

# Contents

## Executive summary

5

## PART 1: The process

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. Background to the forum  | 8  |
| 1.1 Why have a National Children's Forum on HIV/AIDS?                         | 8  |
| 1.2 What was the National Children's Forum all about?                         | 8  |
| 1.3 Who participated in the forum?  | 9  |
| 1.4 Design of an NCF logo and slogan  | 10 |
| 2 What happened At the forum?   | 10 |
| 2.1 How were the children's experiences discussed and recorded?               | 10 |
| 2.2 How was this information processed?                                       | 11 |
| 3 How will we ensure that the children's voices are heard by decision makers? | 11 |
| 3.1 The children met with key stakeholders                                    | 11 |
| 3.2 The Children's Institute has an ongoing advocacy campaign                 | 11 |
| 4 What can I expect to find in this workshop report?                          | 12 |

## Part 2: The experiences of children affected by HIV/AIDS

### 1 HIV and Education

15

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 1.1 The right to go to school and to get an education   | 16 |
| 1.2 Children's experiences  | 16 |
| 1.2.1 "I walk a long distance to school"  | 16 |
| 1.2.2 "When they want school fees I go home - They send me home."   | 17 |
| 1.2.3 "At home there is no food most of the time...I need food."  | 17 |
| 1.2.4 "I couldn't concentrate at school for all the things I had to look after"   | 18 |
| 1.2.5 "They say I'm dirty... I play alone"  | 19 |
| 1.2.6 "Teachers tease me"   | 20 |
| 1.2.7 "Teachers do not keep our problems as secretive as possible"  | 20 |
| 1.2.8 "A child was expelled from school because he was HIV/AIDS infected"   | 21 |
| 1.2.9 "Some teachers, who are informed and know facts about the disease, support the children."                         | 21 |
| 1.2.10 "The government can help children who are affected by HIV/AIDS by giving them opportunities like other children" | 22 |
| 1.3 Conclusion  | 24 |

### 2 Health Care

25

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 2.1 The right to health care                              | 26 |
| 2.2 Children's experiences                                | 26 |
| 2.2.1 "Challenge number one is the medication"            | 26 |
| 2.2.2 "We have no money for transport"                    | 27 |
| 2.2.3 "We want healthy young people"                      | 27 |
| 2.2.4 "I am worried about the rural area"                 | 28 |
| 2.2.5 "They do not keep your file private"                | 28 |
| 2.2.6 "They say we are too young to ask"                  | 28 |
| 2.2.7 "They lash out at us even when it is not our fault" | 29 |
| 2.2.8 "Nurses also help you"                              | 29 |
| 2.3 Conclusion  | 30 |

<b>3</b>	<b>Poverty</b>	<b>31</b>
3.1	The right to life, the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to social security.	32
3.2	Children's experiences	32
3.2.1	"You feel that you are going to be poor and hungry"	32
3.2.2	"I work for my uncle and people in the village"	35
3.2.3	"I need food. I need clothes. I need a house "	35
3.2.4	"My grandmother needs a grant – she cannot cope"	37
3.3	Conclusion	38
<b>4</b>	<b>Stigma and discrimination</b>	<b>39</b>
4.1	The right to be protected from unfair discrimination	40
4.2	Children's experiences	40
4.2.1	"Your mother brought you into this world but she doesn't give you support"	40
4.2.2	"If somebody [in the household] is HIV+, children live with trauma"	41
4.2.3	"If you are HIV+, some taxi's don't allow you in"	41
4.2.4	"You get what you deserve"	42
4.2.5	"People run away from you"	43
4.2.6	"Other children don't play with me"	43
4.2.7	"They call him names like skinny bones"	44
4.2.8	"Talking, it heals inside"	44
4.2.9	"Information – yes!, discrimination – no!"	44
4.2.10	"I have been educating people"	45
4.2.11	"Teach people to fight HIV, not me."	45
4.3	Conclusion	46
<b>5</b>	<b>Sexual abuse</b>	<b>47</b>
5.1	The right to be protected from sexual violence and abuse	48
5.2	Children's experiences	48
5.2.1	"The father touches the child"	48
5.2.2	"The wife doesn't have any choice"	50
5.2.3	"People think that HIV positive is cleaned by children"	50
5.3	Conclusion	50
<b>6</b>	<b>Losing a mother</b>	<b>51</b>
6.1	Children's experiences	52
6.1.1	"My mother suffered a lot and I saw how she suffered"	53
6.1.2	"They did not know that their mother had AIDS"	53
6.1.3	"When the mother dies – children suffer"	53
6.1.4	"You eventually have to leave school to fend for yourself."	56
6.2	Conclusion	56
<b>7</b>	<b>Children as caregivers and breadwinners</b>	<b>57</b>
7.1	The right to rest and to play and to be protected from exploitative labour practices	58
7.2	Children's experiences	58
7.2.1	"I don't have parents, it's just me and my sister"	58
7.2.2	"You have to go to school, but also to look after the baby"	59
7.2.3	"I herd cattle and goats"	60
7.3	Conclusion	62



# Contents

<b>8</b>	<b>The care of orphans</b>	<b>63</b>
8.1	The right to family care or alternative care if deprived of family care and the right to be protected from abuse	64
8.2	Children's experiences	64
8.2.1	"This is my family"	64
8.2.2	"My grandmother gives me power"	65
8.2.3	"[She] will treat them better because they are the children of her sister"	65
8.2.4	"Some relatives ... have big beautiful houses, but bad hearts"	67
8.3	Conclusion	68
<b>9</b>	<b>Religious Institutions</b>	<b>69</b>
9.1	Children's experience	70
9.1.1	"At church they give us support"	70
9.1.2	"People walk out of church when the child comes in"	70
9.1.3	"Most people believe in the preacher...they believe he is a man of God"	71
9.2	Conclusion	72
<b>10</b>	<b>Care for the carers</b>	<b>73</b>
10.1	Children's experiences	74
10.1.1	"They taught me that I am special"	74
10.1.2	"I thought that I would have no future"	75
10.2	Conclusion	76
<b>11</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b>	- Acknowledgements	81
<b>Appendix 2</b>	- The organisations that participated	83
<b>Appendix 3</b>	- A description of the child participatory activities	84
<b>Appendix 4</b>	- A Song	86
<b>Appendix 5</b>	- Follow up activities and media coverage	87
<b>Appendix 6</b>	- Children's experiences of the forum	88