

HIV/AIDS - The Human Dimension

Voices from the Hindu world





"Oneness – the unity of all ...
And so the final essence of things is this Unity.
What we see as many – as gold, love, sorrow,
the world-is really God...We see many, yet there is but One existence ...
These names differ only in the degrees of their expression.
The one matter of today is the spirit of the future.
The worm of today – the God of tomorrow these distinctions
which we so love are all parts of One.
Who can help the infinite ... Even the hand that comes to you through the
darkness will have to be your own."

- Swami Vivekananda



Acknowledgements



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FACTS

 **AIDS** or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is the **late stage** of the Human Immuno deficiency Virus (HIV) infection.  People infected with HIV/AIDS can live for years without any signs of the disease and **look and feel healthy**. Therefore, Without proper diagnosis an infected person has the ability to transmit the disease without even knowing it.  **Prevention** is fundamental to defeating HIV/AIDS, and education is the best method of empowering people with the knowledge of prevention.  There is **no present cure** or vaccine for either HIV or AIDS.  The **mortality rate** is very high (*50 % of adults with AIDS die within 18 months after being diagnosed*). For children the survival period is shorter.  As of the end of 2002, only 5% of the millions living with HIV and AIDS in the world had access to life prolonging antiretroviral medicines and only 10% had access to **basic care**.  The World Health Organization's (WHO) initiative "**3 by 5**" aims to make **antiretroviral therapy** available to three million people by 2005.

Source : www.unaids.org & www.psgaidsinfo.org

Adults and children estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS as of the end of 2003:

North America	90 000 - 1.2 million
Western Europe	520 000 - 680 000
Eastern Europe & Central Asia	1.2 - 1.8 million
East Asia & Pacific	700 000 - 1.3 million
North Africa & Middle East	470 000 - 730 000
Caribbean	350 000 - 590 000
South & South-East Asia	4.6 - 8.2 million
Sub-Saharan Africa	25.0 - 28.2 million
Australia & New Zealand	12 000 - 18 000
Latin America	1.3 - 1.9 million

Source : www.unaids.org & www.psgaidsinfo.org

A **cquired** - In the context of AIDS, it means an illness that can be caught from another person.

I **mmune**
People living with AIDS have a shortage of the blood cells that fight diseases. This shortage is known as immuno deficiency.

D **eficiency**

S **yndrome** - A group of signs and symptoms of sickness that, when they appear, indicate that the illness is present.

Source : *Basic information on AIDS - WHO*



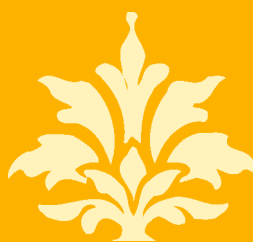
"Religious leaders and those associated with faith-based organizations in many places around the world have already risen to the challenge of HIV/AIDS. Yet more work is urgently needed to stop the spread of HIV and to alleviate the suffering caused by AIDS, using compassion, leadership and a sense of moral responsibility that people of all faiths embrace."

Source : *What Religious Leaders can do about HIV/AIDS : Action for Children and Young People - WCRP*



"I know, too, that I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself. A life of goodness is enjoined upon us, not because it will bring good to us, but because it is the eternal and immutable law of nature ...Virtuous action consists in a strenuous pursuit of good merely for the sake of doing good ...

The power to do good does not come to us from without. It exists always within us and we have only to develop it by proper means. The highest moral law is that we should unremittingly work for the good of mankind. It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words ... Faith does not admit of telling. It has to be lived and then it becomes self-propagating." - Mahatma Gandhi



"Future generations will judge our era a large part by our response to the AIDS pandemic. By tackling it decisively we will also be building health systems that can meet the health needs of today and tomorrow and continue the advance to Health for All. This is an historic opportunity we cannot afford to miss."

- LEE Jong - wook,

Director General, World Health Organization, Geneva, May 2004.



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