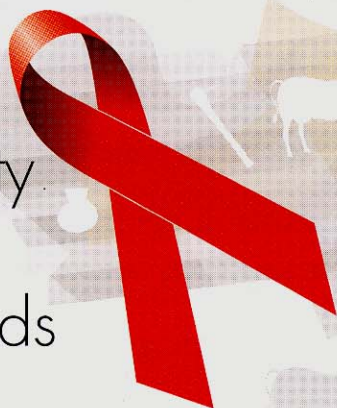


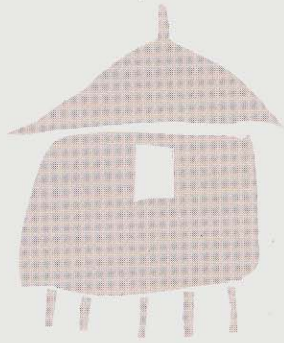
HIV/AIDS

food security
and rural
livelihoods



FAO HIV/AIDS
PROGRAMME





Impacts of HIV/AIDS on food security

Decrease in the agricultural labour force

Chronic illness or death of a household member

Change in household composition

Increase in the number of orphaned children

Change in household nutritional status

Acute decline in household income

Decrease in credit availability and use

Decrease in aggregate community income and assets

Loss of agricultural knowledge, practices and skills and their transmission from one generation to the next

Decrease in access to natural resources, especially land

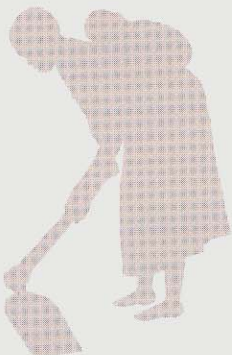
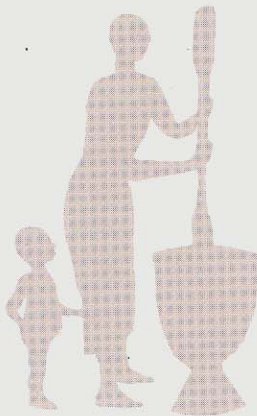
Exacerbation of gender-based differences in access to resources

Change in social resources

Increase in social exclusion

Decrease in tangible household assets

Degradation of public services



Implications

- ▶ Decrease in the area cultivated, in weeding, pruning and mulching resulting in a decline in crop variety, yields and ultimately soil fertility
- ▶ Increase in fallow land returning to bush
- ▶ Less labour-intensive cropping patterns and animal production
- ▶ Decrease in women's productive activities due to their role as care providers
- ▶ Missed planting seasons



- ▶ Increase in health expenditure
- ▶ Funeral costs

- ▶ Change in the age or sex of the household head
- ▶ Increase in the household dependency ratio
- ▶ Out-migration of young adults



- ▶ Increase in the fostering of orphaned children
- ▶ Child-headed households resulting in reduced attendance or withdrawal of children from school

- ▶ Increase in the malnutrition of people living with AIDS and other household members due to the increasing impoverishment of the household

- ▶ Decrease in farm income sources and the proportion of farm output marketed
- ▶ Sale of land
- ▶ Liquidation of savings and slaughtering of livestock to provide income for health care and funerals
- ▶ Decrease in women's contributions to household income
- ▶ Decline in purchased items including food
- ▶ Increased need for cash income sometimes resulting in sex work

- ▶ Increase in interest rates and more frequent loan defaults

- ▶ Reduction in investment
- ▶ Increase in community expenditure for formal and informal health care

- ▶ Decrease in the availability of skilled labour and essential agricultural knowledge for orphan-headed households
- ▶ Loss of gender-specific agricultural knowledge

- ▶ Depletion of resources in close proximity to households, especially water and forest assets
- ▶ Decrease in biodiversity and the pool of genetic resources

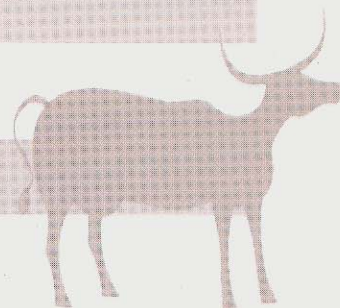
- ▶ Increase in gender inequality, resulting in a decrease in access to land, credit and knowledge, for women in general, but particularly for widows

- ▶ Less time available to participate in community-based organizations, associations and other support networks

- ▶ Increased stigma associated with HIV, thus increasing the difficulty of maintaining social and kin groups

- ▶ Poor household maintenance
- ▶ Increase in sale of household goods, equipment and tools

- ▶ Reduction in the quality and quantity of public service provision
- ▶ Less maintenance of communal irrigation systems, terraces and roads



Agriculture sector responses



Labour-saving technologies

Possibilities include: low-input agriculture; lighter ploughs and tools that can be used by older children, women and the elderly; improved seed varieties that require less labour for weeding; intercropping; minimum tillage; access to potable water; and provision of fuel-efficient stoves that can free women for more economically productive activities.

Knowledge preservation and transmission

Ensure that basic agricultural skills are transmitted through informal and formal community institutions, such as extension services and schools. Reinforce community-based mechanisms to preserve local knowledge, including biodiversity and gender-specific agricultural skills.

Rural institutions and capacity building

All rural service providers – for education, health, agricultural extension, credit and finance, women's associations, nutrition groups, irrigation committees and terrace maintenance associations – need to be strengthened, in addition to local informal community networks, which provide most assistance to AIDS-affected households.

Gender equality

Efforts must be made to reduce gender-based differences in access to and control of resources and livelihood assets – in particular, inequalities in access to land, credit, employment, education and information.

Improving nutrition

Possible strategies would include: nutritional home gardens; use of improved crop management and plant varieties with higher yields; emphasis on staple crops; use of small ruminants for consumption, sale and manure; education and labour exchange arrangements.

Social and economic safety nets

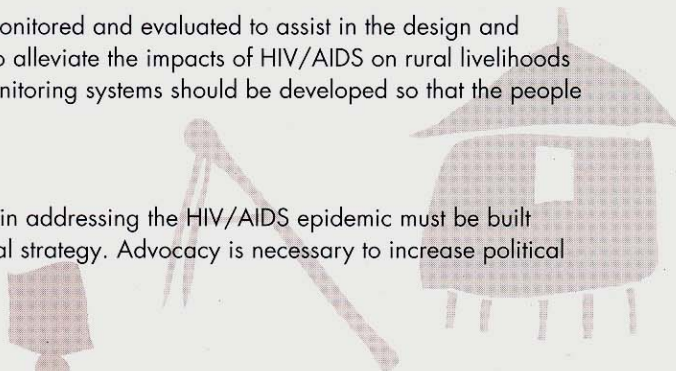
Communities have developed a range of strategies to cope with the impacts of HIV/AIDS, most of which are traditionally based and coupled with extended family support. Efforts must be made to strengthen community-based initiatives, especially safety nets that are essential for food security.

Monitoring and evaluation

Response strategies need to be appropriately monitored and evaluated to assist in the design and implementation of more effective programmes to alleviate the impacts of HIV/AIDS on rural livelihoods and food security. In addition, participatory monitoring systems should be developed so that the people themselves can measure progress.

Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS

The experience of all partners, from all sectors, in addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic must be built upon in order to develop an effective agricultural strategy. Advocacy is necessary to increase political commitment and influence national policies.



For further information contact:
Population and Development Service
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00100 Rome, Italy

Tel.: (+39) 06 57052346
Fax: (+39) 06 57055490/52004
E-mail: HIVAIDS@fao.org
Web site: www.fao.org

