



8. BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDY OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING INTO HIV/AIDS INITIATIVE

CASE STUDY: Involving Men in Preventing Gender Violence and HIV Transmission

Addressing Gender Influencing Factor in HIV/AIDS

Regardless of the form of violence, and the extent of violence, having the ability to negotiate safe sex practices by many women, and placed them at risk of HIV infection. Some of the biggest challenges to preventing gender based transmission and HIV transmission are:

- Tackling gender inequality, denial of small leading to gender and violence and poor disclosure rates
- Challenging the acceptability of gender inequality, sexual relationships and decision-making
- Moving from awareness to behaviour change

To meet these challenges Stepping Stones was first developed in 1995 in Uganda. It has since been translated into over 100 countries and is now being used in over 140 countries including South Africa, Mozambique and Tanzania. It is based on the following principles:

- The best solution is one achieved by people themselves
- Men and women each need private time and space with their partner to explore their own needs and concerns about their relationship and sexual health
- Behaviour change is more likely to be effective if sustained by the whole community or village

Rather than concentrating on individual or targeted HIV groups, Stepping Stones works through groups of peers of the same gender and similar life stage (older women, older men, younger women, younger men). Each intervention is the form of a workshop comprising 12 sessions over a period of 9-12 weeks in the community. These sessions are for four themes:

- Cooperation and communication between men and women/gender problems
- Relationships, HIV/AIDS risks and non-physical vulnerability of HIV related violence and substance abuse
- What influences us to do what we do
- How to protect ourselves and our health

The group work separately, have a safe support space for talking about intimate issues, and works to develop a sense of agency and shared decision-making. Every workshop is a participatory workshop for any formal education background. The limitation of the workshop is a special request for each peer group to the community through a role-play illustrating each workshop priority need for change. These issues are then used as a starting point for a series of role plays to be developed and identified. This sharing enables the community to develop its own ideas and awareness and is done in a safe and non-threatening manner, particularly for men's perspective.

Mobilising Men's Involvement

Stepping Stones mobilises men:

- In participatory approach, needs assessment and discussion with community members, resource persons and existing groups, create opportunities for the process to gain momentum
- Introduce the explicit with their own mortality and prepare for their family's security
- Groups do their own meeting, women and men discuss, encourage regular maintenance
- Facilitator forms a group of men or women, usually from the same community
- The theme of the day can be used in a shop for workplace, union, industry and mining
- Division into men and women groups for a specific cultural or normal social gathering, health issues and most of all, a safe space for men to talk about their own health and HIV/AIDS

Measuring Success and Positive Changes

Six months after Stepping Stones workshop, a second community survey in Uganda, each of the four groups were interviewed separately about the changes they perceived in the community. Cross references revealed that each reported change was mentioned by at least six separate groups. The following were noted changes:

- Young women and men reported that they now had better sense of self between them
- Young women and men reported realising that they need to work together to cover some of the challenges of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and to engage in a more cohesive approach for their needs and HIV
- Young men reported increased responsibility in household care for sons and living with HIV/AIDS in their community
- Meetings continued for many months after the workshop was closed, indicating that the peer groups were keying in and sustaining a change

Conclusions

Stepping Stones offers:

- Women and men of all ages and backgrounds the possibility of feeling safe exploring and learning to negotiate control of their own sex and sexual health
- A path to challenge conventional gendering of women's role in the workplace and the adverse effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic
- Practical alternatives to men's and women's gendering and gendered responsibilities, enabling peer groups members to analyse their own behaviour and address consequences of their behaviour
- Women and men of all ages the ability to begin meeting their own sexual and reproductive health needs and life goals separately
- An alternative to fear of peer pressure to become sexually including sex, death and gender issues
- Strategies to foster gender equality in the community and to address gender conflict
- Sustained and reinforced awareness to address gender based violence and HIV/AIDS transmission and addressing the epidemic as an extension of issues rather than an isolated and gender-specific problem

Adapted from Gender Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS: Taking Multi-Sectoral Approach
Commonwealth Secretariat 2002



Mainstreaming Gender Into HIV and AIDS Programming

1. INTRODUCTION

As the HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to advance in the Southern African region, it is becoming more and more apparent that HIV and AIDS is a gendered issue. Gender inequalities embedded in social structures of wealth/power relations in sexual relationships, participation in decision-making processes, gender-based violence continue to fuel the HIV/AIDS crisis. HIV prevalence levels by gender in the region continue to remain high. A recent study of HIV infection that has been estimated by gender in the 29.4 million people living with HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa were women, girls and females in 66% of all Africa (by the 15-19 year age group). A similar Africa-wide survey of HIV prevalence rates in 2001 also found that women are dying younger, while it is important for development practitioners to understand the gendered nature of the epidemic, it is equally important for them to be able to address these gender issues in HIV/AIDS

2. THE GENDER DIMENSIONS OF HIV/AIDS

Strategic gender concerns equity and the redistribution of income and resources, reduction of inequalities between men and women, sexual transmission of HIV/AIDS, partner consent of equal sexual relations (STIs). Many of these responses however have failed to address economic inequalities between men and women. There is a need to go together with physical gender differences to address economic and social inequalities. This is why gender is not just a biological issue, but a social and economic one. It is about the ability to get what you need and to have a say in the decisions that affect your life. It is about the ability to get what you need and to have a say in the decisions that affect your life.

- Women are physiologically more vulnerable to HIV infection than men. Young women are especially at high risk of HIV/AIDS. This is due to their smaller size and their 20%.
- HIV women are especially at risk of contracting HIV from their male partners.
- Women are less likely to use condoms and to negotiate their own sexual health care than men.
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As the policy and programming level, gender issues have been discussed widely. At regional and national levels, many commitments have been made regarding gender equality in the community. The challenge is to put these commitments into practice. This is why gender is not just a biological issue, but a social and economic one. It is about the ability to get what you need and to have a say in the decisions that affect your life.

3. WHAT IS GENDER MAINSTREAMING?

Mainstreaming gender in development means integrating men and women's concerns, experiences, interests and contributions to development. Empowerment of both men and women in the development process is a key element in the goal of gender mainstreaming. Empowerment of both men and women in the development process is a key element in the goal of gender mainstreaming. Empowerment of both men and women in the development process is a key element in the goal of gender mainstreaming.

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mainstreaming HIV/AIDS

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While information dissemination is part of SA/AIDS core business, mainstreaming gender (and other cross cutting themes like Human Rights, Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV and AIDS (GIPA), Principles and poverty reduction) into the HIV/AIDS initiatives is a challenge. This brochure is one of the products of a project to build capacity for gender mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS. It is a guide for policy makers, programme managers, and other stakeholders in the HIV/AIDS field who include policy makers, AIDS Service Organisations (ASOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs), national HIV/AIDS coordinating bodies, gender expert teams, non-governmental organisations, and other stakeholders.

- Analyse the budgetary allocation for gender-related activities
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