



POSTER PRESENTATION

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Women HIV education, capacity building and economic empowerment initiative

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Background

The national sentinel survey, 2005 HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in Nigeria is estimated at 4.4%. This shows a reduction from the 2004 prevalence rate of 5.0%. However, the reduction may not be significant in terms of the population of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Women have been reported to be the most affected. Women vulnerability to HIV can be attributed to social, economic and cultural factors. HIV prevention initiatives aimed at halting the spread of HIV among women population must integrate an economic empowerment programme if meaningful impact is to be made. It is in this view that Health Matters Incorporated (HMI) implemented a project on Women HIV education, capacity building and economic empowerment initiative in Makoko community in Mainland lga of Lagos state.

The goal is to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS through an integrated HIV education, capacity building and economic empowerment programme.

Methods

- Women HIV education and economic empowerment initiative project is an integrated programme aimed at building the capacity of women fish smokers and small business owners including HIV/AIDS and building their economic network for self reliance.
- HMI provided capacity building training in fish smoking, hairdressing and beads stringing for women in mainland lga of Lagos state with support from Leaders Quest and Micro Small and Medium Enterprise Development (MSME) Nigeria.
- HIV/AIDS and life skills education through training and distributions of Information, Communication and Education materials.

- Monthly women health forum to discuss challenging issues around women and HIV/AIDS and foster solutions as a group.

Results

- 200 women had their capacity build in hairdressing, beads stringing and fish smoking and this provided more economic power for women.
- 50 women were provided with soft loan which lead to increased turnover
- 25 women were linked to micro finance bank for further assistance
- Women who participated in the programme were able to negotiate for safer sex practices with their partners.

Discussion

Poverty and economic dependency on men is a driving factor for women inability to negotiate for safer sex practices with their partners.

Programme designed to address the economic, capacity and reproductive health need of women in integrated approach help to increase women participation.

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