



**AIDSCAP**

**AIDSCAP Women's  
Initiative**

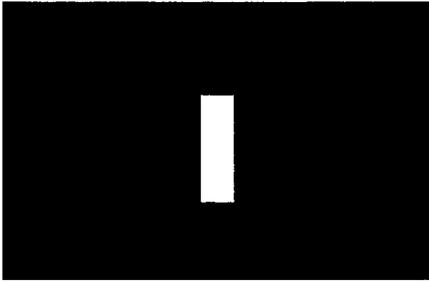
***1994 Annual Progress Report***



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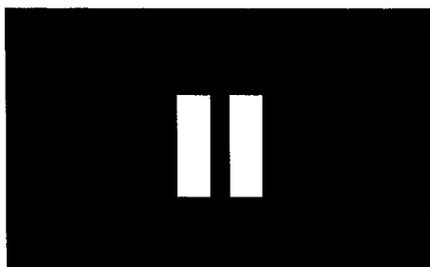
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## **INTRODUCTION**

This document describes the evolution of the AIDS Control and Prevention Project Women's Initiative (AWI) and its major activities and accomplishments in 1994. The Initiative has been shaped by the need, as expressed by the field, to develop HIV/AIDS prevention strategies with a gender component. It has facilitated the incorporation and application of a gender approach to AIDSCAP subprojects and strategies and, through publications, conferences, and meetings, encouraged collaboration among organizations on topics related to women and AIDS.



## THE WID BUY-IN to AIDSCAP

### A. Background

In 1992 the Women in Development (WID) Office of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) formally offered to support the position of a Women and AIDS Officer to serve as a gender specialist and advisor to the entire AIDS Control and Prevention Project (AIDSCAP). The position was created in recognition of the need to address the escalating epidemic of HIV among women and adolescent girls, whose rates of infection are increasing faster than those among men. The WID buy-in to AIDSCAP was premised on the view that an understanding of gender relations is essential to designing effective HIV/AIDS prevention and control strategies. Duties of the Women and AIDS Officer included integrating a gender perspective into AIDSCAP's technical assistance, evaluation, monitoring, and policy work, as well as networking with other organizations working in HIV/AIDS prevention.

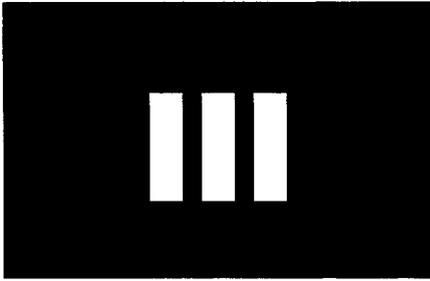
### B. Women and AIDS Strategy Development

E Maxine Ankrah, sociologist on the Faculty of Social Sciences, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, and women's rights advocate, joined the staff of the Behavioral Research Unit of AIDSCAP as the Women and AIDS Officer in April 1993. At that time, Dr. Ankrah undertook an assessment of AIDSCAP projects for their gender perspective. She also contacted 20 major organizations in the Washington and New York areas to identify unmet needs for women in HIV/AIDS prevention programs. Following this initial assessment, Dr. Ankrah concluded that AIDSCAP strategies, like those of most HIV/AIDS prevention organizations, required revision. She worked to incorporate women and HIV/AIDS onto the agenda of AIDSCAP strategies and subprojects so that women could be addressed more effectively.

A Women and AIDS Strategy Document, developed in December 1993, broadened the categories of women targeted for interventions beyond groups of women traditionally considered at "high risk" to women in the general population. Furthermore, the strategy outlined future directions for AIDSCAP units and country programs.

*"Current agendas are largely ignorant of women's roles and those social situations in partner relationships, in the family and community that fuel the threat of HIV/AIDS in this population. Little attention has been given to finding appropriate mechanisms for reaching women who are not commonly thought to be at risk, but who, nevertheless, are greatly exposed to HIV and the threat of AIDS."*

*(Women and AIDS Strategy Document, AIDSCAP, December 1993)*



## **THE AIDSCAP WOMEN'S INITIATIVE (AWI)**

### **A. Establishment of AWI**

As a result of the ideas expressed in the Women and AIDS Strategy Document, it was recognized in March 1994 that the WID interest in AIDSCAP should move beyond research to include interventions and policy work aimed at women in the general population. The WID buy-in was revised and increased at this time. Consequently, AWI was established as an autonomous unit within the Office of the Director of AIDSCAP, with Dr. Ankrah assuming the position of Senior Advisor.

### **B. Goals of AWI**

The Initiative aims to

- 1) Strengthen the capacity of developing countries to design, implement, evaluate and sustain comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention programs that prevent the transmission of HIV in women,
- 2) Contribute to the basic knowledge of the patterns, contexts, and determinants of behaviors associated with the transmission and prevention of HIV and other STDs in women,
- 3) Evaluate and document the effectiveness of AIDSCAP activities focused on women and girls over the life of the project.

### **C. Institutionalizing the Initiative**

The integration of the Women's Initiative into AIDSCAP programming was accomplished through a variety of mechanisms, including the development of a comprehensive scope of work, staffing of the Women's Initiative Unit, integration of women's issues into the agendas of other AIDSCAP units, and collaboration with regional and country office staff.

### AWI Scope of Work (SOW)

The scope of work, drafted in March 1994, was to

ensure that the women's component of the AIDSCAP strategy was gender- and culturally sensitive and would involve women in the design and implementation of AIDSCAP activities,

provide leadership in the development of an HIV/AIDS prevention model for women, participate in appropriate for a, and contribute to publications,

collaborate with organizations involved in advancing women's concerns, particularly as they relate to health, and,

support a range of prevention activities for women consistent with AIDSCAP goals

### Staffing

Discussions in May 1994 led to the appointment of five regional AWI point persons and to the recruitment of a staff assistant and program officer. The staff assistant started in October 1994 and the program officer began in January 1995.

### Field Communications

The field-driven nature of the Initiative requires constant communication with field personnel. Since May 1994, the Senior Advisor has worked extensively with point persons in assessing regional needs and planning for future interventions, policy initiatives, and research projects on women and AIDS. She traveled to the Africa and Asia Regional Offices to orient field staff to the Initiative, discuss policy and programmatic issues related to the expanded focus on women, and develop AWI plans of action for each region. In July 1994 a letter was issued to AID Missions in Priority Countries to introduce the Initiative and to explain its significance in HIV/AIDS prevention programming.

### Integration at Headquarters

Following the revision of the WID buy-in in the spring of 1994, AIDSCAP committed core funding for AWI. The Initiative has worked with key units to develop tools for designing, implementing, and evaluating subprojects for women. The Initiative also worked with the Information Programs Unit to advise in the production of a new Women's Forum feature in the magazine *AIDScaptions* and in the creation of an AWI information brochure.

# IV

## **AWI ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Initiative simultaneously established itself and initiated numerous activities related to its scope of work. These are summarized in the following tables.

### **A. Country and Regional Activities**

AIDSCAP has included and benefited women through a variety of activities. A gender analysis of country subprojects through June 1994 revealed that one third of STD treatment and education programs were directed toward women. A similar percentage was reached through peer education and community outreach activities in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. However, these targeted interventions with women centered primarily on identified high risk situations. Through the Initiative, AIDSCAP has broadened its involvement with vulnerable women to interventions that consider them in their various situations and roles in society, and not only in terms of their sexual behavior.

Table 1 lists AWI country and regional activities in differing stages of development and implementation. All activities originated from needs expressed in the field through AIDSCAP staff and implementing agencies. In addition, the incorporation of a gender perspective into AIDSCAP subprojects is evident in both new and amended sub-projects. There is an increased number of women's organizations as implementing agencies.

### **B. Conferences, Meetings, Publications, and Special Projects**

Table 2 highlights conferences, meetings, publications, and special projects that the Initiative has planned or to which it has made a significant contribution.

## Women's Initiative Country and Regional Activities

Table 1

Activity	Site	STATUS		Comments
		In Prog.	Proj. Start (95 Q)	
<b>AFRICA</b>				
Female Condom Action search	Kenya	✓	Re	Draft protocol developed and reviewed Sites being chosen
Mothers and Daughters Research	Kenya		3	Intergenerational intervention encourages communication between mothers and daughters about sex education and related issues
Women's Market Association	Senegal	✓		Links HIV/AIDS prevention to economic empowerment of women
Girls 8-12	Senegal		2	Focus on the girl child ages 8-12
Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs)	Tanzania		3	Demonstrates the use of TBAs in social support networks
Displaced Women	Tanzania		4	Delineation of needs and programs for women displaced by war
Gender and AIDS Conference	Africa Region	✓		Collaborating with REDSO and AIDSCAP Regional Office to develop gender analysis workshop and tools for Mission/Regional Office staff
<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>				
Materials	Brazil		2	Reprint HIV/AIDS prevention materials for women
Female Condom Action Research	Brazil	✓		Draft protocol developed and reviewed Sites being chosen
Gender Training of Volunteers	Dominican Republic	✓		Trained volunteers working with adolescents to adopt a gender sensitive approach to HIV/AIDS prevention
Women's Advocacy Forum	Dominican Republic		2	Promote exchange of ideas and information on women's health issues
Workplace Gender Training	Dominican Republic		3	Gender-specific training for a workplace HIV/AIDS prevention program
Educational Materials	Dominican Republic		2	Development of HIV/AIDS prevention materials for women
Empowerment Model	Haiti		3	Assessment of a model for women's organizations in other regions
Rural Outreach	Jamaica		4	Incorporation of HIV/AIDS prevention into rural outreach for women
Women's Center/Medical Association of Jamaica	Jamaica		2	Institutional strengthening for HIV/AIDS prevention among women
<b>ASIA</b>				
Femal Condom Action Research	Thailand	✓		Draft protocol developed and reviewed Sites being chosen
Widow's Project	Thailand		3	Links economic empowerment to the prevention of AIDS
Women and AIDS Workshop	Asia Region	✓		Regional workshop on Women and AIDS will include participants from Cambodia Laos Vietnam Yunan Province of China Myanmar (Burma) and Thailand (June 1995)

## AWI Highlights Conferences and Meetings, Publications, and Special Projects

Table 2

### Conferences and Meetings

By sharing information and lessons learned at conferences and meetings, AIDSCAP and other organizations concerned about women and AIDS can develop effective strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention among women. The Senior Advisor made several contributions through this medium.

The IXth International AIDS Conference and IVth STD World Congress, Berlin, Germany – Moderated a workshop panel, "Individual and Institutional Response Risk Perception"

7th International Meeting on Women's Health, Kampala, Uganda – Designed and facilitated a workshop, "AIDS Mothers and Daughters"

The Association for Women in Development's Sixth International Forum, Washington, D C – Organized and moderated panel with AIDSCAP colleagues entitled, "Designing AIDS Prevention Projects with an Impact on Women"

International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Cairo, Egypt – Developed and moderated a panel and caucus entitled, "Women, Development, and AIDS"

Preparatory Meetings, Fourth United Nations Conference on Women (Beijing), Washington, D C – Wrote and submitted language on women and HIV/AIDS to regional platforms for action as part of the Health Issues Working Group

### Publications

Publications are a means of communicating knowledge about women and AIDS to multiple audiences. They provide the groundwork for understanding and addressing ways in which women are affected by HIV/AIDS.

"Women and Children and AIDS," by Ankrah with Marvellous M Mhloyi, Florence Manguyu, and Ruth W Nduati in *AIDS in Africa*, eds Essex et al, Raven Press, 1994 – Discussion of the impact of HIV/AIDS on vulnerable women across all life cycles and their affected and infected children

"Care and Support Systems," by Ankrah with M Schwartz and J Miller in *AIDS and Women's Experiences Emerging Policy Agendas*, eds Ankrah and Long, Columbia University Press, to be published 1995 – Analysis of the systemic as well as sociocultural factors impeding caregiving to women. Explanation of models of approach to care and support

### Special Projects

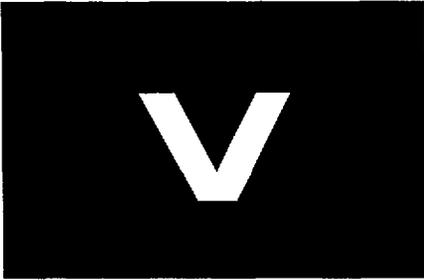
The Initiative addresses problems identified by women, provides technical assistance requested from the field, and assures the incorporation of women and AIDS into the AIDSCAP agenda. This has been a major focus of attention over the past year.

**Indexing of Subprojects** – Conducted a quantitative and qualitative gender analysis of a sample of AIDSCAP subprojects. Preliminary results illustrate the need to broaden the focus on women and to evaluate projects with attention to the gender component. Guidelines and a database have been created for inputting and accessing information.

**Women and AIDS Strategy Document for AIDSCAP, 1993**

**Cairo Women and AIDS pamphlet** – Producing and distributing a booklet of panel presentations from the ICPD Conference

**Guidelines for selection of NGOs in India** – Guidelines are being drafted for the selection of NGOs to participate in the AIDSCAP Program in India. These guidelines will reflect an emphasis on gender analysis and integration of HIV/AIDS activities into NGO programs



## PLANS FOR 1995

In 1994 the Women's Initiative laid the groundwork for a number of activities and for integrating women and AIDS fully into the agendas of AIDSCAP, government, and non-governmental organizations. In 1995 it will concentrate on the interconnected areas of implementation, evaluation, and collaboration.

### A. Implementation and Evaluation

All proposed activities described in Table 1 are expected to be implemented. The Initiative will assist in the development of subagreements and letters of agreement as appropriate, provide technical assistance, monitor subprojects, and coordinate with field staff. Lessons learned will be shared among subprojects from the different regions. Evaluation is an integral component of improved implementation, in order to effectively assess and understand the impact and outcome of subprojects targeting women, the Women's Initiative will work with AIDSCAP staff to develop appropriate evaluation indicators and tools. Evaluation results will provide valuable information for improved planning and implementation of future activities.

### B. Collaboration

A Women's Council will be convened bi-annually to advise on women-related activities and the direction of the Women's Initiative. The Council will be comprised of women's health, policy, and advocacy experts who have specific interests in the area of HIV/AIDS and STDs. Regional offices will use the Council as a model for developing regional councils with a similar focus.

The Initiative will continue to work with the USAID HIV/AIDS Division, Family Health International, AIDSCAP regional offices, and the Health Issues Group in Washington, D C , to prepare for the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September 1995. This collaboration includes the submission of language for the Global Platform for Action and the development of presentations for the preparatory meetings and the Conference in Beijing.

In collaboration with other authors and the WID Office, a book entitled *AIDS and Women's Experience: Emerging Policy Agendas* is planned to be published by the autumn of 1995. Among the authors are AIDSCAP and USAID staff as well as HIV/AIDS researchers and activists.