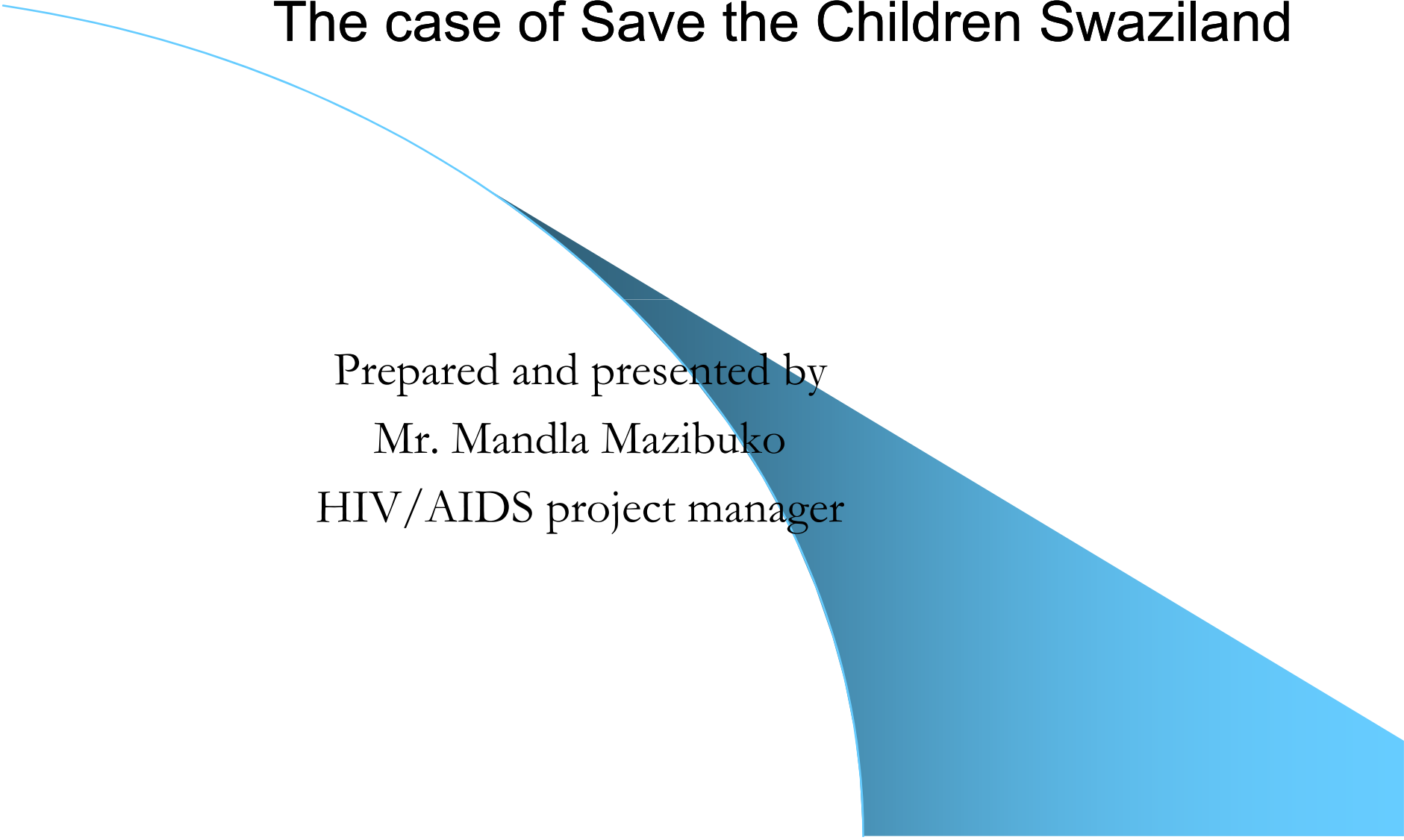


Reducing Exploitive Child Labor in Southern Africa (RECLISA)

The case of Save the Children Swaziland

Prepared and presented by
Mr. Mandla Mazibuko
HIV/AIDS project manager



Swaziland

- a small, landlocked country in Southern Africa
- a population of nearly 1 million (954 000) 58% children and young people.
- It is estimated that 69% of the population lives in poverty.
- Most of the population lives in rural areas that are periodically ravaged by drought.
- The economy is drained by a rampant HIV/AIDS crisis that is affecting all aspects of community life.
- In particular, the crisis is putting children at risk of abuse and exploitative child labor.
- The RECLISA project aimed to support 2,000 school-aged children (primary and secondary school levels) in 26 communities to ensure their protection from exploitive child labor and abuse.

Project approach

- Targets 2 groups of children:-
 - Withdrawn – those who are already out of school and engaged in exploitive labor and abuse.
 - Prevented – those who are still in school, but at high risk to drop out and engage in exploitive labor and abuse.
- Increases opportunities and access to educational programs for these children by addressing the factors that:-
 - pull and or
 - push children into exploitive labor and abuse.

Key activities

- Identifying, preventing, withdrawing and enrolling children into primary and secondary education programs.
- Creating public awareness on exploitive child labor.
- Building and strengthening communities' capacity to address exploitive child labor and abuse. E.g Child Labor Committees
- Improving the livelihoods of OVC headed households
- Influencing government to formulate a national program to eradicate child labor.
- Influencing government to formulate integrated policies, laws and regulations promoting entry of working children into formal education system.

How school system supports these children

- Increases access and opportunities to formal educational programs for children who have been withdrawn from exploitive labor and abuse.
- Prevents children who are the risk of engaging in exploitive labor and abuse from dropping out of educational programs.
- Contributed to the reduction of exploitive child labor (reduced the number of hours children engage in exploitive labor and abuse.
- Increases awareness on exploitive child labor and abuse among school children and community.

How enrollment and completion has made a difference their lives.

- All target children are enjoying their right to education and protection.
- Their time of engagement in exploitive labor has decreased.
- Their awareness of the dangers associated with exploitive labor has increased.
- They feel empowered with information and education.
- School drop out rates have decreased – literacy rates increased.
- Livelihoods OVC households – improving after training in life skills (micro-enterprise fundamentals)
- Levels of assertiveness and self esteem – improving
- Right to be children despite their unfortunate circumstances – restored
- Assurance to a brighter future – guaranteed with good education.
- Minimized chances to be infected with HIV and AIDS

Sustainability

- Government has taken over, the responsibility to pay school fees for all the children who were benefiting from the project.
- The Child Labour Committees are being converted to formal CBOs.
- Children heading OV households are equipped with micro-enterprise fundamental skills to improve livelihood.
- The National strategy and action plan towards eliminating the worst forms of child labour has been launched.
- Government is in the process of passing the children's bill into law

A decorative blue graphic element consisting of a thin curved line at the top left and a larger, thicker curved shape on the right side, both in a light blue color.

Recommendation

- Advocating for the importance of school as a system and a structure with potential to support OVC.

Parting words

- Child labor is not another form of child participation.
- “We may not have been part of their yesterday, but we can help shape their future.”
- “Policies and guidelines without actions are dead wood”
- “Being different is putting money where your future lies”.