



a generation to save

Participants' Bible Study

The Need

Watch the first 9-minute segment, "The Hidden Faces of AIDS," on the video or read the following story:

A Matter of Survival

Ronald Kibuule, 10, lives in a world of hunger.* His mud-floor hut is filled with the smell of rust from a bicycle deteriorating in a corner—but there's no hint of food. The granaries that once brimmed with cassava flour are empty. The gardens that overflowed with sweet potatoes are filled with weeds.

Ronald lives in this makeshift home with four brothers—the oldest of whom is 15. Their father died in 1996, followed by their mother in 2000.

For a few months the children were able to live with their grandmother. But when she died late in 2000, the children were left to care for themselves. They have to scavenge for their own food, clothe themselves, walk to the village well for water, and maintain some form of shelter.

The boys go to school, but finding food competes with their time to get an education. Ronald's torn t-shirt, the favorite of the two pieces of clothing he owns, reveals bony shoulders. The children's breakfast is a mug of water, which has to last them until supper. On rare occasions when they have enough at dinner, they have the leftovers for breakfast.

These children are starving. They spend more time worrying about the next meal than realizing their God-given potential. They are proud of their hoe, but their lack of farming skills makes food scarce. When mangoes are in season, the children stuff themselves with the fruit that grows at school. It is too painful waiting for the mangoes to grow, Ronald says, so he and his brothers begin eating them when they are raw. Raw mangoes may not provide much nutrition, but they are better than nothing.

* Note: original story told by a World Vision staff member in June 2002.

The Challenge: What Would You Do?

People who live in poverty often lack the skills and/or resources to solve their problems—but often a solution can be easily reached when others partner with them.

Each group will read one of the following three scenarios, which are real situations orphans face regularly. Ask yourselves the questions at the end of the scenario, and decide what you would do if you had no outside help. After your group has reached a decision about a possible solution, each group will read their scenario to the class and share their solutions. Then your leader will read what the Christian humanitarian organization World Vision did to solve that challenge, and why.

Scenario 1: The hungry children of Chanjoka, Malawi

The children of Chanjoka village are hungry. Many of them are orphans, and many more are members of families whose basic resources are stretched too far because they are caring for orphaned relatives. In both cases, there isn't enough food to go around. The families' farming skills are inadequate. And now that the dry season has arrived, nothing will grow without a water source such as a river adjacent to their land—which they don't have. Lack of rain caused last year's harvest to fall far short of the needs. They have no job skills and no way to earn money to buy food, which is especially expensive now that food is in such short supply. There are still six months until the next harvest.

- You are part of an orphan family. What can you do to solve your problem with no outside help?
- What resources or skills do you need to solve your problem?

Scenario 2: Frank from Tanzania

Frank was born into hardship. His mother struggled alone to provide for her nine children, earning money however she could. But then she began to fall sick. During his mother's last stages of illness, life became so desperate that Frank had to sell boiled eggs to buy school materials. By then, Frank was the oldest sibling still living with his mother. "I never believed my mother would die," Frank says, his voice choked with tears. When his mother died, Frank was heartbroken but remained determined to finish his education and "live an honorable life." Yet with few resources, that dream was fading fast.

- You are Frank. Tanzania's school system charges tuition and you must provide your own school supplies—but you can barely feed yourself. What can you do to solve your problem with no outside help?
- What resources or skills do you need to solve your problem?

Scenario 3: The Nanyonjo orphans in Uganda

At age 11, Rose Mary Nanyonjo became mother and father to her siblings Anizio, Sanyu, Maria, and Sarah after their parents died of AIDS-related causes. "Our parents left us with a dilapidated grass-thatched mud hut and a banana garden overgrown by bush," Rose remembers. "We couldn't clear the plantation or grow crops because we went to school and came back in the evening. We tried to dig on Saturdays but could not do much." The children were forced to survive on food handouts from neighbors, but the neighbors live in poverty as well, and struggle to feed themselves. Many days the children simply went to bed hungry.

- You are Rose. What are you going to do to get enough food with no outside help?
- What resources or skills do you need to solve your problem?

* These true stories are representative of the real-life situations faced by children in impoverished, AIDS-affected communities worldwide.

The Opportunity

Introduction: Chuck Colson says, "The crisis of AIDS orphans cries out for the kind of response only Christians can deliver: one that combines compassion with respect for the truth." Christians can address this crisis on a spiritual level that is impossible for government agencies and secular charities. The Church has the opportunity to make a life-changing difference for this younger generation. Many churches in AIDS-affected communities are teaching the young to avoid contracting HIV through abstinence and fidelity. These same churches are doing what they can to care for the orphans' needs. Yet the churches, because they are in poor communities, often lack the resources they need to fully address the needs of the orphans, widows, and sick.

Focus on Scripture

- Read John 8:2-11
- Read James 1:27a
- Read Matthew 22:39

Pray as you end

Talk with your church about getting involved to help orphans, widows, and children in need. The "A Generation to Save" Tool Kit that your pastor has contains great ideas for how you can help turn the tide against the spread of AIDS and care for those affected. Find out what your church is doing!