

Comments from Swaziland

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- The most important issue that I believe needs to be accepted and highlighted is that HIV is spread by 'behavior' and to prevent such a spread there has to be change in behavior and/or the determinants of behavior. I feel this could be given more prominence in the document
- All prevention activities have to be rooted in the socio-cultural environment of the epidemic, taking into account values, norms, culture, traditions and other behavior determinants of the society that is being targeted.
- A clear distinction should be drawn between prevention activities which target a 'concentrated' epidemic and those targeting 'generalized' epidemics. Each requires a different strategy and program of actions.
- Prevention should target two population groups - those who are not sexually active and those who have become sexually active. The strategy with the first group would be to delay debut, eliminate risk, educate and influence future behaviour. For the second group the strategy would be to educate on risk assessment and reduce risk by, for example, reducing concurrent partnerships and using condoms.
- There is a place for considering other bio-medical prevention interventions such as male circumcision and the reduction of other biological risk factors.
- All entry points for prevention messaging should be used and the objective should be to create a general societal awareness of HIV and social movement against the disease. An appropriate mantra would be - *many activities, in many places, all the time, for a long time*
- I believe that prevention strategies, in many instances, may have failed because of the lack of credibility and the inappropriateness of the messenger. Prevention messages should be delivered by those who have the authority and in whom people have faith and trust. In many cases the appointed messengers do not have the capacity or knowledge to communicate their messages and deal effectively with their audiences. Prevention strategies will thus be considerably more effective where the capacity, and thus the credibility, of the messengers is strengthened.

I do, nevertheless, realize that by its very nature the Strategy has to be generic in order to be globally acceptable and that my comments may be too specific and related to our own specific situation and experience.