

How Are Children Who Are Orphaned by AIDS Affected?

- Basic Needs

Children orphaned by AIDS run a greater risk of being malnourished than children who have parents to look after them. Other necessities that orphans may not have access to: food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, or education.

- Overwhelming Responsibilities

Orphans oftentimes have to take on the role of mother, father, or both: doing housework, looking after siblings, caring for ill/dying parents.

- Neglect

Even before the death of a parent, children begin to suffer physical and emotional neglect.

- Future

Frequently, parents do not write out wills while they are still alive as it is seen as bad luck. Consequently, children have no records of their property and are at a greater risk to lose their house, land, crops, and livelihood.

- Family

The scale of the children orphaned by the AIDS pandemic appears smaller than it actually is. The time between when one parent becomes infected and when they die can lead to misleading numbers of children affected by AIDS. If as expected, the number of adults dying of AIDS rises over the next decade, an increasing number of children will grow up without parental care and love.

- Education

Children orphaned by AIDS may be the first to be denied education when extended families cannot afford to educate all the children of the household. Children living with the disease may not be physically able to attend school (the trip to school can be as long as several miles with no transportation readily available). With the death of a parent due to AIDS, children may have to take on an additional workload at home and not have time for school.