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Whether originating from the African primates in the Central African forest, or from polio vaccine trials by some western scientists, there is no doubt that HIV/AIDS poses the greatest single challenge to the marginalized poor of Africa, where it has found a malnourished, vulnerable, defenceless host. Collective response is necessary by physicians and health professionals who must be at the forefront of restoring hope and a dignified quality of life. In sub-Saharan Africa, HIV/AIDS is not a security threat but a painful slow death which forces victims into exhausting their lifetime savings on expensive medicines and massive hospital bills. It leaves helpless orphans to struggle for survival in countries where government subsidy on education and healthcare has been long withdrawn so as to channel the meagre state resources into debt servicing. A combination of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and Third World debt is subjecting millions of children to the worst form of violence. This article reviews the situation in sub-Saharan Africa, with special reference to Kenya and South Africa as examples of countries devastated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Changes elsewhere are noted and the global response is critically examined.