

Interim Report of African Jesuit AIDS Ministries, 2007

2007 was a significant year, with fifth anniversary celebrations of the founding of AJAN and with the establishment or strengthening of several Jesuit projects dedicated to the pandemic.

Milestone – Public events to celebrate the fifth anniversary took place in Nairobi in January and June and in Harare in October, as well as the publication of a special anniversary book, *Linked for Life* in English and French, with a Portuguese edition due in 2008; and an external evaluation, *AJAN from 2002 to 2006* in English, with a French version in early 2008.

Publications –AJAN sponsored or co-sponsored the following books:

- Bénézet Bujo and Michael Czerny, editors, *AIDS in Africa: Theological Reflections*, Paulines Publications Africa, 2007.
- Robert J. Vitillo, *Pastoral Training for responding to HIV-AIDS*, Paulines Publications Africa, 2007.
- Ghislain Tshikendwa SJ, *Suffering, Belief, Hope: The Wisdom of Job for an AIDS-Stricken Africa*, Paulines Publications Africa, 2007.

Networking and Communications – AJAN House fosters networking among Jesuits involved in AIDS ministry and shares information about their work primarily with other Jesuits in Africa and also beyond through a variety of publications compiled, edited and produced by AJAN House. Over 5000 subscribers worldwide receive *AJANews* (in 2007: issues 52-62), a monthly electronic newsletter, free-of-charge in English, French or Portuguese and find updated information on the AJAN website <www.jesuitaids.net>

Meanwhile, communication among Jesuits belonging to AJAN was enhanced with the launch in 2007 of a new monthly service, *AJANotices*, an internal email bulletin by and for Jesuits involved in AIDS ministry and their superiors. *AJANotices* features project news and reflections and aims to stimulate debate about common concerns.

Documentation Centre – AJAN House is actively developing its documentation centre, which serves interns and others undertaking research on AIDS-related issues. With the generous support of Missio-Aachen, the Medical Mission Institute (MMI) in Würzburg, Germany seconded its librarian, Mrs. Sieglinde Mauder, to work with our staff from 5 to 21 February, contributing greatly to establishing the cataloguing system for maintaining the growing collection.

Meetings – When possible, AJAN gathers Jesuits and their colleagues to share information about the pandemic, to reflect together on their responses, and to network. The first assembly was in September 2003, and after a long gap, there were three successful meetings in 2007: Nairobi (January), Lomé (March) and Harare (November).

Country Visits – The co-ordinator and regents made some 12 African country visits during 2007, to visit the various Jesuit responses already underway, to meet colleagues and to see if new efforts can be initiated: Burundi (2), Ethiopia, Rwanda (2), South Africa, Tanzania (3), Togo, Zambia, Zimbabwe. A visit to Tanzania supported an AIDS-Awareness event at Loyola High school, while the one to Zimbabwe marked the 10th anniversary of the Jesuit AIDS Project.

Representation – The coordinator and/or Jesuit staff represented AJAN at the Ignatian Encounter and World Social Forum (Nairobi, January); the inauguration of the Loyola Hope Centre (Lomé, March); the Kenya Catholic AIDS Conference (Nairobi, June); the Assembly of European Provincials (Poland, October); and the Vision Workshop (Hekima, December).

Fund Raising – The co-ordinator makes an effort to visit Funding Agencies or to meet their representatives, seeking financial support for AJAN and for Jesuit AIDS ministries in Africa. Partnerships with several key agencies include Catholic Relief Services, Cordaid, Development and Peace, Misereor and Missio-Aachen, as well as Assistancies, Provinces, Jesuit Mission Offices and Jesuit NGOs.

Discretionary Funding – Jesuit AIDS initiatives are helped to write up projects, for presentation to other funders or for start-up funds support from AJAN's resources.

New Projects – AJAN has been especially active in assisting in the development and construction of the new Loyola Hope Centre in Lomé, Togo, which was inaugurated in March 2007, and in negotiating the new *Yezu Mwiza* Service, to begin in Burundi early in 2008. AJAN also backed Séverin Mukoko SJ in setting up income-generating activities with the *Association de Solidarité et de Vie Constructive* for people living with HIV and AIDS in Kikwit, DRC. In December, the Association officially inaugurated its headquarters, the P. Matungulu Otene SJ Centre, with the support of AJAN.

In Chad, the *Coin des Amis pour la Lutte contre le VIH/SIDA* was officially launched on 3 November 2007 as part of the Jesuit Educational Centre in Kyabé, capital of Lac Iro department. Another significant step in 2007 was the launch of a VCT (Voluntary Counselling and Testing) service within a Jesuit project to implement HIV prevention and AIDS care in two missionary districts of Madagascar.

Hospitality / Visitors - AJAN House welcomes Jesuits and colleagues, briefing them on AJAN's activities and assisting, if possible, with whatever they are doing in the struggle against HIV/AIDS in their respective countries.

Internships - There have been 21 short-term interns at AJAN House from 2003 to 2006, and in 2007 there were three: Paterné Mombé SJ (Aug-Sept, for his third internship), Wilfried Banaba SJ (July-Sept) and Ken Ogot SJ (May to July).

Teaching - AJAN contributes to Jesuit formation, motivating young Jesuits to get involved in the struggle against the pandemic and providing them with the knowledge and skills to do so. An elective course was offered at the Jesuit school of theology in Nairobi and a session at the Jesuit school of philosophy in Harare.

On Staff – Regent Mbugua William SJ left AJAN House after two years and candidate (now novice) Michael Ochien'g after one; they were replaced by Eric Simiyu Wanyonyi SJ and Marcel Uwineza SJ for regency, and candidates Francis Adika and Kevin Devotta as interns.

Respectfully submitted by the Coordinator
2008

Kangemi, Kenya, 1 March