

**"Impediments in the War on HIV/AIDS Among the Rural and Urban Poor in Kenya", *Journal of Scholarly and Scientific Perspectives*, Vol. 2, 2006, pp.45-66.**

### **ABSTRACT**

Kenya has declared war on the HIV/AIDS pandemic. But a victory in any war is often achieved when those managing the war possess unity of purpose, a common set of deeply cherished values and, above all, a *conscience* large enough to make them feel uncomfortable at the thought of deviating from those values. Kenya lacks such a *conscience*. This has undermined the efforts to win the now much publicized war on the HIV/AIDS pandemic, just as it has done in many other countries in Africa today. This article, first, presents the situation of HIV/AIDS pandemic in Kenya today, highlighting the measures the country has taken to wage war on the pandemic. Second, the article attempts to show that the efforts to win the war are undermined by corrupt political leadership that lacks a nation's *conscience* to restrain leaders from committing economic crimes, resulting in reckless blunders and misappropriation of the very funds meant for the war on the HIV/AIDS pandemic. By analyzing the events that led to the loss of the nation's *conscience*, the article then shows how this political leadership without conscience has now left the ordinary citizen in abject poverty despite the availability of immense wealth in the country. This in turn has not only created a fertile ground for the spread of HIV/AIDS but has also rendered the citizen the pitiable inability to fight back the scorch. The paper then suggests that one way of winning the war on the pandemic is to direct more efforts towards the restoration of the nation's *conscience* by putting in place measures that would ensure the cultivation of a culture of transparency, accountability and good governance in Kenya.