

ROLE OF VARIOUS AGENCIES IN CONTROLLING THE AIDS

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ABSTRACT:-

The wealth of the nation does not depend on the natural resources or the richness of material things but it depends on the human resources; the healthy, knowledgeable citizens can contribute to the development of the nation. If the people are suffering from diseases, they cannot contribute anything to nation. Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a disease of the human immune system caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). UNESCO initiated a Global/multi-country initiative on Education and HIV/AIDS called EDUCAIDS in 2004 and it began to work in a number of countries, including Cambodia, Jamaica, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, with the objective of strengthening education systems. It was one of the three core 'Education for All' initiatives, complementing those focused on literacy and on teacher education (UNESCO, 2005). In India, the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) carries out the country's National AIDS Programme, which includes formulation of policy and implementation of prevention and control programmes.

KEY WORD:- AIDS

INTRODUCTION:-

To lead peaceful and prosperous life health plays a significant role in one's life. Swami Vivekananda emphasized the importance of strong mind and strong body which is very essential to develop oneself. The wealth of the nation does not depend on the natural resources or the richness of material things but it depends on the human resources; the healthy, knowledgeable citizens can contribute to the development of the nation. If the people are suffering from diseases, they cannot contribute anything to nation. The diseases like HIV/AIDS, dengue, H1N1, etc., are some of few examples that challenge the human kind.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a disease of the human immune system caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). This condition progressively reduces the effectiveness of the immune system and leaves individuals susceptible to opportunistic infections and tumors. HIV is transmitted through direct contact of a mucous membrane or the bloodstream with a bodily fluid containing HIV, such as blood, semen, vaginal fluid, preseminal fluid, and breast milk. This transmission can involve anal, vaginal or oral sex, blood transfusion, contaminated hypodermic needles, exchange between mother and baby during pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or other exposure to one of the above bodily fluids. AIDS is now a pandemic

GLOBAL RESPONSE

UNESCO initiated a Global/multi-country initiative on Education and HIV/AIDS called EDUCAIDS in 2004 and it began to work in a number of countries, including Cambodia, Jamaica, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, with the objective of strengthening education systems. It was one of the three core 'Education for All' initiatives, complementing those focused on literacy and on teacher education (UNESCO, 2005). For its part, the global union Education International, with a membership of over 29 million teachers and education workers, had an HIV training programme with WHO and other partners. By 2006, this had reached 133 000 teachers in almost 25 000 schools in 17 countries.

In China, as part of the School-based HIV/AIDS Prevention Project in Sichuan province to train teachers to carry out school-based HIV/AIDS education a 'cascade' model (whereby trainers train other trainers) has been adopted (Sun, 2000). A core group of teachers were first trained. They subsequently trained larger groups of school staff (including administrators), who then trained other local school staff. Throughout the training, interactive activities were used to help teachers take a life-skills approach with students, and to integrate HIV/AIDS-related issues into the curriculum. In school activities with students included: Building life skills, Providing opportunities to address AIDS related issues across the curriculum, Drawing and writing competitions, Developing, rehearsing and performing plays, and Developing, publishing and disseminating written materials (such as leaflets and posters). National and local media have been used to publicize students' work and contribute to school-community dialogues on AIDS-related issues. Efforts were made to enhance the quality and consistency of support through close monitoring of the different levels of training, and by providing awards for excellence in teaching about HIV/AIDS education at the school level. An important first step was consultation with senior officials in government ministries and departments. This facilitated political commitment and enabled resources to be identified to promote the involvement of teachers and, ultimately, young people themselves (Sun, 2000).

In Senegal, HIV/AIDS education and other sexual and reproductive health issues have been embedded within a wider programme of school health activities as part of the broader Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH) (UNESCO, 2002). This initiative is supported by WHO, UNESCO, the World Bank and UNICEF. An action plan was agreed to and acted upon. As a result, issues related to malaria, STIs and AIDS, malnutrition oral diseases, diarrhoeal diseases are now part of the

national school curriculum. New health education guides are given to teachers training has been provided; addressing skills based health education for HIV/AIDS. Another move against HIV was by Leaders of many religions who joined hands against HIV/AIDS in Senegal. They conduct multi faith events and cultural practices to disseminate information for behaviour change. Other activities include Peer Education and Awareness among military persons.

In Canada, Toronto, Maggie's Prostitute's Safe Sex Project was started by Danny Cockerline. Sex workers were given pamphlets about safe sex and HIV knowledge, to be given to their customers. This encouraged sex workers to feel that they were practicing safe sex and promoting it with their customers (11th IAC, 1996).

INITIATIVES IN INDIA

NACO- STRATEGY

In India, the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) carries out the country's National AIDS Programme, which includes formulation of policy and implementation of prevention and control programmes. It was established in 1993 and is now running the third phase of the National AIDS Control Project (NACO, 2001). In fact, NACO is the national response to the fatal epidemic. The programmes initiated by NACO are; Blood Safety Programme: The major objectives of the Blood Safety Programme is to ensure the easily accessible, adequate supplies of safe and quality blood and blood components for all irrespective of economic or social status. To achieve this, ensured blood-banking services at the State/district level, educated and motivated people about blood voluntary donation, enforced quality control of blood and set up a HIV testing network.

National AIDS Control Organisation has prepared a comprehensive Condom Programme by outlining clear strategies in the National AIDS Prevention and Control policy. The objective of the condom programme is to ensure easy access to good quality, affordable and acceptable condoms to promote safe sex encounters. With this objective programmes are organized to sensitize people for using condoms for family planning and for preventing HIV and STD and convinced the clients and the commercial sex workers, about condoms as a means for preventing the HIV transmission, and made available low cost and good quality condoms to the people all over the country easily at the time and place when they need it.

Information, Education and Communication Programme (IEC) is launched as one of the most important preventive strategies in the fight against HIV/AIDS. IEC is a process that informs, motivates and helps people to adopt and maintain healthy practices and life skills (NACO, 2001). It aims at empowering individuals and enabling them to make correct decisions about safe behaviour practices. IEC also attempts to create an environment which is conducive and supports access to treatment and services for those already infected. IEC is an effective strategy to enhance knowledge, create positive attitude that lead to change the behaviour pattern of the community in a rational way.

The IEC department of NACO has prepared several packages of materials aimed at various population groups, to be used by the outreach workers, health workers and peer educators working in government as well as non-government organizations. Packages comprised flashcards, posters, stickers, leaflets, and guide book training guides, educational games and kits.

NACO is utilizing the massive outreach of Doordarshan and private satellite channel for telecast of messages on HIV/AIDS prevention and control during prime time. These include messages on sexually transmitted diseases, blood safety and voluntary blood donation. Some of the specific activities are as follows:

NACO has sponsored a classical music programme Spirit of Unity Concerts to mainstream the issue of HIV/AIDS and to reach out to the cultural elite and other educated classes through this programme. Telecast of Spots made by the renowned film makers featuring the popular film stars are telecast to create awareness and empower women to discuss the difficult issue of HIV/AIDS in the family and prevent further spread of the infection.

NACO had oriented the personnel of the Directorate of Field Publicity on the effective use of mobile exhibition kits produced by NACO in collaboration with DAVP in the appropriate regional languages. These kits were used in a countrywide month long campaign 'Swastha Jagrukta Mah' (Health Awareness Month) in every Parliamentary Constituency sponsored by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Since 1994, the Song and Drama Division of Government of India has involved in the AIDS awareness campaign. It had produced several street plays, songs and dramas and had performed in 400 different locations utilizing the local drama troupes in many States. The Directorate of Field Publicity had also participated in the campaign conducting several programmes such as seminars, debate/essay and quiz competitions, panel discussions, features, phone-in programmes and film shows for AIDS awareness.

Two films have been made by Bollywood in 2004 and 2005 on HIV and the stigma and discrimination attached to it. *Phir Milenge*, and *My Brother Nikhil* are excellent feature films which however did not do well at the box office. Even though the Indian films did not have box office coffers jingling, they portrayed in a sensitive manner the trauma of a very real, social issue confronting the nation. In that sense they are landmark films (HIV/ AIDS in News – Journalists as Catalysts, 2005). The film *Philadelphia*, from Hollywood was the first mainstream Hollywood film highlighting unsafe sex between men that make them vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

A toll free National AIDS Telephone Helpline has been set up to provide access to information and counselling on HIV/AIDS related issues. This is a computerized four digit number, 1097, with a voice response system linked with the telephonic hotline. This is a very popular service, since it maintains the confidentiality of the callers and helps the caller clarify doubts and access personal counselling without revealing their identity (NACO, 2001).

Young people are among the most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. School AIDS Education is one of the important programmes that focuses on student youth, awareness levels and that help young people resist peer pressure and develop a safe and responsible lifestyle (NACO, 2001). The programme reinforces family values and respect for the opposite sex. The activities

include training of teachers and peer educators among students, role playing, debates and discussions, question box and access to referral services, if necessary. A training module has been developed for the programme in consultation with UNICEF.

International Labor Organization's Tripartite Action on HIV/AIDS in India: The ILO, in consultation with its Indian tripartite constituents and the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO), has developed a three-phased programme, aimed at establishing a sustainable national action on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support in the world of work (ILO, 2004).

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