
Introduction

An effective response to the problem of HIV/AIDS must look at the impact of the pandemic from a gender perspective. While an infected man is seen primarily as a threat to the income of his family, an infected woman is a threat to the life of her family, its fabric, food, security and education.

This resource book has been drafted keeping in mind the service provider and the counsellor. The manual attempts to look at the HIV infection from the gender point of view as women are particularly susceptible to it and many safe-sex messages fail to reach those living in poverty, transition, and social isolation.

The vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases is not only linked to poverty and lack of education, but also to prevailing cultural norms of inferiority. Women often lack the power to negotiate safe sex or to even control their general health including reproductive health.

This resource book is created for

- service providers.
- peer educators.
- those who work with families, especially women, including families of high risk groups.

If you are working with families, this manual will help you in

- Creating awareness about the problem of HIV/AIDS and STDs and women's vulnerability to them.
- Emphasizing the role of family in relapse prevention.
- Equipping women with assertive and negotiation skills.
- Providing guidelines for home care of the affected.
- Equipping women to form self-help groups.
- Providing preventive and supportive counselling.
- Safeguarding families from HIV.

What do you ultimately gain?

This manual seeks to provide the basic tools and information you need to integrate women and HIV/AIDS issues into the work you already do. In short, it will give you the satisfaction of helping to create a new generation of empowered women, well informed, conscious of their rights and well equipped to assert them.

The manual has nine chapters, each of which is divided into three parts: Activities, presentation and additional information related to HIV/AIDS.