



Research Report

World Health Organization

AGENDA ITEM

Recommending policies to aid the fight against HIV/AIDS in Botswana

Chairing Panel

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Introduction

Dear Delegates,

A wonderful welcome to each and every one of you. We hope you are as excited as we are to discuss and debate on this highly relevant topic. 360.000 people suffer from HIV in Botswana and counting. The government is using its budget to work against the increasing trend, but more has to be done to mitigate the effects of this deadly epidemic that has struck populations all around the world and claimed millions of lives. The countries present here today have to discuss this and reach a conclusion to resolve this matter. This is an issue of utmost importance.

*Sincerely,
Webster Woltersdorf and Lionel Welz*

Definition of Key Terms:

HIV: HIV is a variable retrovirus that invades and inactivates helper T cells of the immune system and is a cause of AIDS and AIDS-related complex. It is transmitted through blood, by sexual contact or contaminated hypodermic needles.

AIDS: AIDS is a disease of the immune system characterized by increased susceptibility to opportunistic infections.

Antiretroviral treatment: medication which slows down the progression of HIV in the human body.

NGO: A Non-Governmental-Organisation that aims to help affected parties.

General Overview

What is the issue?

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus, a.k.a. HIV, is a Sexually Transmitted Infection, a.k.a. STI, which infects the body's immune system preventing proper defense against disease-causing agents called pathogens. It is the deadliest epidemic of our time

At the end of 2016, approximately 36.7 million people were living with HIV. Since the start of the illness, which originated from chimpanzees, it has claimed 35 million lives worldwide. The alarming fact from all of this is that up until now, no cure has been found. Measures have been imposed, but many are expensive, rely on human resources and do not guarantee any success. This is also partly why Botswana and surrounding countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe have suffered so dramatically from HIV.

HIV has been an ever-present problem in many parts of Africa for many decades now. Often seen as a rarity in Western countries such as Germany, HIV, or the latter stages of the illness, AIDS, has claimed the lives of influential people with one of the most prominent people being Queen's lead singer Freddie Mercury.

Organisations such as the UNDP (*United Nations Development Programme*) are already doing a lot to mitigate the issue at hand. The UNDP is working closely together with the Government of Botswana (GoB) to educate people and send help to schools in the form of expert advice.

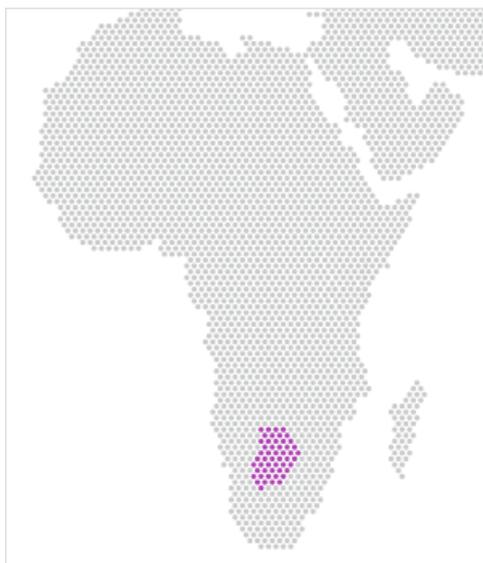
The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is a world-renowned organization that has also worked in Botswana. The primary objectives of these attempts were to distribute modern contraceptives to especially millions of girls and women. Despite these efforts, it is said that 1 in every 6 people in Botswana was infected by the HIV epidemic in 2010, which means that practically everyone is affected on a family basis.

Origin and History of the Issue

Ever since this epidemic caused widespread fear and death in society, there have been outstanding initiatives to solve the problem. Films such as *'Philadelphia'* starring Tom Hanks and Denzil Washington have spread awareness in the USA, which has led to a significant decrease in cases.

However, in Botswana, due to many different reasons, HIV is still a massive problem affecting populations.

'Botswana currently has the highest HIV prevalence rate in the world: more than one in every three adults is HIV-positive. Life expectancy had reached 65 years in 1990-1995, but it dropped to 56 years by 1995-2000 and is currently around 40 years as a result of deaths related to AIDS. The population will likely begin to decline within a few years. Although the full economic impact of HIV/AIDS is still to come, population projections for Botswana show a severe deficit of working-age people by 2025.'



Botswana (2016)

360,000 people living with HIV

21.9% adult HIV prevalence

10,000 new HIV infections

3,900 AIDS-related deaths

84% adults on antiretroviral treatment

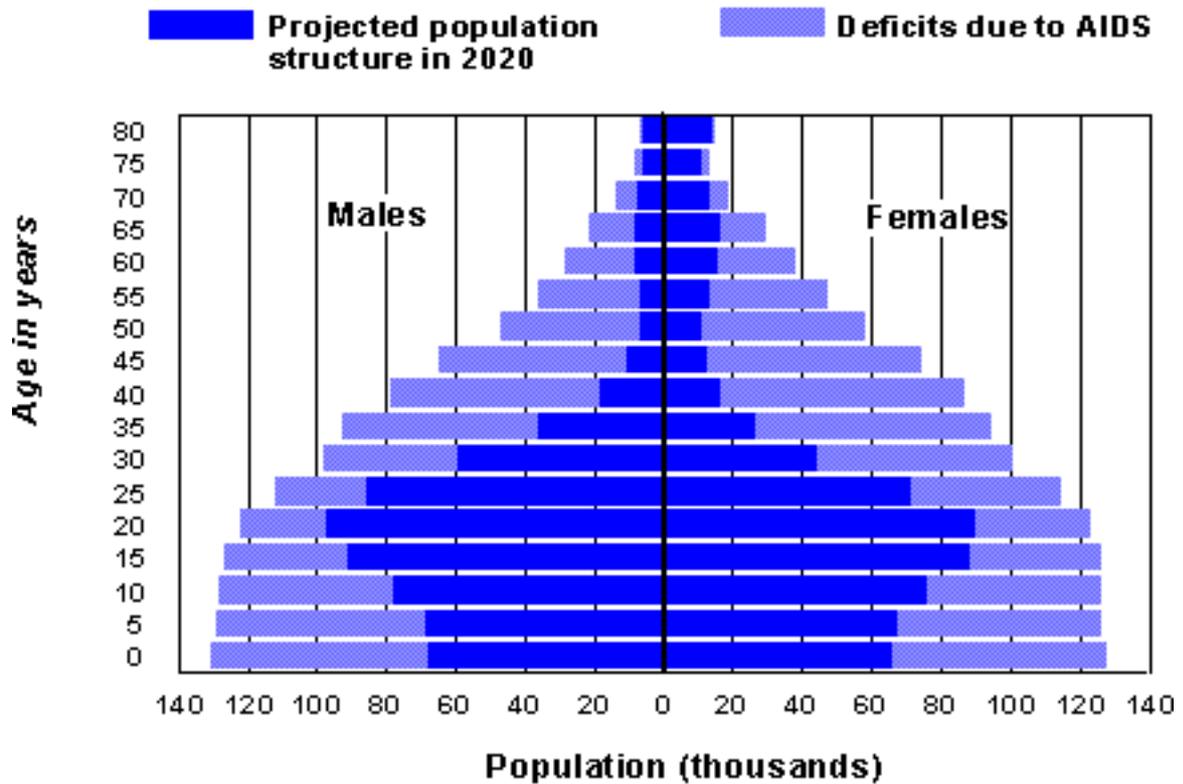
60% children on antiretroviral treatment

Source: UNAIDS Data 2017

Some of the impacts are:

- Children are left orphans
- Drastic decreases in the economically active population
- Poverty
- Helplessness

Projected population structure with and without the AIDS epidemic, Botswana, 2020



Source: US Census Bureau, World Population Profile 2000

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Current Situation and Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

¹<http://gingerbooth.com/coursewareCBC/neweco/demographics/readers/botswanapyramid.gif>





Botswana has been prevailing in the fight against HIV and AIDS. The country has implemented several programs, such as free antiretroviral testing (ART) and the prevention of mother to child transmission program (PMTCT). Also, HIV tests have become part of routinely check-ups, in governmental and private clinics. Condoms have been made

available to the population.

However, Botswana is still struggling to eradicate HIV. The programs currently in effect reach only 44.9% of the population. Also, ART is compromised by low testing rates and low levels of HIV knowledge². Major upscaling and education is required. Most of the international donors have reduced or wholly withdrawn their funds as a result of Botswana being a middle-income country. It is predicted that the costs of the HIV prevention programs will increase from the current \$274 million to \$339 million in 2030. Funding from the UN is required to keep reducing the number of HIV infections and deaths.

Possible Solutions

Specific measures have been taken into consideration, some have been implemented as stated above in the report, and some are still in progress. However, if this HIV epidemic in Botswana is to be tackled efficiently, we need the help of you, fellow MUN delegates. Education schemes, the distribution of modern contraceptives and the intervention of foreign NGOs are all good methods but need drastic improvement and reconsideration to strengthen the quality of life in this Southern African country. Therefore, we invite you to discuss and negotiate any ideas, solutions or measures to help mitigate the effects of this epidemic.

Appendix

“HIV and AIDS in Botswana.” *AVERT*, 6 Nov. 2017, www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-around-world/sub-saharan-africa/botswana.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - United Nations.

http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/AIDSimpact/22_EXEC_SUMMARY_English.pdf

World Health Organization: Recommending policies to aid the fight against HIV/AIDS in Botswana

<http://www.who.int/en/>

[Notable WHO achievements 2012](#)

[Notable WHO achievements 2013](#)

[World Health report 1998](#)

[World Health statistics 2010](#)

