AIDS-EDUCATION THROUGH PUPPET- AND DEVELOPMENT THEATRE

SETTING UP OPEN BASIC EDUCATION/COMMUNITY NETWORK CENTRES

Dr. K.D.P. HOFFMANN, M.Ed.
Hirschgas 5
D-69120 HEIDELBERG
kdrhoffmann@yahoo.de

NAIROBI-HEIDELBERG 2008/9
CONTENTS

1. PRECONDITIONS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT WORK
   1.1 Basic Conditions
   1.2 Prime Strategies and Fundamental Components of Puppetry

2. HIV/AIDS LEARNERS NETWORK – PUPPET THEATRE APPROACHES AND EDUCATIONAL CONSEQUENCES
   2.1 Lessons Learnt
   2.2 Multi-functional Puppeteers as Community and Development Educators

3. THE USE OF MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PUPPETRY IN ENTERTAINMENT-EDUCATION
   3.1 Set Targets
   3.2 Roles and Indicators Involved

4. TEACHER AIDS-EDUCATION AND HIGH-PRIORITY TEACHING/LEARNING INTERVENTIONS
   4.1 Changing the Traditional Teaching Practice
   4.2 HIV-Puppetry Training for Teachers

5. APPLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF BEST-PRACTICE EDUCATIONAL PUPPET-THEATRE MODELS
   5.1 Conceptual Framework and Integrative Principles
   5.2 Puppetry Techniques and Basic Pilot Approaches
   5.3 Training Workshop Modules

6. BASIC PROCEDURES FOR PUPPETRY-PROGRAMMES
   6.1 Fundamentals and Potentials
   6.2 Primary Educational Puppetry Model-Types (Children/Youths)
   6.3 Specific Communicative Play Project Modules

7. MAIN PROJECT MODULES AND PRIME NETWORK-TRAINING ACTIVITIES
   7.1 Youth-to-Youth Action Teams
   7.2 Girl Child Lifeguard
   7.3 Primary Teacher/School Action for Better Health Education
   7.4 AIDS-Outreach/Skills Training Centre
   7.5 Edu-Clowns Against AIDS
   7.6 Mobile/Forum Puppet Theatre for Deprived Groups
1. PRECONDITIONS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT WORK

1.1 BASIC CONDITIONS

The most recent statistics show that the HIV/AIDS infection rates in the youth and school populations are increasing at an alarming rate. Profound expert findings support the conclusions that a great deal of the existing HIV/AIDS awareness and education programmes only have limited overall impact on the most concerned target groups, e.g. socially excluded youth communities, out-of school aids-orphans or infected teenage girls in rural areas.¹

Particularly these Health/Education Care efforts do not substantially take into account the ways in which gender inequality, child sexual abuse (esp. girls in the 6 - 12 years age group) or gender-based violence put young women at excess risk. Significantly, a lot of AIDS-Education Actions – esp. the ABC-approach² – fail to integrate functionally efficient support programmes, such as community-based genderising prevention efforts, life-skills development training modules adapted to local conditions or network-oriented youth-driven initiatives.

Evidence shows that participatory, synergetic AIDS-Education implementation strategies are supposed to include:

- networking peer education/counselling measures for adults and children
- multi-tiered educative approaches combined with cross-sectional health treatment modules
- community activism by music, dance, theatre groups and edutainment strategies
- multi-media campaigns, clown- and puppet shows embedded into follow-up community (theatre) actions.

By using the coordinative and connecting link of continuous participatory educational theatre such holistic activities are in the appropriate position to mobilize the full range of community members (leaders, parents, youth, teachers), 1and to create a high awareness degree of helping others affected by the disease.

1.2 PRIME PROJECT STRATEGIES AND FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENTS OF PUPPETRY

Didactic, Community and Campaign Theatre-Actions serve multi-dimensional purposes in the context of overall community-based AIDS-Education interventions. They equally contribute to the empowerment and skills multiplication of in-school, out-of-school and relevant local training programmes.

¹Hoffmann, Klaus: Das Zigira-Primary-School-Projekt als Grundlagen-Modell für eine Alternative Netzwerk-Konzeption “Offene Grundbildung für Alle, Kwale District, Kenia (SES/Bonn), Heidelberg 2007 www.ibw.uni-heidelberg.de

² A is abstain, B for be faithful (and be tested) and C for wear a Condom consistently!
Significantly, those special International Development Agencies or NGOs, using increasingly Community and Puppet Theatre as a part of their information campaigns, consequently improved their comprehensive service packages (e.g. voluntary counselling, testing and follow-up care). Moreover, they also reached especially through the guise of a clown or through the use of puppetry a higher potential of persuasiveness, an increased awareness of actual risk and even stimulated cooperation across neighbouring villages.

The advantages of using Community, Campaign and Puppet Theatre in combination with Coordinative Basic Education Network Programmes (for all) are evident:

- they are more part of the culture and life-style of local home-based people
- as collective pedagogical methods they spark off community actions
- their low costs make it possible to apply them regularly
- because of direct interaction between communicator/edutainer/puppet and audience.

Such Educational, Theatrical AIDS-Network key activities will reach a larger number of underprivileged, grassroot people, and their overall Community Development Theatre Strategies motivate the regarding high priority target groups to more active participation.

2. HIV-AIDS LEARNERS NETWORK – PUPPETRY APPROACHES AND EDUCATIONAL CONSEQUENCES

2.1 LESSONS LEARNT

Although it is sufficiently known among critics and experts that the indicated theatrical community pilot projects are one of the most promising multi-sectoral, sustainable approaches in fighting HIV/AIDS, the appropriate Education Network support programmes are at an initial stage.

Particularly, in Southern and Eastern Africa exemplary Educational Puppetry Programmes and “Puppets against AIDS” Campaigns as well as Community Theatre Outreach Programmes have been undertaken to develop special communication-, learner-oriented- and awareness strategies:

- with the aim of taking the HIV/AIDS messages to the people in the streets – quite literally
- to provide interactive social life-skills education to disadvantaged communities in different regional contexts

---

3 EDU-Clowns, Blossom Trust, addressing HIV/AIDS in Tamilnadu, Southern India (TAPE), was founded in 1986.
Comp. arepp: Theatre for Life Trust became synonymous with Puppets Against Aids and began work in the streets in South Africa

4 African Research and Educational Puppetry Programme (arepp) Comp. CHAPS (FPPS) Kenya
to support In-School Programmes on health and drug misuse awareness (new life-skills-oriented curricula)
- to deal with the different aspects of sexuality (e.g. abuse, discrimination, sex and relationships, child-prostitution)
- to provide step-by-step guidelines for encouraging self-esteem and self-image etc., combined with basic skills acquisition modules
- to integrate leadership training programmes and home visitation projects

The South African arepp: Theatre for Life-Trust pilot programmes not only integrated their Adult-Aids puppet shows with a condom demonstration and a facilitated Question-Answer discussion but also provided special field-work groups with guidelines for making puppets and performing simple puppetry techniques.

The most important results of this singular first long-term community-based Puppetry Theatre project are based upon the close cooperation between national AIDS-programmes, health care strategies and the education sector.

In general, substantial testimonies, however, confirm that the developed network puppetry programmes (in Sub-Saharan Africa) should be coordinated more efficiently with the regarding education sectors at the national level. Additionally, they fail to be connected sufficiently with parallel community-based medical/material and counselling support projects, e.g. youth/students-AIDS controll organisations (in different regional areas).

Simultaneously, these promising multisectoral Popular, Development and Puppetry Theatre resp. AIDS-Education programmes need much more unified lobby and advocacy support actions from (alternative) NGOs and international development agencies.

2.2 MULTI-FUNCTIONAL PUPPETEERS AS COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT EDUCATORS

According to the current state of Didactic, Popular and Puppet Theatre forms it has been realised that integrative AIDS-campaigning based on the direct interaction between communicator/actor and audience/spectators plays a crucial role.

By creating awareness with the help of the puppets in different roles (from down-to-earth to provocative settings) and combined with quiz-talk shows as well as multi-media edutainment, the actors will ensure that their educative care-messages come across to everybody in the audience.

Ideally, the theatrical plays that are concerned with different community, school or youth sections should be developed and created at the appropriate time by the members/network learners of the target group themselves. The youth-led grassroot Learners Network (Western Cape/South Africa) demonstrates that youth leadership capacities and young team facilitators create space for real dialogue and have a direct impact on their age communities.5

If there is to be improvement and expansion of youth-related training projects in the related communities, however, it is also of comparative advantage to establish multifunctional puppet theatre projects.

The Community Health Awareness Puppeteers (CHAPS) in Kenya, introduced by the Family Planning Private Sector (FPPS), represent an exemplary multi-sectoral approach that assigns a lead role to youth in community-based puppetry training programmes. Moreover, the Kenyan puppeteers and performers act as conversation starters or catalysts, promoting discussion, accelerating problem-solving processes, and thus acting on cross-sectional HIV-intervention issues, arising from the multi-dimensional theatrical presentations.

Similarly to the REPACTED (Community Theatre for Behaviour Change and Abstinence)\(^6\) particularly focussed on girls, community members are to be exemplarily encouraged to take the role of puppets or even take the role of actors in the puppet drama, guided by the facilitator.

Distinctive features of this multi-disciplinary community theatre presentation are its focus on the empowerment of the grassroot people and the creation of a high degree of ownership and commitment from the youth resp. community members involved.

While incorporating existing theatrical genres and a combination of songs, dancing or visual aids, the relevant Community Theatre and Puppetry Shows create best-awareness in HIV/AIDS and STD’s in education, entertainment and therapy (comp. Edupuppets 2002)\(^7\)

### 3. THE USE OF MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PUPPETRY IN ENTERTAINMENT-EDUCATION

#### 3.1 SET TARGETS

The overall strategies of Educational Puppetry Models are ranging from state-of-the-art sound drama systems to life-size puppet and clown theatre HIV-programmes. In such a way they create the ability to entertain and educate any age group as well as people at different levels of literacy.

Substantially the success of the multi-disciplinary puppets in Education-Entertainment actions is due to:

- edutainment in all forms, e.g. from multi-media education and skills-development workshops to teaching school children about HIV/AIDS

---

\(^6\)Rapid Effective Participatory Action in Community Theatre Education and Development (REPACTED)

\(^7\)Edu-Puppets (Kenya): The only pure puppetry festival in Sub-Saharan Africa combining performances with new communication skills, skill-development workshops and monitoring activities
- performances in open-air communal spaces with no conceptual boundaries between the actors and the audience
- universal puppetry principles of visual action, motion, simplification and exaggeration
- openness to change experimentation and innovation between performers and audiences
- multi-functional interrelating theatrical roles between life-edutainer, masked puppeteer/edutainer, Campaign/Development Puppeteer and life-audiences in a single performance

3.2 ROLES AND INDICATORS INVOLVED

In the context of grassroots community actions and spontaneous methods of edutainment the synergetic Puppet Development Theatre forms should also lay special emphasis on the Edu-Clowns.8

Masked Edutainers resp. puppeteers in the guise of a clown help to facilitate feedbacks, to encourage follow-up community actions and to break the rigidity posed by societal stigmas. It has been observed that the involvement of edutainment, puppeteering and clownish performances help to raise consciousness, and to achieve more probably a change of behaviour, especially related to the AIDS-affected target audience.

The visual and metaphoric theatrical multi-functional roles and actions in the essence of puppetry and its appealing principles (reduction, distortion and simplification) are most effective Health-Awareness strategies to provide psycho-social support.

In this context Campaign and Participatory Puppetry actions should take into special account the marginalized target communities, homeless youths, disabled groups and traumatised children.

4. TEACHER AIDS-EDUCATION AND HIGH-PRIORITY TEACHING/LEARNING INTERVENTIONS 9

4.1 CHANGING THE TRADITIONAL TEACHING PRACTICE

One of the most important steps in the overall AIDS-Education related project activities lie in the new multi-teared societal roles teachers, teacher trainers and educational administrators are confronted with.

---

8EDU-Clowns created a down-to-earth awareness-manner in the cultural rigidity of Southern India and actively encouraged creative follow-up community actions

9Comp. Hoffmann, Chapters 5 and 6
Although it is difficult to reliably measure the actual changes of these target groups, decisive evaluation results show \(^{10}\) that the increasing expertise in quality teaching and active learning has not factually contributed to improve the quality of practical AIDS-Education

Rather than providing psycho-social support or integrating AIDS-related behavioral skills the teachers or teacher educators mostly focus exclusively on technical skills, e.g. the use of guides and handbooks. Unless innovative AIDS-Network Projects do address the teachers’ own sexual behaviours and their own HIV-attitudes, the numerous developing pilot AIDS-projects will have shortlived/limited results in the context of their heralded community action approaches.

4.2 HIV-PUPPETRY TRAINING FOR TEACHERS AND TEACHER EDUCATORS

In helping to sort out these failings and to tackle the increasing care for HIV/AIDS infected/affected school populations and teachers, the proposed multi-sectoral project modules should include the training of sufficient numbers of teachers, teacher trainers and peer educators.

The success of the combined HIV-Puppetry-Training is due to the following factors:

- to create a higher degree of self-awareness, ownership and commitment from the teaching and school classes
- to focus on other issues of social concern besides HIV/AIDS
- to enact theatrical plays by competition, with prizes given and driven by training-grants etc.
- to address the Teacher Matter\(^{11}\) challenges and issues in a self-active and interactive learning method
- to apply to all educational agents - responsible for introducing change into their respective systems - an indigineous multidisciplinary strategy.

The multidisciplinary methodology of Special Teacher Training/HIV-Education Puppetry Programmes will help to transform schools into safer places, as well as strengthen the challenging community actions and the roles of trainers, peer educators and (in-service) teachers. \(^{12}\)

\(^{10}\)ibid. Basic Education Network Center Kwale District

\(^{11}\)see also USAID: Education for Marginalized Children of Kenya (EMACK), 2006 and Kenya School Improvement Programmes (KENSIP), 2000

\(^{12}\)It is not uncommon for the educational system in Kenya (evaluation results at coastal Kenya! ) to be a threatening environment for girls (sexual harassment or forced sexual relations by teachers and school administrators). Teachers often give preference to boys and discriminate against girls in school classes.

\(^{11}\)TM=Teacher Matter and the two-sided teacher roles in fighting HIV/AIDS through Education. Comp. Hoffmann, ch. 6.3, 7.2,

\(^{12}\)Comp. In-Service Teacher Training Programmes for AIDS-Education comp. ibid.
5. APPLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF BEST-PRACTICE EDUCATIONAL PUPPET-THEATRE MODELS

5.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND INTEGRATIVE PRINCIPLES

The puppet is by nature a visual metaphor and symbol - in particular combinations with other performance disciplines - which has the ability to educate and entertain any age group and people at different levels of literacy.

The concept of the multidisciplinary puppet-theatre as an applied art creates meaningful interactions and enables people of all ages to pass across messages they otherwise would not communicate. Particularly, the use of puppetry in Entertainment-Education creates the possibility of applying and transferring the basic interrelationship between the masked entertainer, mime artist, the various roles of the puppeteer on the one side and the life audience on the other side.

All these performances open up change, experimentation and innovation by dealing with taboos or sensitive social issues, such as family planning, sexually transmitted infections, gender discrimination or teenage pregnancy.

By taking on the role of a caricature, abused girl, socio-political critic, two-faced instructor or musician the puppeteers create critical thought, self image and mobilization.

Remarkably, the multidisciplinary principles of puppetry and entertainment-education actions correlate with indigenous performances (in open-air communal spaces) in Subsaharan African countries where puppets like other types of African sculpture are part of the culturally standardized sets of rituals.\(^\text{13}\)

These qualities of traditional African theatre – actually exemplified in Gary Friedman’s ‘Puppets Agains Aids’ or in Kenya’s CHAPS\(^\text{14}\) – offer puppetry elements in a flexible and adaptable performance. Furthermore they stimulate the audience participation or motivate the audience members to a call-and-respond participative role play.

5.2 PUPPETRY TECHNIQUES AND BASIC PILOT-APPROACHES

Puppetry is indeed a diverse applied art form in which the puppet can be a miniaturized figure (hand puppets, stick puppets) or a gigantic structure (large hand-crafted puppets) manipulated

\(^{13}\)Such performance traditions associated with a socially relevant communal festivity are operated in an astonishing variety of methods e.g. in Mali, Burundi, Congo or Ivory Coast

\(^{14}\)Comp. Community Health Awareness Puppeteers, Kenya
by several puppeteers or by a single puppet-player acting as masked edutainer, musician and actor at the same time.

In the context of the submitted conceptualization the various AIDS-related Puppetry Programmes shall accordingly be mainly connected with Education-Entertainment strategies, in order to encode and promote the aims of project-driven Theatre for Development, Community and Campaign Theatre.

Hereby the educational performances range from object theatre, plays with wood, metals, plants or making a simple mouth puppet from a sock\(^1\), to a multidisciplinary community theatre show with a single actor to breathe life into various puppet figures.

In helping to address mainly the issues of youth in-school and out-of-school these awareness-raising Theatre Campaigns should e.g. enact short plays on HIV/AIDS themes with prizes given or youth audience participation such as music presentation, comedy role plays or talent-related clown edutaining.

Occasionally the introduction of life size puppets into the complete interactive theatrical processes will the more enable people living in youth and marginalized communities to create stories which reflect their genuine lives.

5.3 TRAINING WORKSHOP MODULES

The relevant training workshop programmes – in close interrelation with local artists – offer a competitive curriculum which brings together street theatre, the visual art and single performances in the context of small Community Puppetry Action Teams.

The Puppet Theatre Network Project provides interested, talented trainees with step-to-step guidelines on choosing and making puppets, setting up creative peer education modules or bringing forward artistic perspectives, to break the barrier of silence surrounding HIV/AIDS.

The fundamental Pilot Workshop Modules include the following particulars:

- types of puppets and their roles
- teaching children and marginalized groups fundamental life skills with puppetry
- transforming HIV/AIDS issues into action-learning and new awareness-processes
- the puppetry art of expression and narration to unfold the HIV course knowledge (attitudes, practice essentials etc.)
- development of multi-style performances, e.g. clown theatre and simple puppetry role plays for disabled target groups.

---

\(^1\) See Annex: Table 1

Ministry of Education: Secondary Level, Teacher’s Guide to the School Health Kit on AIDS Control. Kampala, Uganda (no publication date)
6. BASIC PROCEDURES FOR PUPPETRY PROGRAMMES

6.1 FUNDAMENTALS AND POTENTIALS

Due to the multifold social and personal dimensions of the AIDS-related diseases, the Network Puppeteers use multidisciplinary theatrical plays and edu-entertainment in all forms. By using various theatre forms and having community members participate, the producers/actors ensure the suggested solution is in accordance with life and socio-cultural values in the regional area.

Ideally, the puppeteers work together with local participants, other theatre groups, community workers etc., and make sure, that the specified preparation/training programmes include the puppet-production from local materials.

All the plays about AIDS should consider that it is not sufficient to merely give facts about the transmission, or to propose a monogamous life-style as the only solution resp. to focus exclusively on one topic.

Through the identification with the puppet characters the audience should see its own life depicted and rather than laughing off the problems, the topic AIDS is supposed to involve the spectators both on an emotional and cognitive level (followed by post-performance discussions).

In particular the multidimensional AIDS-Education messages should come across to children/youths before they become sexually active. It is the special function of the puppeteer to transform the customary dry didactic lesson materials resp. wait-and-see-attitudes into interactive forms of realistic, responsible and responsive life-skills learning strategies.

6.2 PRIMARY EDUCATIONAL PUPPETRY PLAY-TYPES (FOR CHILDREN/YOUTHS)

Plays addressing this highly important target groups could contain:

- the immune system and how it works inside the human body: blood cells personified, white blood cells as soldiers, immune system as super hero, virus as ogre and various puppet characters
- myths and misunderstandings about HIV/AIDS, healthy choices, transmission (mosquitoes, playing with someone who is infected): the puppeteer (plus masked edutainer) encourages debates around these issues, and in an informative, educative and simple way separates the fact from the fiction
- the primary aim is to show correct behaviour as opposed to the wrong one; the different puppet characters enter upon spontaneous dialogues with spectators
- participatory puppetry story-telling sessions (eventually prepared by an infected person!) and the anti-conventional edutaining puppeteer acting as clown (breaking the barrier of shame), as learning facilitator – (also in the role of a lion, elephant or another heroic leading animal in African folk/fairy tales).
6.3 SPECIFIC COMMUNICATIVE PLAY-PROJECT MODULES

In addition to the above exemplary case strategies the play project scenes cover awareness/attitude settings towards those people who already are infected.

Accordingly, special emphasis will be laid on a multi-function form of the puppet theatre and fairy folk tales – depicting visions, fairy figures and reality in the context of health giving forces and educative suggestions. On the cognitive level, the playwrights try to convince spectators they have to change their attitudes (e.g. transmission of AIDS), and on the affective, subconscious level the appeal is to traditional moral, social values!

In order to strengthen the direct interaction between puppetry communicators and different audiences, health educators (incl. the puppet’s role) should be present/active to make the adequate adjustments to the reaction of the spectators.

Consequently, the project’s strong focus on educating children/youths and to promote youth-to-youth development strategies in connection with youth-related training projects serves that integrated project purpose!

To mobilize and increase holistic, integral support for the concerned prime target-groups the proposed puppetry/training programmes resp. scripts for puppet plays particularly aim at:

- preparation of various types of puppet characters (young girl – sugar daddy) and their manipulation techniques
- story-telling community sessions supported by the Communicative Puppet, live puppeteer and learning experience facilitator in one single performance role (script: Living With AIDS)
- production and presentation of puppet plays based upon Counselling and Therapeutic Project Strategies (suitable themes according to the participatory concerns/target audience)
- promotion of Workshop Training Programmes “The Role of Puppetry in Education and Therapy” as a multidisciplinary, dynamic art form, that particularly appeals to and motivates educators, trainers, peer educators of all age-groups.

7. MAIN PROJECT MODULES AND PRIME NETWORK-TRAINING ACTIVITIES

7.1 YOUTH-TO-YOUTH ACTION TEAMS

The proposed youth-to-youth initiatives play a front-line role to combat the spread of HIV among children/young people, and to increase/mobilize community activism in all stages of AIDS-Education project-implementation.

By providing quality workshops and training sessions to their peers the trained young Educators and Puppet Theatre actors cause multifold responsive, educative actions, and thus
encourage other youths for continuous participatory community strategies/social work activities.

The youth-led grassroot/young leadership training network programmes not only involve further trainings but also run alongside other life-skills - , network community-projects and gear towards talent-hunting (as media entertainer, professional puppet producer, social educator etc.).

Furthermore there are intentions to draft certain ‘Love-Life’ or special educative (e.g. TEPA=Teach English by Preventing AIDS) network-programmes and to transfer different project-modules into regular monthly gatherings.

7.2 GIRL CHILD LIFEGUARD

The project focuses on the girl child and the future young women who suffer from sexual harassment, domestic violence, sex work, HIV-infection as well as an enormous lack of educational and hygiene support bases.

The Lifeguard programmes provide the children in the 6-12/14 years age group with assertive and protective strategies as well as future social implications through the medium of puppet theatre.

In addition, special girl groups perform interactive puppetry plays on a variety of behaviour change and gender-sensitivity issues in helping affected children to gain self-confidence or to explore ways in which they can say NO. Substantially the Lifeguard Girls’ AIDS-Education Puppetry Programmes shall be based both on peer education techniques and on adequate developmental/vocational training skills to reduce poverty (e.g. by art-forms painting, bead making, knitting, puppet production, sculptures, TEPA).

7.3 PRIMARY TEACHER/SCHOOL ACTION FOR BETTER HEALTH EDUCATION

The priority project objective lies in training teacher educators/teachers in the multi-functional use of puppet theatre targeted at interactive Entertainment-Education- and Psychosocial Teaching/Learning Methods (comp. 4.2).

At the end of the leadership training the overall strategy of the AIDS-Education methodology includes not only identifying infected and affected pupils but also creating learning activities in order to build up self-efficacy together with didactic instructions (e.g. School Health Kits) and medical/counselling structures.

According to the In-Service Teacher Action Programmes each participatory community resp. intervention school will be alternately provided with workshop training sessions (2 – 3 weeks) associated with Community Action Teams and pupil peer-supporters.
The methodology of forming a network of trained teachers and a target youth group of pupil-leaders, and then creating a Community Popular/Puppetry Action Team will prove effective in creating a high degree of commitment from the youth involved.

However, those Community Theatre interventions especially connected with Edu-tainment Puppetry will foremost scale up awareness programmes for out-of-school and illiterate youths.

7.4 AIDS-OUTREACH SKILLS TRAINING CENTRE

This model is an integral component of all other Community Theatre/Puppetry-AIDS-Awareness project activities, and mainly seeks to address socially excluded youth communities, out-of-school AIDS-orphans, homeless youths or street children.

The project-based counselling and guidance centre acts as longterm training support-base by promoting AIDS-awareness and drug misuse strategies with the help of multi-disciplinary Puppet Theatre. By addressing the issues of self-help, vocational skills provision and basic learning needs in special connection with creative arts, short puppetry plays, music, dance or multi-edutainment events, the training measures also further sustainable livelihoods for the youth involved.

Particularly talented groups are to be trained in the art of puppetry, puppet design and construction, installations in performance and theatrical presentations. In this way they are integrated into a new socio-economic process, with the marketable skills they acquire and the income through puppeteering.

7.5 EDU-CLOWNS AGAINST AIDS

The Puppet Theatre Training Project particularly includes homeless/street-involved youths not only to initiate puppetry scenarios (e.g. in conjunction with entertainment-media) but also to facilitate concrete HIV-Awareness Actions by means of Edu-Clown-Campaigning.

Evidence shows that these underprivileged, deprived target groups are most appropriate and quite talented to tailor their resourceful Clown-Theatre performances to the rural youth populations’ level of comprehension and needs.

The humorous, straightforward messages of the guised clowns and their simple native languages mixed with songs, puppet plays and entertainment-media help to ventilate/discuss the serious issues of AIDS-infection in a lighter vein and in a more personal attitude. Edu-Clowns in combination with short Popular Puppeteering also prove more effective in maintaining interaction, encouraging debates, and thus in allowing individuals in the audience to come up with open-minded solutions.

As far as is possible medical staff and the regarding counseling health personell should be directly involved in each session-show before and after the performances.
7.6 MOBILE-FORUM PUPPET THEATRE FOR DEPRIVED/HANDICAPPED TARGET GROUPS

Before every touring campaign (3 or 4 regional communities) the entire project team undergoes an initial 2 weeks’ interactive, participative workshop-training in conjunction with expertise in follow-up peer group counseling courses. The Mobile-Forum Puppet Theatre Models provide the most adaptive communication channels and instructive strategies for rural, marginalized community groups in the special context of basic AIDS-Education and social therapy.

Substantially the Forum Media-Puppetry Theatre Types, including songs, visual arts, role plays, drumming, dancing are largely based on indigeneous African traditions resp. on the nature of the multiform entertaining and information sharing folk media.

An important element in the combined informational and therapeutical HIV/AIDS-awareness Forum Shows lies in the creative interactions and participatory sensitive, solution-oriented reactions between the actors and the illiterate, deprived parts of the audience.

On the other hand the associated Mobile Community/Puppet Theatre employs Media Edutainment strategies especially to provide home-based care, visitation to the bedridden and welfare services for respective health units of AIDS-patients.

Accordingly this Mobile Action Media Puppetry Approach mainly focuses on psycho-social support strategies for rural vulnerable deprived groups, (incl. autistic and traumatized youths/children) as well as HIV/AIDS infected handicapped village people.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


DED: AIDS-Arbeit in der Praxis, Bonn 2004

ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE: Keep the Promise. A Teaching resource on advocacy and HIV and AIDS, Kampala 2004


GTZ: The GTZ Approach to Mainstreaming AIDS, Eschborn 2006


HOFFMANN, K.D.P: Das Zigira-Primary-School Projekt als Grundlagenmodell für eine Alternative Netzwerk-Konzeption. „Offene Grundbildung für Alle“, Heidelberg/Bonn(SES) 2007


SCRIPTURE UNION: Adventure Unlimited. Lifeskills for an AIDS-Free Generation, Bulawayo 1993