Toolkit for Programming Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Sub-Saharan Africa

Background: Orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) are among the most vulnerable population groups in Africa. Without support and protection, they are exposed to the risk of abusive labor, lack of education, malnutrition, disease, and death. Estimates indicate that 20% of children in Sub-Saharan Africa are OVC. They constitute such a large group that, to achieve the MDGs, OVC concerns need to be mainstreamed into relevant World Bank projects and programs.

The World Bank’s OVC Thematic Group (consisting of staff members from the Africa Region and the World Bank Institute) developed an OVC Toolkit to provide practical guidance for task team leaders and their counterparts who wish to integrate OVC concerns into their project and program activities.

A practical tool for practitioners, planners and advocates
The toolkit is designed as a web-based product to make it a widely accessible, live document. It draws on a large array of experiences and material from international agencies and NGOs, hence helping to disseminate lessons—good and bad—learnt in a variety of settings. It was piloted in October 2004 in a workshop with NGOs (both field-based and US-based), UNICEF, World Bank staff and African government agencies. The toolkit was revised based on the feedback received during the workshop. It was then officially launched in December 2004 at the Second Global Partner’s Forum for Orphans and Vulnerable Children living in a World with HIV and AIDS. Translation in French is underway and a workshop for Francophone Africa should be held in the Spring 2005.

The toolkit is user-friendly and practical. The text is simple and direct, with check lists, “dos” and “don’ts”, rules of thumb, worksheets and examples. The links open the door to a wealth of information, including datasets, other toolkits, manuals, reports and websites. To cope with limited internet access and slow connections, it is possible to copy the toolkit to one’s own computer, to print it, or to obtain it as a CD.

Content
The Toolkit is organized in four parts and twenty-four sections. Each section is stand alone (if it refers to previous material, there is a link).

- Do I need this Toolkit? This introduction helps users decide if the toolkit will be useful for them, and what would be the most practical way to use it. Sections: Relevance to my Project, Rapid Test of Relevance, Choosing a Point of Entry.

- What do I need to know? This part provides basic information on OVC in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as arguments to win support from...

• What do I need to do? Once support for an intervention is won, it is time to design it. This part goes through the main steps involved in setting up (or adapting) a project benefiting OVC. Sections: Background Data, Working with Partners, Consulting with Children, Deciding What to Do, Common Pitfalls, Targeting, Monitoring and Evaluation, Roles and Responsibilities, Costing Issues.

• Sector Specific Approaches. Some users may just need a quick overview of what types of interventions are possible in the particular sector in which they work. Each section in this part covers a specific sector or type of project. Sections: CAS/PRSP/PRSC, Multi-sector demand driven, Multi-Country HIV/AIDS, Post-Conflict projects, Early Childhood Development, Education, Health, Transport, Energy.

To access the toolkit, please visit http://www.worldbank.org/ovctoolkit.