



→ Foreword from Egmont's CEO

Over the last fifteen years great progress has been made in slowing the spread of HIV. Much remains to be done.

When Egmont was launched, international discourse centred around the promising results of a few comprehensive roll-outs of anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment to affected communities. Where once, only one in ten HIV+ people in Africa were receiving treatment, fully 16 million across the region are now enrolled on ARV regimens. They are able to collect monthly, the drugs that prevent the progression of HIV to AIDS and reduce the likelihood of passing on their infection to almost zero. What were seemingly insurmountable challenges at the time: the elimination of mother-to-child transmission; testing for the first time the millions of people who do not know they have HIV; easily accessible treatment for all those who are infected - even in remote rural areas - are now within a few decades grasp.

These achievements, while laudable, also highlight that the global response has focussed on one end of the epidemic - treatment - and failed to address the continuing impact of HIV & AIDS. Since 2005, more than ten and a half million people have died of AIDS-related diseases in sub-Saharan Africa. Today, there are almost 11 million children that have lost a parent to the disease. Families – dealing with the loss of a breadwinner or their own infection – are struggling to provide for them. Their resources are being stretched thinner and thinner as they try to feed, clothe and care for these children and their own offspring. The result is that the same issues that affected the most vulnerable – women and children - are just as prevalent now as they were 15 years ago.

Malnutrition remains the underlying factor in almost half of all child deaths in Africa, and the number of children displaying stunted growth is increasing. Of all regions, sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of out-of-school children. And, despite the progress in slowing the pace of

the epidemic, there are now six million more people infected with HIV across the region, with one-in-four of those infected unaware of their status.

From just five partners, our portfolio has grown more than twenty-fold. 103 locally-led, grassroots organisations have now been supported. In our first year of operation, Egmont's partners reached 4,078 people. Last year, our current portfolio of 53 partner organisations reached more than 87,000 children and family members. As we look towards the new decade, we will continue searching for new, innovative and cost-effective partners ensuring that Egmont reaches more of the children and family members most affected.

The next few pages will show you how our partners have contributed to the progress against AIDS while helping those most affected in their communities. It is only through the generosity and commitment of our supporters that the last 15 years of Egmont and the achievements of our partners has been possible. On behalf of the hundreds of thousands of vulnerable children you have all helped our partners to reach, thank you.

Newsletter
Spring 2020

Colin Williams OBE
Chief Executive Officer



15 Years of Egmont

Our partners impact

Since 2005, our partners have responded to the long-standing effects of the AIDS epidemic, as well as adapting to new developments in the ways the disease has affected their communities. Below are just a few of the ways our partners have helped the children and families in their communities to cope with the impact of the AIDS epidemic.

TOWARDS ZERO HIV+ BIRTHS

When Egmont first began supporting partners in six of the most affected countries in sub-Saharan Africa, there were effectively two HIV epidemics in regards to how the disease was being spread. The majority of transmissions were spreading through the adult population, but there was a quickly growing and significant portion that were occurring in children via vertical transmission - from mother-to-child at birth or shortly afterwards. In 2005, the number of infections occurring in children constituted almost a third of all new HIV cases. Life Concern (LICO), an Egmont partner based in Rumphu, Malawi, has been a part of the effort to reduce this transmission rate.



New mothers helped to attend post-natal appointments by LICO. Children are tested for HIV every six months, up to 2 years old. If treatment is successful they are then declared HIV-free.

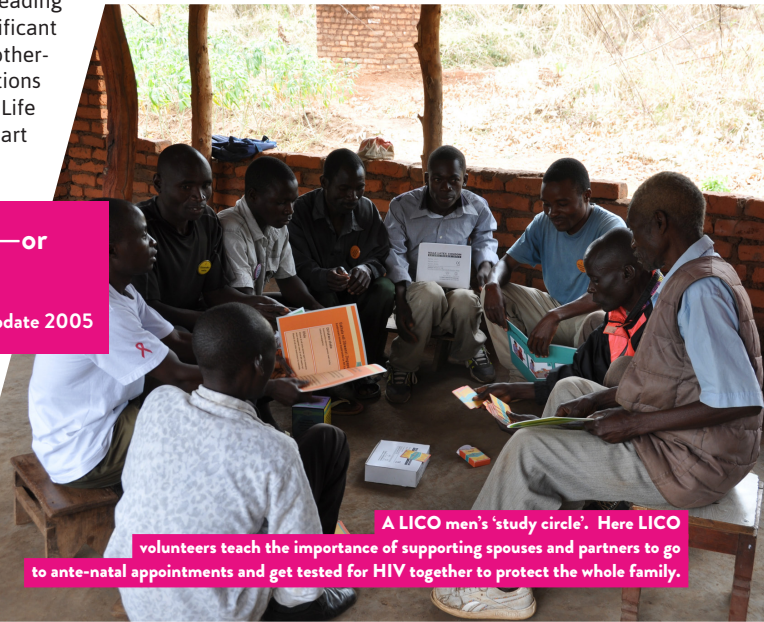
“HIV infection levels among pregnant women are 20%—or higher—in six southern African countries”

UNAIDS, AIDS Epidemic Update 2005

LICO works to identify HIV+ pregnant women in the local community who are at risk of passing HIV on to their children. By conducting HIV tests on all the pregnant women in the area, LICO can provide support to those who test positive. LICO will help the HIV+ mothers by securing for them their antiretroviral drugs and helping them to adhere to the treatment. Those mothers with a low viral load - due to treatment - have a reduced risk of passing on HIV at birth or through their milk.

In 2012, when LICO first began working in the rural Rumphu District, roughly one in four babies with HIV+ mothers would be born HIV+ themselves. LICO identified that this high transmission rate was a result of many rurally isolated women not attending their ante-natal appointments due to the long distance from their homes to the clinics, poor understanding of the importance of HIV testing and treatment when pregnant and low male/spousal involvement in the ante-natal appointments and care. As a result, many HIV+ pregnant women were not aware of their status. Many who were enrolled on treatment did not adhere to their ARV regimens and often women would elect to deliver their babies at home; away from health professionals. All of which increased the likelihood of complications and transmission.

Thanks to LICO’s efforts, the proportion of home deliveries in their project area has decreased from 17.9% in 2012 to just 0.4% today. Men are attending antenatal appointments with their pregnant spouses and couples are being tested



A LICO men’s ‘study circle’. Here LICO volunteers teach the importance of supporting spouses and partners to go to ante-natal appointments and get tested for HIV together to protect the whole family.



A LICO women ‘study circle’. A support group for pregnant and young women to encourage them to go to ante-natal appointments and get tested for HIV, ensuring their children are born HIV-free.

for HIV together, ensuring they can live long, healthy lives and be there to provide and care for their children. Crucially, this means that less children are being born HIV+. By 2019, LICO had helped to reduce the mother-to-child transmission rate for Rumph District to just 7% compared to 24.7% in 2012.

Over the last 15 years, Egmont partners have worked to increase the number of pregnant women getting tested for HIV and helped them to adhere to their treatment. This has been part of a concerted effort of many thousands of small organisations across the region, like Life Concern, and together they have helped to reduce the number of infant HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa by 200,000 annually.

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“There is ample evidence that HIV does yield to determined and concerted interventions”

UNAIDS, AIDS Epidemic Update 2005

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NUTRITION FOR INFANTS & CHILDREN

A recent UNICEF report† shows that since 2005 every region of the world except for Africa has seen a reduction in the number of malnourished children. As family members have succumbed to the disease or stricken by illness many have struggled to provide for the children in their care. This is particularly dangerous for newborn children as under-nutrition in the first year of life can have lifelong physical and cognitive effects, and greatly increases infant mortality.

Forever Angels works in Tanzania where over 40,000 children die every year before reaching their first birthday. Forever Angels supports HIV+ and AIDS-affected women who - through illness - are unable to produce milk for their newborn babies. Last year, they supported 686 babies with formula milk and nutritional supplements, and after just three months they had reduced the number of children who were severely malnourished from 85% to 11%. Forever Angels provides training and formula milk to families every week at their centre; a simple but effective intervention.

Over the year, Forever Angels increased the weight of almost all of the infants by at least 15%. By increasing the weight of the infants and monitoring them

closely, Forever Angels lowered the mortality rate to around 1%. This is an incredible achievement considering that these infants are severely malnourished when they are brought to Forever Angels.

Felicity came to Forever Angels with her year old triplets. They each weighed about 3-4kg; the same as a newborn baby and a dangerously low weight at their age. To help Felicity provide for her family, which included another two children, Forever Angels began supplying her with food packages and milk formula. All of the family quickly gained weight. Forever Angels also enrolled Felicity on their business programmes to help her sustainably provide for her family. Felicity learnt how to make charcoal and is now using this to generate income for her family. She is now able to look forward to the future with a happy and healthy family.

Since 2005, Egmont has supported our partners to reach over 196,000 children and family members, providing them with food in times of crisis or with the training, seed, tools and equipment to grow their own food and provide for their family in the long-term.

† UNICEF (2019), The State Of The World's Children



→ News & Updates

Egmont's Annual Awards

Our Annual Awards took place on March 4th at the Royal Institution of Great Britain where we were delighted to hand out awards to two of our partners, recognising their achievements over the past year. This year, in celebration of Egmont's 15th anniversary, we also heard from Isa Jacobson, who relayed her experiences filming 11 of our partners over the last decade. Isa also introduced her latest film which focuses on the achievements of all of the partners Egmont has worked with since 2005. The film is now available to view on our website.



Our awards recognise two distinct achievements. This year, Francis Lemoile, received the award for Best Performing Organisation on behalf of SAFE in Kenya. Prisca Kambole, Director of PLAEP in Zambia, was awarded Egmont's Most Inspiring Individual of the past year. Thank you to all of you who could attend this year for making it such a special occasion.

EDUCATION FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

For many families, losing the main breadwinner to an AIDS-related illness means that they are unable to send their child to school and provide for their family at the same time. This creates a cycle of poverty: children do not attain the skills they need to support themselves as they grow up and struggle to afford an education for their own children. For those with HIV, they have an even more substantial challenge: frequent illness often means they fall behind in their studies. Many of our partners work in this area to ensure that those children affected by AIDS are still able to obtain a full education.

Egmont partner, Community Based Aid Programme, focuses on helping children affected by AIDS into the classroom. In 2019, CBAP provided 100 vulnerable children from AIDS-affected families with uniforms, school materials, as well as payment of school fees so that they could return to education or enter the classroom for the first time. Not only are the children now in school, but they are also excelling now that they are able to attend classes every day without fear of having to drop out. This has led to an incredible 90% pass rate in a country that recorded a national pass rate for O-levels of 32.8% last year.

CBAP are also working with schools to find new and innovative ways to allow them to take on more students. Each of the ten schools that they are working with have been trained in poultry farming and given 100 chicks to start a small poultry farm. This not only provides the schools with a steady income, but also provides the children with vital vocational skills which they can use after they graduate.

Since 2005, Egmont has supported our partners to help over 49,700 children and adults into the classroom or helped them to learn through informal or after-school tuition.

New Staff

Last September, we welcomed Jake Stoneman - our new Communications and Fundraising Officer - to The Egmont Trust. Jake brings his marketing experience from his role as Volunteering Co-ordinator for Cardiff University Student's Union to the team.

This year, Matthew Kidd joined us as Egmont's new Joint Chief Executive. Previously, Matthew worked as the British High Commissioner to Cyprus (2010 - 2014 and 2016 - 2018). He has also worked for the diplomatic service in Paris, New York, Ethiopia, and as part of the UK Joint Delegation to NATO.