What must be done?

- The stigma associated with people living with HIV/AIDS must be ended. Women and orphans are cast from families, children from their school and workers from their workplace. Ignorance breeds needless fear.
- Confidential testing centres must be made operational in every district. HIV/AIDS must be fought at the grass-roots level.
- Women are a vital target for information and testing. Lost they be left defenceless. It is also important to reach drug users and their partners.
- HIV/AIDS information — and counseling — must be universal. Everyone should know the truth about HIV/AIDS.
- People must learn that a single, uninfected partner is the best defence.
- Those who do engage in risky behaviour must learn the value of a high quality condom and how to obtain one.
- Treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS, including antiretroviral drugs, should be provided free of charge, given that the expense is beyond the reach of many.
- The importance of quickly educating youth is a key element in the campaign.

All the danger signs are there. Knowledge of the disease itself is low, the knowledge of preventive measures is far short of what is necessary and counseling is unavailable to many. HIV/AIDS has come to Nagaland and is now a genuine epidemic.

This series of factsheets on the six hard-hit HIV/AIDS states (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland and Telang Nadu) are available in English and the respective state language and are free of charge to individuals and organisations. For additional copies, please contact the Population Foundation of India at the address below.

Factsheet prepared by:
Population Foundation of India
B-28, Qutab Institutional Area, Tara Crescent, New Delhi 110 016
Telephone: 91-11-2686 7090 Fax: 91-11-2685 2766 e-mail: popfound@sify.com
www.popfound.org

Population Reference Bureau
1875 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 520, Washington, DC 20009
Telephone: (202) 483-1100 Fax: (202) 328-3937 e-mail: popref@prb.org
www.prb.org

Funding was provided through the generosity of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Accurate knowledge, testing and counselling are three main weapons in the struggle against HIV/AIDS...

Overall, in these states, 28 percent of survey respondents said that they believed testing for HIV infection was possible in their area. However, the percentage who know of a place to be tested was a shocking zero percent – no respondent could identify a testing place. Testing for HIV is not only in the individual’s own self-interest, but would act as a strong deterrent to its spread.
How Far Has AIDS Spread?

Of officially reported cases of AIDS from hospitals and clinics across the state are only a small fraction of the total. However, their rise from 103 in 2001 to 343 through August 2003 shows that the disease is rapidly gaining ground. Of those 343 cases, 45 were added in the first eight months of 2003 alone.

Among adults, males are infected 3:1 compared to females, but the number of infected females is rising. About 90 percent of the total reported AIDS cases are in the age group 15-44.

Bridge Groups

The high rate of HIV infection among women in antenatal clinics indicates that the disease is being carried to the general population by a “bridge” group. Husbands are a bridge that carries HIV from high-risk groups, such as sex workers and their clients, to their spouses.

Tragically, pregnant women can pass the infection to their unborn child or, after birth, by breastfeeding, an otherwise recommended practice.

Among pregnant women, the high rates of infection for those with higher education shows that even these groups have been unable to protect themselves from infection.

A true AIDS epidemic is not one where the services of sex workers, infect their wives with HIV who then pass the disease to their babies. The epidemic is complete...

“Bridge” groups, such as husbands who use the services of sex workers, infect their wives with HIV who then pass the disease to their babies. The epidemic is complete...

Measuring the Spread

In order to measure the extent of HIV infection, testing is conducted at “sentinel sites” among high and low-risk groups. High-risk groups are patients at intravenous drug user (IDU) clinics and patients at sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinics. Women treated in antenatal clinics (ANCs) are the low-risk group.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nagaland is now categorized as high prevalence, with five percent or more of high-risk groups testing positive and one percent or more of women in antenatal clinics testing positive.

The risk of HIV through sex with an IDU is rapidly gaining ground. Of those 343 cases, 45 were added in the first eight months of 2003 alone.

Among adults, males are infected 3:1 compared to females, but the number of infected females is rising. About 90 percent of the total reported AIDS cases are in the age group 15-44.

Bridge Groups

The high rate of HIV infection among women in antenatal clinics indicates that the disease is being carried to the general population by a “bridge” group. Husbands are a bridge that carries HIV from high-risk groups, such as sex workers and their clients, to their spouses.

Tragically, pregnant women can pass the infection to their unborn child or, after birth, by breastfeeding, an otherwise recommended practice.

Among pregnant women, the high rates of infection for those with higher education shows that even these groups have been unable to protect themselves from infection.

A true AIDS epidemic is not one where the services of sex workers, infect their wives with HIV who then pass the disease to their babies. The epidemic is complete...

“Bridge” groups, such as husbands who use the services of sex workers, infect their wives with HIV who then pass the disease to their babies. The epidemic is complete...

Measuring the Spread

In order to measure the extent of HIV infection, testing is conducted at “sentinel sites” among high and low-risk groups. High-risk groups are patients at intravenous drug user (IDU) clinics and patients at sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinics. Women treated in antenatal clinics (ANCs) are the low-risk group.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nagaland is now categorized as high prevalence, with five percent or more of high-risk groups testing positive and one percent or more of women in antenatal clinics testing positive.

The risk of HIV through sex with an IDU is rapidly gaining ground. Of those 343 cases, 45 were added in the first eight months of 2003 alone.

Among adults, males are infected 3:1 compared to females, but the number of infected females is rising. About 90 percent of the total reported AIDS cases are in the age group 15-44.

Bridge Groups

The high rate of HIV infection among women in antenatal clinics indicates that the disease is being carried to the general population by a “bridge” group. Husbands are a bridge that carries HIV from high-risk groups, such as sex workers and their clients, to their spouses.

Tragically, pregnant women can pass the infection to their unborn child or, after birth, by breastfeeding, an otherwise recommended practice.

Among pregnant women, the high rates of infection for those with higher education shows that even these groups have been unable to protect themselves from infection.

A true AIDS epidemic is not one where the services of sex workers, infect their wives with HIV who then pass the disease to their babies. The epidemic is complete...

“Bridge” groups, such as husbands who use the services of sex workers, infect their wives with HIV who then pass the disease to their babies. The epidemic is complete...

Measuring the Spread

In order to measure the extent of HIV infection, testing is conducted at “sentinel sites” among high and low-risk groups. High-risk groups are patients at intravenous drug user (IDU) clinics and patients at sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinics. Women treated in antenatal clinics (ANCs) are the low-risk group.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nagaland is now categorized as high prevalence, with five percent or more of high-risk groups testing positive and one percent or more of women in antenatal clinics testing positive.

The risk of HIV through sex with an IDU is rapidly gaining ground. Of those 343 cases, 45 were added in the first eight months of 2003 alone.

Among adults, males are infected 3:1 compared to females, but the number of infected females is rising. About 90 percent of the total reported AIDS cases are in the age group 15-44.

Bridge Groups

The high rate of HIV infection among women in antenatal clinics indicates that the disease is being carried to the general population by a “bridge” group. Husbands are a bridge that carries HIV from high-risk groups, such as sex workers and their clients, to their spouses.

Tragically, pregnant women can pass the infection to their unborn child or, after birth, by breastfeeding, an otherwise recommended practice.

Among pregnant women, the high rates of infection for those with higher education shows that even these groups have been unable to protect themselves from infection.

A true AIDS epidemic is not one where the services of sex workers, infect their wives with HIV who then pass the disease to their babies. The epidemic is complete...

“Bridge” groups, such as husbands who use the services of sex workers, infect their wives with HIV who then pass the disease to their babies. The epidemic is complete...

Measuring the Spread

In order to measure the extent of HIV infection, testing is conducted at “sentinel sites” among high and low-risk groups. High-risk groups are patients at intravenous drug user (IDU) clinics and patients at sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinics. Women treated in antenatal clinics (ANCs) are the low-risk group.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nagaland is now categorized as high prevalence, with five percent or more of high-risk groups testing positive and one percent or more of women in antenatal clinics testing positive.

The risk of HIV through sex with an IDU is rapidly gaining ground. Of those 343 cases, 45 were added in the first eight months of 2003 alone.

Among adults, males are infected 3:1 compared to females, but the number of infected females is rising. About 90 percent of the total reported AIDS cases are in the age group 15-44.