

AIDS Awareness Program CECA 20

History

The AIDS Awareness Program started in 1999 when church leaders after a conference in Kenya acknowledged that AIDS was in the church. They assigned a coordinator. This man, Liki Muza, also was coordinator of education and he had easy access to the school with information about AIDS. He also started to teach in the local churches of Bunia. In 2002 Annemarie Boks, missionary of AIM, came to join him. Together they worked in Bunia. During that time they gave a three-day workshop to pastors and church members about counseling. Bunia however was not safe and Annemarie couldn't go back after having gone to Uganda for a short break. Fighting had erupted in town. The church leadership decided to move the AIDS office to Aru. Liki Muza arrived there with his family in February 2003. The focus of the ministry turned more to informing church leaders and Bible school students of CECA about AIDS and how they could assist people living with AIDS. They did this using a manual that had been developed in Kenya: 'Choosing Hope'. Financially it was a hard time for the program. Because of the situation in Bunia it was difficult to receive money, and the money received had the restriction that only a small percentage was meant for salaries. Also good lodging for Liki and his family was lacking. In the end it resulted in the resignation of Liki as coordinator of the program and Annemarie continued alone. She was helped in her ministry by several pastors with heart for the program. During this time several workshops were organized for Bible schools and pastors using 'Choosing Hope', among others in the Pazande region in the north of Congo. A new radio station started in Aru in November 2003 and the AIDS program could pass on information about AIDS in their allotted broadcasts.

In 2005 two coworkers joined, although the financial situation had not changed. Okusaru Ayagabho joined in February and was given the responsibility for the radio broadcasts, Drudra Titre joined in September and took over from Annemarie, because she went for furlough in November.

In 2007 Annemarie returned. AIM had decided together with CECA to move the office of the program to Adi. Notwithstanding that many activities still were taking place in Aru. Every week there were two radiobroadcasts. There was the teaching at schools (under which the French Bible school at the men's and women's section), the work with people living with AIDS continued and there were film shows with discussions. In Adi Annemarie came into contact with people of CIELS (Center of Information and Education about the Fight against AIDS) and with people living with AIDS. They were going to Arua in Uganda for their treatment with ARV. That often caused big problems for them. From Adi to Arua it is a trip of about 80 km. That took travel costs and immigration fees to be paid. Sometimes it was not possible to return the same day. People had to find accommodation for overnight. Annemarie decided to use part of the funding to help them.

In 2007 financial support was received through EZA/Prisma and Red een Kind (Help a Child). After contacts with the church leadership in Bunia they had agreed to support the AIDS Program. Funding was received from 2007-2010. In those years a lot has happened and the program could develop. After a visit from Red een Kind in October 2008 the decision was made to limit the activities to four health zones, those of Adi, Adja, Ariwara and Aru. In each of these zones one or two staff workers were responsible for the activities. In Adi, Ariwara and Aru people were present. The work in Adja was started only in 2010. The activities that developed during this period are still ongoing today. These are

the Support and Action Groups, the CARM – Clubs for mutual encouragement of people living with AIDS, support for orphans, film shows, radio work, teaching at schools ... the collaboration with the authorities in the health zones was also established.

Since 2009 the program focused as well on helping orphans. This project of Bethsaida, started when Annemarie came in contact with Mama Anna, a widow who had fled from Aba with orphans she took care of. A baby had been brought to her and this girl was struggling with her health. The program started to help Mama Anna with food and payment of the school fees of the children who went to school. The contacts with Mama Anna were difficult at times. On one side she was asking for people to help her, on the other side she also rejected this help. In the summer of 2013 Mama Anna left Bethsaida. The children, who then were still there, were brought to family who by that time were identified. The children are still supported with school fees. Other orphans are assisted with school fees too in all four health zones.

Goal of the AIDS Awareness Program

Create an openness about AIDS in the local communities where CECA churches are established as well as create a system of care and assistance for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).

How do we try to reach this goal?

We are working in a small team of six persons in four health zones (Adi, Adja, Ariwara and Aru) in the northeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo. We develop different projects to reach out to people with information about AIDS.

Our team

Annemarie Boks: manager of the AIDS Program. She is responsible for the administration and finances; fundraising; coordination and evaluation. She has a Master's in Community Health.

Okusaru Ayagabho (since 2005) and Alio Avudri (since 2007): staff workers in the health zone of Aru, where they organize all projects and activities. Both have a higher degree in Information, Education and Communication of ISPASC, Pan African Superior Institute of Community Health.

Bhayo Leku (since 2008): Staff worker in the health zone of Ariwara with the same tasks in the organization of all projects and activities. He was trained at the French Bible school (4 years) and followed a year course in Christian Education in the church. He worked for the program as a volunteer before 2008.

Likambo Mutro (since 2008): Staff worker in Adi. He worked after his secondary education as a teacher. He is now supported in his work by Margaret Badaru who has a higher degree in Information, Education and Communication as well. She works as a volunteer for the program.

Ayikoyo Alidra: Works as staff worker in Adja since 2010. He has a higher degree of ISPASC in management and administration.

For the rest we work regularly with volunteers, mainly people living with AIDS and who during sessions of teaching about AIDS give their testimony about living with it.

The projects

Support and Action Groups

The Support and Action Groups (SAG) are groups of volunteers in the local churches who are willing – after having been trained – to teach about AIDS in their community, to help people living with AIDS and orphans and to develop income generating activities, which will make them self-supporting. At the moment we work with 20 SAG of which most work well and they are active in creating income-generating projects. One SAG in Ariwara¹ did help 280 orphans with school fees over a period of six months (January-June 2014).

In the coming period of October 2014-December 2015 we want to create SAG in 20 other local churches. For this we need a total amount of \$8.000 (€6.092). For monitoring and evaluation of the existing SAG we ask an amount of \$2.000 (€1.523).

Creating awareness of young people about AIDS

The staff workers visit schools and show films in places where the youth gathers together. Also they organize discussion sessions and workshops where youth, staff and volunteers change thoughts about AIDS. During church youth conferences often our staff is asked to give information about AIDS and make a call for purity before marriage.

For the coming period of October 2014-December 2015 we want to visit 30 schools and organize 20 video shows, 5 workshops and 4 youth groups to be 'peer educators'. For this we need \$16.000 (€12.184). The equipment we use for the film shows needs to be replaced (bought in 2008-2009). A kit (with different equipment) costs \$1.500 (€1.142,25). Four kits costs \$6.000, or €4.569.

Care for people living with AIDS

The CARM (Club d'Aide et de Réconfort Mutuel)-groups make that people living with AIDS do not stand alone, but receive support from others who live in the same situation as they do. They can encourage each other, help one another and be there for the other. There are now 8 CARM-groups working in the four health zones. Each group is also working in income generating projects. Because this really just started, the staff workers regularly visit each group. Also they visit people living with AIDS in their homes. Since the beginning of 2014 ARV medication is available at the hospital in Adi and the staff workers are involved in follow-up of the adherence to the treatment. They then are able to give personal advice. To continue all these activities we ask for 2014-2015 a total amount of \$6.000 (€4.569).

Orphan care

Because of Bethsaida, the orphanage in Ingbokolo, we became more involved with orphans and the problems they face. One of these problems is school fees. Family often doesn't pay (their own children getting priority) and orphans are taken out of school to help in the gardens or at home. Bethsaida as such doesn't exist anymore, but we know enough orphans (more than 800). We want to help those kids that are extremely needy with their school fees and school equipment (like school uniforms and notebooks), and invite them to participate in activities where they learn more about God's love for them. For this ministry we need in total \$10.000 (€7.615). The work implies getting into contact with local authorities, school directors and tutors to be able to identify these kids who merit our assistance, to visit them in their schools and in the villages where they live start income generating projects, apart from also paying their school fees. For a child in primary school the amount comes to \$40 (€30,50) for school fees. For the other necessities the amount is around \$30 (€22,85) per child. For a child in secondary school the amounts are around \$60 (€45,70) and \$50 (€38,10) per year.

¹ Ariwara is a commercial city with lots of businessmen.

Media and literature

In three health zones radio stations organize broadcasts, and this enables us to broadcast about AIDS. We produced a movie in 2010 and plan to produce sequels to it. This is because the movies available to us are in English, French or Kenya Swahili. These are languages not fluently spoken by the local population. The language used in our movie is Bangala, the national language in the region where we minister. It reaches out to many more. Also we plan to write lesson materials to be used at schools and in the different cell groups in church. For these activities we need \$10.000 (€7.615).

Collaboration with medical authorities

In January 2014 the AIDS Awareness Program played a role in the organization of a training given by the National AIDS Program thanks to financial support found by us. The training took place and after that VCT has started. In the health zone of Adi a treatment program with ARV has slowly started. In Ariwara (for Ariwara and Adja) we would like to be able to organize the same training. This costs about \$30.000 (€22.845). We also work together with the medical authorities of Adi to organize the treatment program. For this we need \$5.000 (€3.807,50). A CD4 count-machine (a machine that counts the white blood cells involved in the fight against HIV) costs \$31.891 (€24.285). This machine is important for the decisions to treat with ARV.

Overhead and equipment.

Right now the staff uses their own motorbikes for their transport to different locations in their health zones. However, these are not suitable for the roads of Congo that are difficult to drive. A cross-bike, type Yamaha AG, would cost, with all the documents, \$5.000 (€3.807,50). We need four of them. A Landcruiser with documents costs \$20.000 (€15.230). The overhead costs for the administration will be around \$2.000 (€1.523) and for the salaries of the staff (who receive a compensation only for all the work they are doing) we mention \$7,500 (€5,711,25) in the budget. For their medical fees and family allowance we need \$10,000 (€7,615).

| Budget AIDS Awareness Program CECA 20, DR Congo | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| PROJECT | \$ | € | Exchange rate |
| Support and Action Groups (new) | \$8.000,00 | € 6.092,00 | 0,7615 |
| SAG Monitoring | \$2.000,00 | € 1.523,00 | |
| Create Awareness (activities) | \$16.000,00 | € 12.184,00 | |
| Film kits (4) | \$6.000,00 | € 4.569,00 | |
| Care for people with AIDS | \$6.000,00 | € 4.569,00 | |
| Care for orphans | \$10.000,00 | € 7.615,00 | |
| Media and literature | \$10.000,00 | € 7.615,00 | |
| Collaboration (training) | \$30.000,00 | € 22.845,00 | |
| Collaboration (treatment program) | \$5.000,00 | € 3.807,50 | |
| Collaboration (CD4 machine) | \$31.891,00 | \$24.285,00 | |
| Overhead and equipment (crossbikes-4) | \$20.000,00 | € 15.230,00 | |
| Overhead and equipment (landcruiser) | \$20.000,00 | € 15.230,00 | |
| Overhead and equipment (administration) | \$2.000,00 | € 1.523,00 | |
| Overhead and equipment (salaries) | \$7.500,00 | € 5.711,25 | |
| Overhead and equipment (medical fees and family allowance) | \$10.000,00 | € 7.615,00 | |
| TOTAL | \$184.391,00 | € 140.413,75 | |

Zoetermeer, 01/09/14

Annemarie Boks