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AIDS Free
Strengthening High Impact Interventions
for an AIDS-free Generation

ISLAMIC KHUTBAH GUIDE CHILDREN AND HIV

FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS




INERELA+ KENYA
International Network of Religious Leaders Living
with or personally affected by HIV - Kenya Chapter



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1. Sheikh Yusuf Nasur Abuhamza, Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM)
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3. Salim Wanganga Mohammed, Imam Council
4. Brother Abu Najma, Imam Council
5. Prof. Mohammed Karama, Vice Chancellor, Umma University

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AIDSFree

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JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc.

1616 Fort Myer Drive, 16th Floor

Arlington, VA 22209 USA

Phone: 703-528-7474

Fax: 703-528-7480

Web: aidsfree.usaid.gov

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DEFINITION OF PEDIATRIC GROUPS

(per World Health Organization)

Adolescent: A person between 10 and 19 years of age

Child: A person 18 years or younger

Infant: A child younger than one year of age

Youth: A person between 15 and 24 years of age

ACRONYMS

AIDS	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
AIDSFree	Strengthening High Impact Interventions for an AIDS-free Generation Project
ART	antiretroviral therapy
ARV	antiretroviral [drug]
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
PEP	post-exposure prophylaxis
PreP	pre-exposure prophylaxis
PLHIV	people living with HIV
SAVE	Safer Practices, Access to Treatment, Voluntary Counseling and Testing, Empowerment
VCT	voluntary counseling and testing
WHO	World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

Kenya is one of the four HIV high-burden countries in Africa; about 1.5 million people were living with HIV at the end of 2015. Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya, is ranked first in the country's HIV burden, with an HIV prevalence comparable to the national prevalence at 6.1 percent and contributing to 11.3 percent of the total number of people living with HIV in Kenya.¹ Pediatric HIV remains a significant challenge to the AIDS response. By the end of 2015, a total of 171,510 people were living with HIV in Nairobi County; of these, 14 percent were young people aged 15–24 years and 5 percent were children under the age of 15 years. Approximately 260 children and 2,177 adults died of AIDS-related conditions in 2015; and an estimated 614,000 children and adolescents (179,770 aged 0 to 14, and 435,224 aged 15 to 24) are living with HIV; of these, only 42 percent are receiving lifesaving care and treatment.

These challenges require solutions that can be adapted and sustained at the country level. To address these challenges, the Strengthening High Impact Interventions for an AIDS-free Generation (AIDSFree) Project is implementing a novel community approach to engage the faith sector as part of efforts to expand HIV care and treatment services in Kenya. An estimated 90 percent of Kenyans practice some form of religion, and religious leaders have an influential role on behavior change and social norms. Engaging the faith community is a largely untapped opportunity and has the potential to increase community knowledge; and attitude and practices, e.g., demand for and access to pediatric care and treatment services. These activities contribute to the Ministry of Health, Kenya efforts to achieve the 90–90–90 targets. This approach aims to have 90 percent of HIV-positive people know their HIV status; and out of those testing positive, 90 percent are put on HIV treatment; and out of those on treatment, 90 percent achieve viral suppression (minimal level of virus in the body).

This sermon guide was developed to empower religious leaders with a tool and skills to reach their congregational members with key messages on pediatric HIV transmission and prevention; stigma and discrimination; and treatment, care, and support, as well as male involvement in the whole HIV prevention and response continuum. The Khutbah sermon guide was developed in collaboration with religious leaders at the grassroots level and theologians in Nairobi, Kenya, taking cognizance of grassroots realities. Hence it is written to reflect the original tone and language used by the clergy and theologians who developed the sermon messages. This authenticity is preserved to ensure that the guide is adaptable to its primary audience, i.e., religious leaders in Nairobi, Kenya. However, the messages can be adapted to suit different country contexts.

¹ Kenya HIV Estimates, 2014, Ministry Of Health, Kenya

SECTION 1: HIV TRANSMISSION AND PREVENTION IN CHILDREN

Introduction

HIV Transmission

HIV stands for “human immunodeficiency virus” and is the virus that causes AIDS. AIDS is “acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.” There are 1.8 million children living with HIV and most of them got the virus from their mothers.

HIV is transmitted through:

- Unprotected sex with an HIV-positive person.
- HIV-positive woman to her baby during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding. 15–25 percent among infants who are formula-fed and 25–40 percent among infants who are breastfed.
- Blood from HIV-contaminated syringes, needles, or other sharp instruments.
- Transfusion with HIV-contaminated blood.

FACT:

**HIV IS NOT
TRANSMITTED
THROUGH CASUAL
CONTACT.**

HIV infection in children is aggressive; without treatment, half of the children living with HIV will die by their second birthday.

HIV Prevention in Children and Young People

In summary, preventing HIV transmission to children requires embracing the SAVE (Safer practices, Access to treatment, Voluntary HIV testing and counseling, Empowerment) prevention methodology.² The SAVE toolkit defines SAVE as:

- **Safer** practices covering all the different modes of HIV transmission: for example, blood transfusions, the use of condoms, and sterile needles for injections. Abstinence remains the most reliable method of avoiding exposure to sexually transmitted infections, but it must not be taught in isolation.
- **Access** to treatment—not just antiretroviral therapy (ART), but treatment for HIV-related infections as well as provision of good nutrition and clean water to support adherence to antiretrovirals (ARVs). Access also includes the availability of all pathological tests which can further inform treatment.
- **VCT** (voluntary counseling and testing) refers to the need to test regularly and for the testing to be confidential. If you know you are positive, you can protect yourself and others and can take steps to live a healthy, productive, and positive life. If you know you are negative, you can take the necessary steps to remain that way.
- **Empowerment** through education and advocacy. Stigma, shame, denial, discrimination, inaction, and misaction associated with HIV remain massive challenges to the uptake of HIV services, and get in the way of people living with HIV (PLHIV) living productive and healthy lives within their communities and countries. This is why empowerment remains a vital component of all HIV work. People need accurate information about HIV to make informed decisions and to protect themselves, their partners and their children from HIV. Empowered people are able to challenge the stigma and discrimination that can make the lives of people with HIV so difficult.

² The International Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS (INERELA+).

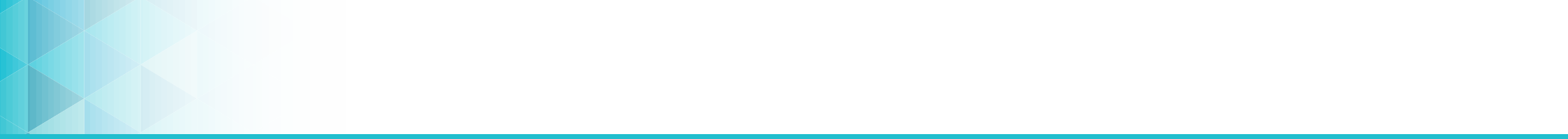


Photo: Paul Jeffrey, IMA WorldHealth

Khutbah One: Safe Motherhood

It is often the case that children are exposed to great danger right from birth. Throughout history, different scourges have threatened the lives of newborn children. For centuries, smallpox killed millions of people, including children. Measles and polio have also had a devastating effects on generations of people, especially children.

In our day, HIV and AIDS continue to pose a great challenge for children. According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), somewhere between 110,000 and 190,000 children were infected with HIV in 2015.

What Can We Do?

We read from the Quran that when Prophet Moses (Peace Be Upon Him) was born in Egypt, his life was in great danger. All male children among his people were being killed.

إِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضَعِفُ طَائِفَةً مِّنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

Verily! Pharaoh exalted himself in the earth and made its people castes. A tribe among them he oppressed, killing their sons and sparing their women. Lo! he was of those who work corruption. (28:4)

Therefore, Moses's mother was greatly worried about her son's fate; then, the Quran specifies that God inspired her to take an unlikely action.

We do not have to let children suffer. The mother of Prophet Moses (Peace Be Upon Him) did not allow her child to suffer. She took action to protect him.

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

So We sent this inspiration to the mother of Moses: "Suckle (thy child) but when thou hast fears about him cast him into the river, but fear not nor grieve: for We shall restore him to thee, and We shall make him one of Our messengers." (28:7)

1. Trained Birth Attendants

We have advances in science today that ensure that children born to HIV-positive parents do not contract HIV. Prevention of mother-to-child transmission has become a lifesaving technology. It is therefore important that parents seek the help of trained health workers in order to secure the future of their children. This help should be sought before getting pregnant, while pregnant, and during and after the birth of the child.

2. Caring Parents and Family

As in the case of Prophet Moses (Peace Be Upon Him), the family can take steps to protect their children. Moses's family hid him in the river, where he was found by Pharaoh's wife.

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرْتُ عَيْنٍ لِي وَلَكَ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰ أَن يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

And the wife of Pharaoh said, "(He will be) joy to behold for me and for thee. Kill him not. It may be that he may of use to us or we may choose him for a son." And they perceived not. (28:9)

We can take steps to protect our children from HIV.

This role is not confined to mothers alone. We see the involvement of other members of the family, in this case Moses's sister Miriam. She is the one who was given the responsibility of watching over the baby.

وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِ قُصِّيهِ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِ عَنْ جُنُبٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

And she said to his sister, "Follow him"; so she watched him from a distance while they perceived not. (28:11)

She did her part well. She even found a way of ensuring that Moses continued to receive care from his own mother after he was taken to Pharaoh's house.

وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ

And We ordained that, at first, he refused to suckle, so she [his sister] said, "Shall I direct you to a household that will be responsible for him for you while they are to him [for his upbringing and care] sincere"? (28:12)

Men are also encouraged to be involved in this process of taking care of the children.

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ ۖ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ ۚ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بَوْلِدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بَوْلِدِهِ ۚ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ ۚ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا ۚ وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

Mothers may breastfeed their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]. Upon the father is the mothers' provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable. No person is charged with more than his capacity. No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child. And upon the [father's] heir is [a duty] like that [of the father]. And if they both desire weaning through mutual consent from both of them and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them. And if you wish to have your children nursed by a substitute, there is no blame upon you as long as you give payment according to what is acceptable. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Seeing of what you do. (2:233)

Even today, parents and even society can save children from HIV by taking the following steps:

- Attend health facilities to receive health care services.
- Ensure that all babies are delivered in a health facility.
- Ensure ongoing care of children.
- Support children on treatment to adhere until they are of age to do so on their own.

Khutbah Two: A Mother's Priority

There are events that reshape our lives. One such event is the birth of a baby. Many things change when a child is born. Daily schedules are reorganized. Budgets are affected. Sometimes, even the house itself is affected by the change. We do these things in order to give the newborn baby the best care.

In the Quran, the birth of a baby should be accorded the proper attention.

أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنْتُمْ مِنْ وُجْدِكُمْ وَلَا تُضَارُّوهُنَّ لِتُضَيِّقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ وَإِنْ كُنَّ أُولَاتٍ حَمْلًا فَأَنْفِقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ حَتَّى يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَأَتَمِرُوا بِإِنَّكُم بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَإِنْ تَعَاسَرْتُمْ فَسَتَرْضِعْ لَهُ أُخْرَى

Lodge them [in a section] of where you dwell out of your means and do not harm them in order to oppress them. And if they should be pregnant, then spend on them until they give birth. And if they breastfeed for you, then give them their payment and confer among yourselves in the acceptable way; but if you are in discord, then there may breastfeed for the father another woman. (65:6)

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بَوْلِدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بَوْلِدِهِ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

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Breastfeeding is seen as an important duty that should be allocated time and a budget. Both the Quran and Sunnah support breastfeeding. The Prophet Muhammad was breastfed by his wet nurse, Halimah, of the Bani Sa'd Ibn Bakr. Breast feeding has been shown to have many

benefits. The Kenya Ministry of Health strongly recommend that all HIV-positive mothers should exclusively breastfeed for six months, then stop gradually while transitioning to replacement feeding methods, provided such methods are *Affordable, Feasible, Acceptable, Sustainable, and Safe*. There is a risk of HIV infection during breastfeeding. However there is reduced risk if both mother and children take antiretroviral drugs throughout the period of breastfeeding.

It is advisable that you exclusively breastfeed for the first six months, meaning that during this time, no other food or liquids should be given to the baby. In case of difficulties, there are professional health workers who are trained to help mothers during the breastfeeding period.



SECTION 2:

IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING YOUR STATUS

Introduction

All pregnant women who suspect that they, their partners, or family members are HIV-positive, have been exposed to HIV, or live in a setting with a generalized HIV epidemic should take an HIV test and undergo counseling. According to the Kenya HIV Testing Services Guidelines, adolescents 15 years and older, and adolescents who are symptomatic of HIV, pregnant, married, with children, or engaged in a behavior that puts them at risk of getting HIV, can give their own consent for an HIV test.

HIV testing services, however, should be voluntary and conducted in a way that assures confidentiality, counseling, correct results, and connection to needed services (linkage). All children of adults receiving HIV services and those born to women who know they are HIV-positive should be tested. All sick children whose HIV status is not known need to be tested. Orphaned and vulnerable children should also be tested. Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and their partners also need to be tested to establish their HIV status and minimize risk of HIV transmission to the unborn and breastfeeding infants. Testing services in the community may include family testing, door-to-door testing, and outreach testing.

FACT:

KNOWLEDGE EMPOWERS PEOPLE.



Photo: Craig Thompson, IMA WorldHealth

Khutbah Three: Seek Knowledge

It is dangerous to be in a situation where you do not know. Knowledge empowers people.

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَانِتٌ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ ۖ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Is one who is devoutly obedient during periods of the night, prostrating and standing [in prayer], who takes heed of the Hereafter and who hopes for the mercy of his Lord, [like one who does not]? Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding. (39:9)

This is true in many areas of life. But it is especially true in the area of HIV and AIDS.

A report by the National AIDS and STI Control Programme on the contribution of HIV deaths in Nairobi County revealed that 15 percent of deaths recorded at the Kenyatta National Hospital, City Mortuary, and Nairobi Hospital are HIV-related, and that half of the deceased did not know they were HIV-positive. In a meeting in Nairobi, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health said: "Fifteen percent of adults having undiagnosed HIV is a wake-up call. People need to get tested because you could be infecting your partner unknowingly."

Why Should Everyone Get Tested?

Experts argue that many new HIV infections are caused by people unaware that they are infected. They then unknowingly infect others. Knowing your HIV status will help you save others if you are positive. This also applies to elimination of mother-to-child transmission.

Additionally, early diagnosis leads to better treatment of HIV, because ARVs are more effective if you start them early. Starting treatment early can mean the best health for you and a longer time before you develop AIDS or other infections. Unfortunately, most people do not come to know their status until they have developed AIDS.

For those who are HIV-negative, knowing your status provides a motivation to continue to protect yourself.

There are people who got tested once, and they stopped there. The important thing is knowing your current status. A self-evaluation is important; if you have engaged in risky behavior, it's especially important to have a HIV test. If the viral load is very low, a person may test negative, even if they in fact have the virus. Also, HIV has an incubation period of up to six months, when the test cannot detect it. Perhaps you got tested during an incubation period. So you need current testing. Even when it comes to our faith, we are instructed to examine ourselves to see if we are **walking** in accordance to the faith. The emphasis is on the current situation, not a past test.

Finally, there are people, especially men, who rely on the status of their spouses. They argue that their status is the same as that of their spouse. This may not be true. In the Quran we read the story of two men who had a dream. They both told their dream to Yusuf.

وَدَخَلَ مَعَهُ السَّجْنَ فَتَيَانٍ ۖ قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا إِنِّي أَرَانِي أَعْصِرُ خَمْرًا ۖ وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ إِنِّي أَرَانِي أَحْمِلُ فَوْقَ رَأْسِي خُبْرًا تَأْكُلُ الطَّيْرُ مِنْهُ ۖ نَبِّئْنَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِ ۖ إِنَّا نَرَاكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

And there entered the prison with him two young men. One of them said, "Indeed, I have seen myself [in a dream] pressing wine." The other said, "Indeed, I have seen myself carrying upon my head [some] bread, from which the birds were eating. Inform us of its interpretation; indeed, we see you to be of those who do good." (12:36)

However, they received different results.

يَا صَاحِبَيِ السَّجْنِ أَمَا أَتَاكُمَا رَسُولِي مِنْ رَبِّهِ خَمْرًا ۖ وَأَمَّا الْآخَرُ فَيُصَلَّبُ فَتَأْكُلُ الطَّيْرُ مِنْ رَأْسِهِ ۚ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ الَّذِي فِيهِ تَسْتَفْتِيَانِ

O two companions of prison, as for one of you, he will give drink to his master of wine; but as for the other, he will be crucified, and the birds will eat from his head. The matter has been decreed about which you both inquire." (12:41)

The lesson here is that the results of another person's experience do not mean the same results for you.

What Should You Do?

- Get tested at least twice a year.
- Get tested together with your spouse.
- Get tested when getting into a relationship.
- Get tested if expecting a child.



Khutbah Four: Leading Healthy Lives

It is Allah's will that we lead healthy lives. We are told in the Quran:

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

And We send down of the Qur'an that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss. (17:82)

Again the Quran says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

O Mankind: There has come to you a direction from your Lord and a healing for the (disease) in your hearts—and for those who believe a guidance and mercy! (10:57)

HIV is one of the great health challenges of our day. The impact of HIV on individuals and communities has many dimensions, and while its effects continue to unfold, the following are evident:

1. HIV affects the infected person by weakening their immune system and making them susceptible to other illnesses. When this happens, the person is said to have developed AIDS. It is these other infections that lead to morbidity (the need to go and seek medical attention) and, sadly, mortality (death).
2. Like other serious illnesses, HIV drives up the cost of health care, thus taking up resources that could have been used to do other things to better the life of the individual.
3. The strain on resources is compounded by the need for care. A person who is bedridden may require extra care, and this means that both the sick person and the caregiver have to leave other important activities.
4. The situation is made worse when parents succumb and leave orphans, sometimes with no way of fending for themselves. This leads to increased poverty in the family and society.

But HIV and its Negative Impact Can Be Stopped. How?

1. Getting knowledge about HIV and AIDS

It is important to seek the facts about HIV. What is it? How is it spread? What is its effect? How can you protect yourself and your family?

2. Getting to know your status

The second important fact that touches on knowledge is the need for testing to get to know your status. Knowing your status will motivate you to take steps to protect yourself if you are negative. If your test positive, you will receive counseling on how to live positively and will be provided with the medical and social help that you may need.

3. Protecting ourselves and those we love

We can also take measures to protect ourselves and those we love. Abstaining from sex if not married is one way. Another way is to be faithful to one partner. For those exposed to the risk of HIV, use of condoms, as well as pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis, have been shown to help. It is also important to protect the children who are born to HIV-positive parents from being infected. It is important to seek the help of qualified medical professionals if you think that you are at risk, or you have been exposed to HIV.

4. Loving, supporting, and caring for those who are affected in our midst

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger. Those—Allah will have mercy upon them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. (9:71)

SECTION 3: IMPORTANCE OF ENROLLING AND RETAINING CHILDREN IN HIV CARE AND TREATMENT

Introduction

HIV affects children in many ways, such as increased infant and childhood illness and death, and increased number orphaned. To reduce these negative impacts, all infants, children, and adolescents diagnosed with HIV need to be enrolled in care and treatment.

All children living with HIV need to be put on ART, irrespective of CD4 count and HIV stage as defined by WHO. In children under two years old, this has been shown to reduce death by 75 percent. All children enrolled are given cotrimoxazole for prophylaxis against opportunistic infections, common bacterial illness, and malaria. Children enrolled in clinics benefit from a package of services, including nutrition assessment, routine immunizations, developmental assessment, necessary laboratory tests, ongoing counseling, drug replenishment, treatment, prevention of other illnesses, and psychosocial support, including community follow-up.

FACT:

**ADHERENCE TO ANTIRETROVIRAL TREATMENT
CAN SAVE LIVES OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH HIV.**

Promoting Adherence

The goal of antiretroviral therapy is to maintain a person's immunological status at a level that prevents disease progression. Adherence is taking the right drug, in the right dose, at the right time, with the right frequency, and in the right way. This involves:

- Clinic appointments.
- Routine lab tests to monitor viral load.
- Monthly prescription refills.

To improve adherence, involve children in their own care by telling them the truth in an age-appropriate way. Children, adolescents, and pregnant or breastfeeding women need to be in support groups to improve adherence. *One hundred percent* adherence is important for treatment success and long-term benefit.

Khutbah Five: Helping Children Deal with HIV and AIDS

What should we do when we find ourselves responsible for children who need our help, such as those who are infected or affected by HIV? It is true that this can be overwhelming because of the time, energy, and resources required.

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْئًا كَبِيرًا

And do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Indeed, their killing is ever a great sin. (17:31)

As believers, we do our best to ensure that we do not let these children suffer or even die because of neglect, as we read in the Quran.

We should not also oppress these children, as often happens. Many children who have been left behind by parents as a result of HIV and AIDS have been dispossessed of their inheritance. Some have been chased out of their homes and left in the street without any way of helping themselves.

This is not right.

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْإِيمَانِ (١) فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ (٢) وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ (٣) فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ (٤) الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ (٥) الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ (٦) وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ (٧) أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْإِيمَانِ (١) فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ (٢) وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ (٣) فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ (٤) الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ (٥) الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ (٦) وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ (٧)

Have you seen the one who denies the Recompense? For that is the one who drives away the orphan and does not encourage the feeding of the poor. So woe to those who pray [but] who are heedless of their prayer—those who make show [of their deeds] and withhold [simple] assistance. (107:1–7)

We are told not to oppress the orphan or take advantage or withhold assistance from them. Our beloved Prophet was an orphan. And Allah has commanded us to treat orphans fairly.

وَأَتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا الْخَبِيثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا

Give unto orphans their wealth. Exchange not the good for the bad (in your management thereof) nor absorb their wealth into your own wealth. Lo! that would be a great sin. (4:2)

What Can We Do?

Here are some things you can do to help:

- Ensure that children who need treatment are able to access it.
- Support children to adhere to treatment.
- Provide the required help and resources needed to go along with treatment, including food, clothing, shelter, and psychosocial support.
- Refrain from stigma and discrimination.
- Rely on proven interventions. Some people resort to witchcraft and other traditional practices that end up creating more harm for children.
- Engage with the governance structures around us (government, community, religious, etc.) to ensure that policies and programs that benefit the infected and affected among us are given a high priority.



SECTION 4:

IMPORTANCE OF A SUPPORTIVE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY FOR CHILDREN LIVING WITH HIV

Introduction

When hearing that a family member has tested positive for HIV, the family may respond with shock, fear, guilt, disbelief, anger, and sadness, even depression. This is true whether the family member is an adult or a child. HIV is a chronic illness, and dealing with chronic illness is challenging, not only for the individuals who are sick but also for their families and their communities. Disease disrupts the normal functioning of a family.

Parents and other family members of those who have HIV need help to ensure that their HIV-positive loved one receives dignified care at hospital or at home.

Family members may also need help coping with life challenges resulting from HIV, their own emotional responses to those challenges, and

FACT:

THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING WE MEN AND WOMEN CAN ALL DO AS PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, FAMILY MEMBERS, RELATIVES, NEIGHBORS, AND FRIENDS TO HELP CHILDREN AMONG US WHO ARE LIVING WITH HIV.

the infection itself, such as stigma and discrimination from relatives, neighbors, friends and the community at large and stress of caring for someone with a chronic illness.

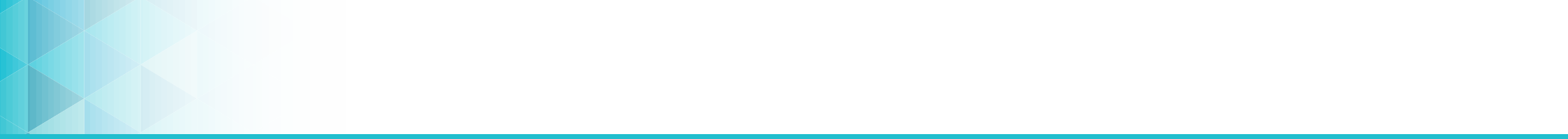
Parents and other family members of those who have HIV need help to ensure that their HIV-positive loved one receives dignified care at hospital or at home. Family members may also need help coping with life challenges resulting from HIV, their own emotional responses to those challenges, and the infection itself.

The effects of HIV on individual families combine to ripple through a community. Children who might otherwise contribute to the life of the community cannot realize their potential. Strengthening family and community support is key to healthy, happy lives of children living with HIV.

Engaging Men

Many attitudes and behaviors that men exhibit—violence against a partner, resistance to negotiating with a partner about abstinence or condom use, or resistance to taking responsibility for caring for the children that they have fathered—are rooted in the way that boys are raised. In many settings, men and boys may learn that being a “real man” means being strong and aggressive and having multiple sexual partners.

There is an urgent need to reach men and adolescent boys with alternative messages. They also need to understand evidence-informed HIV prevention methods and the importance of HIV testing, counseling, treatment, and care. Men are often reluctant to access health services, out of the belief that doing so indicates weakness; they may postpone seeking care until they are very sick, when it may be too late to regain their health. Engaging men by encouraging them to seek HIV services for themselves and their families is important for their own health and also partner and children’s health. One man accessing HIV services benefits his family and the community as a whole.



Khutbah Six: A Compassionate Response

Every day we are surrounded by many people and individuals who are suffering from the impact of HIV and AIDS in their lives, some of them children. What should be our response?

We are admonished to be doers of good.

وَبَارَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ إِسْحَاقَ ۚ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا مُحْسِنٌ وَظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ مُبِينٌ

And We blessed him and Isaac. But among their descendants is the doer of good and the clearly unjust to himself. (37:113)

Saving a soul is compared to saving humankind.

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ

Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land—it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one—it is as if he had saved mankind entirely. And our messengers had certainly come to them with clear proofs. Then indeed many of them, [even] after that, throughout the land, were transgressors. (5:32)

It should therefore be our ambition to support those among us who are suffering.

Moralizing about HIV has been a basis upon which people living with or personally affected by HIV and AIDS have been stigmatized and discriminated against. Some in the faith community see sick people and they see people they believe are rightfully paying for their sins and are therefore unworthy of our compassion. This is false.

وعن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ما من مسلم يشاك شوكة فما فوقها إلا كتبت له بها درجة ، ومحييت عنه بها خطيئة

Aisha (May Allah Be Pleased With Her) reported that the Messenger of Allah (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "For any adversity a Muslim suffers, Allah erases some of his sins, even though it may be no more than a thorn pricking him." (Related by Al-Bukhari.)

Caring for those who are sick and showing them our compassion is one of the greatest ways to show our gratitude to Allah Subhannah wa Ta'ala for our own health.

وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "حق المسلم على المسلم خمس: رد السلام، وعيادة المريض، وإتباع الجنائز، وإجابة الدعوة، وتشميت العاطس" ((متفق عليه))

Abu Hurairah (May Allah Be Pleased With Him) reported:

The Messenger of Allah said, "Every Muslim has five rights over another Muslim to return the greetings of salam, to visit the sick, to accompany funeral processions, to accept an invitation, to respond to the sneezer. [al-Bukhari and Muslim]

There is always something we can do to help those among us who are living with or personally affected by HIV.

As a Family We Can:

- Provide resources (e.g., food, clothing, and shelter).
- Nurture and support (emotional comfort).
- Assist in the development of life skills (success in school, and choosing a career).
- Maintain and manage the family system.

Communities Can:

- Influence receptiveness to accessing, adhering to, and benefiting from HIV services.
- Help reduce stigma associated with HIV services.
- Strengthen psychosocial support for infected and affected children and young people.
- Create referral systems to connect HIV-positive women, children, and men to care and treatment.
- Reach underserved, marginalized, and hard-to-reach populations.

Khutbah Seven: Passing Godly Values to our Children

The responsibility of passing the right moral values to children rests on the parents.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them but do what they are commanded. (6:6)

While this principle applies to many areas of our lives, it is particularly applicable to the area of sexuality. Studies have shown that parents are in a very good position to teach their children about sexuality. Allah, Subhannah wa Ta'ala, commands us to guard our sexuality.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (١) الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ (٢) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ (٣) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ (٤) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ (٥) إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ (٦٦) فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ

Certainly will the believers have succeeded: They who are during their prayer humbly submissive. And they who turn away from ill speech. And they who are observant of zakah [obligatory charity]. And they who guard their private parts except from their wives or those their right hands possess, for indeed, they will not be blamed—But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors. (23:1-7)

Not teaching our children these values means that they will be influenced by their friends and by the media, which has a distorted view of sexuality.

Children who receive the right information make better decisions about their sexuality. They have been shown to delay sexual debut. They are also less likely to hurt others through sexual violence.

Sexuality education should be age-appropriate. It should also be based on correct scientific data.



SECTION 5:

IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVE LIVING IN CHILDREN LIVING WITH HIV

Introduction

Promoting Positive Living in Children Living with HIV

Psychosocial support promotes positive living in children by helping them gain confidence in themselves and improve adherence to HIV care and treatment, thus enabling them to cope better with illness and deal more effectively with stigma and discrimination. Psychosocial is made up of two words: “psycho,” meaning mind and “social,” referring to interaction with the environment. Children, adolescents and caregivers should be emotionally and socially supported in all parts of their lives. Positive living involves personal hygiene, sexuality, self-awareness, and stress management.

FACT:

WITH OUR SUPPORT CHILDREN LIVING WITH HIV WILL LIVE NORMAL LIVES LIKE ANY OTHER CHILD WHO IS NOT LIVING WITH HIV.

Promoting Age-Appropriate HIV Disclosure for Children and Adolescents

As children living with HIV grow, they ask questions regarding their illness and treatment. Also, when children living with HIV (youth in particular) know their status it is important for them to share their status with key people in their lives such as siblings, friends, teachers, etc. This is done through a process known as HIV disclosure. There are many benefits of disclosure to children. Knowing their status:

- Allows children to cope better with HIV.
- Increases self-esteem among children and adolescents.
- Helps children adhere to treatment.
- Helps adolescents make informed decisions when contemplating sexual intercourse with a partner.
- Helps children and caregivers psychologically adjust to living with HIV.
- Works towards reducing stigma, discrimination, and misconceptions and myths regarding HIV.

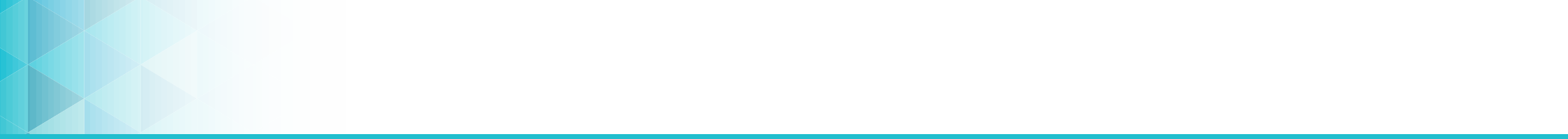


Photo: Craig Thompson, IMA WorldHealth

Khutbah Eight: Living Positively

Children who find themselves having to deal with the effects of HIV and AIDS in their lives can easily despair. Questions arise about their illness and treatment. The news that they will have to be on treatment throughout their lives can be discouraging to them.

But believers ought not to despair.

يَا بَنِيَّ اذْهَبُوا فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ وَلَا تَيَاسُّوا مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْئَاسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

Go, O my sons, and ascertain concerning Joseph and his brother, and despair not of the Spirit of Mercy of Allah. Lo! none despaireth of the Spirit of Mercy of Allah save disbelieving folk. (12:87)

We should always remember that Allah will provide a way to be able to deal with these challenges.

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

So verily, with hardship, there is ease." (94:5)

As parents, guardians and caretakers, we can also help children overcome despair. We can do this by creating an environment in our homes and institutions that can help children to cope better with HIV, including disclosure and the shame, denial, and self-stigma which often accompanies it. We should also help them adhere to treatment. Psychosocial support can help increase their self-esteem. Finally, we should empower these children with skills to enable them to make the right choices in their lives.

