



FACT SHEET

What is Education Fights AIDS International (EFA)?

- EFA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that was officially incorporated in May 2006 by returned Peace Corps volunteers to support African youth infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS.
- EFA’s mission is to promote the successful future of African children and youth infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS through education and empowerment.
- EFA is based in the USA and operates a regional office in Maroua, Cameroon. EFA works with five groups of HIV+ youth in Northern Cameroon and the Rebero Orphan Center in Kigali, Rwanda. In addition, EFA organizes an annual cultural exchange program through the University of Maryland.

What are EFA’s goals?

- To improve the psychosocial development, health literacy, professional capacity, and financial autonomy of African youth who are infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS by:
 - Providing educational and employment opportunities;
 - Building core leadership values and community; and
 - Promoting the value of “living positively” with HIV/AIDS while reducing stigma;
- To contribute to the healthy development of African children who are infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS by:
 - Improving access to comprehensive health services;
 - Offering educational opportunities; and
 - Developing employment opportunities for families and caretakers;
- To inform and engage communities around the world about HIV/AIDS in Africa.

How does EFA approach the issue of HIV/AIDS?

- EFA takes a community-based, holistic approach to combating HIV/AIDS in African communities through the development of the *EFA Youth Empowerment Network*. Through training, education, and empowerment, EFA teaches groups of HIV+ youth, aged 15-35 years old, how to take charge of their lives and how to “live positively” with their disease.

The problem	EFA’s strategy
HIV+ individuals often lack access to information and the resources necessary to effectively treat their illness and the additional costs which living with HIV entails (i.e. tests, improved nutrition, treating opportunistic diseases, etc).	EFA provides training and education to help groups of HIV+ youth learn more about HIV/AIDS, build core leadership and advocacy skills, start income generating projects, and develop on-the-job work skills.
Many youth do not have or know where to find support once they find out they are HIV+.	EFA helps HIV+ youth to organize into a group, become legally recognized, start up income generating projects, apply for loans, and advocate for HIV/AIDS awareness within their communities. Collectively, these groups make up the <i>EFA Youth Empowerment Network</i> .
Stigma against HIV+ individuals is a significant problem in many African communities.	EFA promotes the value of “living positively” and trains HIV+ youth as peer educators , enabling them to teach others about HIV/AIDS and the importance of getting tested. Youth are also encouraged to run advocacy campaigns to engage fellow youth, local authorities, and health services in the promotion of basic human rights.



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What is the *EFA Youth Empowerment Network* model?

- The goal of the youth network is to help its groups and members become responsible adults who can reduce stigma in their communities and work towards social change.
- Groups receive various trainings from EFA staff which target the specific needs of group members: including health care, life skills, project and financial management, behavioural change, and conflict resolution.
- Benefits of membership in the EFA Youth Empowerment Network include: economic collaboration, regional conferences and trainings, and the exchange of best practices with other groups in the network.

How can I get involved?

Donate

There are many ways to donate to EFA:

- Donate to the organization's **general operating fund** through EFA's website, so your donation can be put to use where it is needed most.
- **Sponsor a group's activity:** Check out youth group activities on EFA's website and sponsor part or all of a particular activity. We'll send you updates and photos on the progress of the project.
- **Sponsor a group in the Youth Empowerment Network:** Help EFA to identify, organize, and train new groups of HIV+ youth to live positively.
- **Sponsor a network-wide activity,** like a peer education training or coordination meeting, which will benefit all members of the Youth Empowerment Network.
- **Sponsor an individual group member** to launch their own income generating project.

EFA is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit organization, so all donations are tax deductible.

Volunteer

EFA International relies on interns and volunteers to coordinate its fundraising and operational activities in the United States. If you are interested in working with us, please send a cover letter and CV to volunteer@efainternational.org, specifying where you live, your availability, and your areas of expertise and/or interest.

To read more about how to donate and/or volunteer, please visit the EFA website: www.efainternational.org.