

# **JESUIT CENTRE FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

*Our vision is to have a society where faith promotes justice for all in all spheres of life especially for the poor.*

## **JCTR response to HIV and AIDS**

### ➤ **Promoting a “Society where Faith Promotes Justice”...**

- The Vision of the *Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection* (JCTR) is a society where faith promotes justice for all in all spheres of life, especially for the poor.
- The Mission of the JCTR is to foster, from a faith-inspired perspective based on theological reflection, a critical understanding of current issues that will generate action for positive change.
- The Work of the JCTR involves research, advocacy and education on development issues, including the Church’s Social Teaching, cost of basic needs, trade justice, access to education and health, etc.
- The Structure of the JCTR includes 3 projects, namely the Church’s Social Teaching Project, the Social Conditions Research Project and the Debt and Trade Project.

### ➤ **Uplifting a Justice Perspective to HIV and AIDS...**

- “There is a strong synergy between the AIDS epidemic and four basic root causes: poverty; gender disparities and power structures; stigma and discrimination; and exploitative global and economic structures and practices” – (HIV and AIDS: A Justice Perspective – Michael Kelly, S.J.)
- “AIDS and justice issues are so intimately linked that action on behalf of justice will almost automatically be action against the epidemic” (HIV and AIDS: A Justice Perspective – Michael Kelly, S.J.)

### ➤ **Researching HIV and AIDS Cross-Cutting Issues...**

- *Faith and AIDS* – HIV and AIDS poses a challenge for practical faith, a faith that does justice
- *Basic Needs* – The cost of essential food and non-food items for an average family of six persons living in Lusaka cost K1, 517,100 in June 2007. In the majority of households unable to meet this cost of basic needs, persons face increased risk of contracting HIV due to poor nutrition, lowered immune systems, vulnerability to high-risk sexual behaviour (e.g., prostitution), etc. Furthermore, HIV and AIDS reinforces poverty situations as family sizes increase well beyond 6 persons, and those infected with HIV face challenges in accessing treatment without good basic nutrition.
- *Gender* – Following retrenchment of thousands of employees and an interrelated breakdown of many families, women have been forced to become primary income earners for their families. This has put pressure on many women to engage in high-risk sexual relationships.
- *Education* – The high direct and indirect costs of education, especially in urban areas and at secondary levels, continue to exclude vulnerable children, many of whom are AIDS orphans, from accessing adequate education. HIV prevalence decreases with increased educational attainment.
- *Social Protection* – The inadequate social protection measures by government leave those affected by HIV and AIDS, including orphans, elderly care-providers, widows, etc., in extreme poverty and with few livelihood choices. For those infected with HIV Social Protection should include nutritional support or capital / training for income generating activities to support themselves.
- *Debt* – Reduced income to families and expenditure on social services due to Government debt servicing exposes people to situations which compromise their moral choices
- *Trade* – The inability to fully access the benefits of trade because of unfair international trade rules, results in stifled economic and human development which is necessary to overcome the poverty conditions and power structures that perpetuate HIV and AIDS

### ➤ **Advocating for a Holistic Response to HIV and AIDS...**

- *Faith-filled Responses* - stamp out stigma and discrimination, promote a just sexuality attaching value to partner and oneself, and offer comprehensive sex education for the youth
- *Affordable Basic Needs* - increased agricultural production and more, better paying jobs
- *Social Protection for all* - scaled-up provision of the PWAS, Food Security Pack, micro-finance, etc. to the vulnerable, especially the care-givers for Zambia’s 1 million orphans
- *Education for all* - scaled-up school feeding programmes and bursaries targeted at vulnerable children, especially the girl-child
- *Trade Justice* - fair international trade like the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) that promote human development
- *Debt Sustainability* - just international socio-economic structures and practices e.g. WTO arrangements, World Bank and IMF conditionality, Prudent use of resources freed by debt relief, transparent and responsible borrowing to avoid another debt trap
- *Gender Equality*