'.

And another girl said:

*'I give thanks to God for every good gift you have given and for sharing with others'*

### Book Aid

In the last year, ACET has sent nearly 17,000 books and resources to local organisations in 47 countries around the developing world. Many recipients cannot afford to contribute to the costs of this and any support towards printing, translating or posting this material would be appreciated.

## The other face of South Africa



Community HIV prevention team warming up before a training session!

Away from the World Cup, vuvuzelas and game parks, South Africa is struggling with an alarming incidence of HIV, with infection rates amongst the Xhosa people of the Eastern Cape particularly high.

In response, ACET Eastern Cape has launched a rapidly growing education programme, which last year reached more than 45,000 young people in remote rural schools with prevention messages about HIV.

*'I grew up in a time where we never discuss with our parents sexual related issues; I ended up being sexually active at an early stage which led me to drop out of school.'*

*The ACET EC education programme has opened an opportunity for me to go out to the youth and educate them about HIV and AIDS prevention and risk reduction.'*

Nazo Nomaphetha: Volunteer educator

*'Many thanks for books you sent us. They are very useful and many people who visit our centre are asking us how they can get them from us because those 10 books are kept in our centre and are used for trainings and seminars only. We cannot lend them because we are afraid of losing them.'*

Louise Timotheo, Calvary Compassion (Bukavu, R D Congo)



# What to do to help...

## Dave puts his body on the line

ACET supporter Dave Tonks as he finishes the bike section of the gruelling *Trail Plus Adventure Challenge* held in the Grizedale Forest in the Lake District. Dave raised a fantastic £714.00 by completing a 10k run, a 'technical' 25k mountain bike ride and a 1k 3 man canoe event on Lake Coniston. Our thanks go to him for all his hard training and the generous support of his many sponsors.

### Organise AN EVENT

**If you'd like to follow Dave's example and take on a challenge for ACET we'd love to hear from you..!**

Why not organise a fundraising event for the work we do to tackle HIV and AIDS – it's so easy to create your own web page on [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com) and nominate ACET as your chosen charity.

**Want to learn more together?** 'Issues of sexual health, stigma and discrimination can be hard to talk about in the local church.

If you would like someone to come to your church or small group and speak about what ACET has learnt from our experience around the world, please email [enquiries@acet-international.org](mailto:enquiries@acet-international.org) or phone 020 8568 7770. We have a number of speakers around the country able to visit churches and help members to tackle these issues together.

### Regular GIVING

**Saving one life after another**  
Eradicating stigma and prejudice. Mobilising churches. Challenging misconceptions. Reducing the suffering of the sick and saving the lives of the young and the vulnerable. This is all part of ACET's work.

Could you make a regular financial commitment to ACET's compassionate care or increase your existing gift? Regular support helps us to train and retain the best community carers and educators. Help them to keep on saving lives.

### giftaid it

If you are making a gift please gift aid it if you possibly can, so we can claim the tax back from the UK Exchequer. Did you know that if you are due a tax rebate, you can also donate it directly to ACET through your tax return? Please contact us for further details.

### Remembering ACET in your will

We are humbled and encouraged each time we hear that ACET has been remembered in someone's will. Around the world whole communities continue to be devastated by HIV/AIDS. Whether they are from the developing world or wealthier countries, children and young people are most vulnerable. A legacy from you will help ACET continue to provide care, support and education to people at risk of HIV/AIDS and reduce suffering and save lives.

Thankyou.

*Peter Fabian*  
Chief Executive



Visit [www.acet-international.org](http://www.acet-international.org) - with all the latest news from around the world - see the latest on falling infection rates in Russia and also ways you can get involved.

Receive our online NEWS and PRAYER updates straight into your email box! - sign up at our facebook page or email [enquiries@acet-international.org](mailto:enquiries@acet-international.org).



Find 'ACET UK' on Facebook  and have your say on the work we do as well as keep up to date. You can also invite all your friends to do so too.



Join us on Twitter - @ACETnewsHIVAIDS - and be first to hear what's happening. Make your own comment and read those of others.



ACET is a practical and compassionate response to HIV and AIDS and works to support the ACET International Alliance. The Alliance is a group of independent organisations around the world working to reduce the rate of new HIV infections, caring for those affected by HIV and AIDS and supporting AIDS orphans. (Registered Charity number 299293)