

Literacy, Gender and HIV/AIDS Series

# Take Care of those You Love

NAMIBIA



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Literacy and Non-Formal Education Section

Division of Basic Education

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# **Take Care of those You Love**

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**Product of a UNESCO workshop for the Preparation  
of Gender-sensitive booklets on HIV/AIDS**

**Adapted from a booklet produced at the UNESCO  
Workshop for the Preparation of Gender-sensitive Materials**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

**This booklet is one of an ever-growing series of easy-to-read materials produced at a succession of UNESCO workshops.**

**The workshops are based on the appreciation that gender-sensitive literacy materials are powerful tools for communicating messages on HIV/AIDS to poor rural people, particularly illiterate women and out-of-school girls.**

**Based on the belief that HIV/AIDS is simultaneously a health and a social, cultural and economic issue, the workshops train a wide range of stakeholders in HIV/AIDS prevention including literacy, health and other development workers, HIV/AIDS specialists, law enforcement officers, material developers and media professionals.**

**Before a workshop begins, the participants select their target communities and carry out needs assessments of their potential readers.**

**At the workshops, participants go through exercises helping them to fine-tune their sensitivity to gender issues and to how these affect people's risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. The analysis of these assessments at the workshops serves as the basis for identifying the priority issues to be addressed in the booklets.**

**They are also exposed to principles of writing for people with limited reading skills.**

**Each writer then works on his or her booklet with support from the group.**

The booklets address a wide-range of issues normally not included in materials for HIV/AIDS such as the secondary status of girls and women in the family, the "sugar daddy" phenomenon, wife inheritance, the hyena practice<sup>1</sup>, traditional medicinal practices, superstitions, home-based care and living positively with AIDS.

They have one thing in common — they influence greatly a person's safety from contracting HIV/AIDS.

We hope that these booklets will inspire readers to reflect on the problems and issues that ordinary women and men face in their day-to-day relationships.

In so doing, they might reach a conclusion that the responsibility is theirs to save their own lives and those of their loved ones from HIV/AIDS.

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<sup>1</sup> The hyena practice is the custom of exposing young virgins to sex with an unidentified man as part of their initiation rites.

Mrs. Toivo was very worried about her daughter Emma who has been ill for such a long time. Emma's condition was getting worse. She knew Emma's health would never improve, but she still had to encourage her and give her hope.

My daughter, you will get better. I will take care of you. Don't worry!

Aaah... I know mom. But not now.



Mrs Tovia became very worried about touching Emma with her bare hands and wanted to do something about it.

Hmmm ! Emma has been having sores on her arms... Today she passed loose stools. The virus may catch me if I wash her with bare hands. I must go and see Emily for advice.



The next day at the clinic.

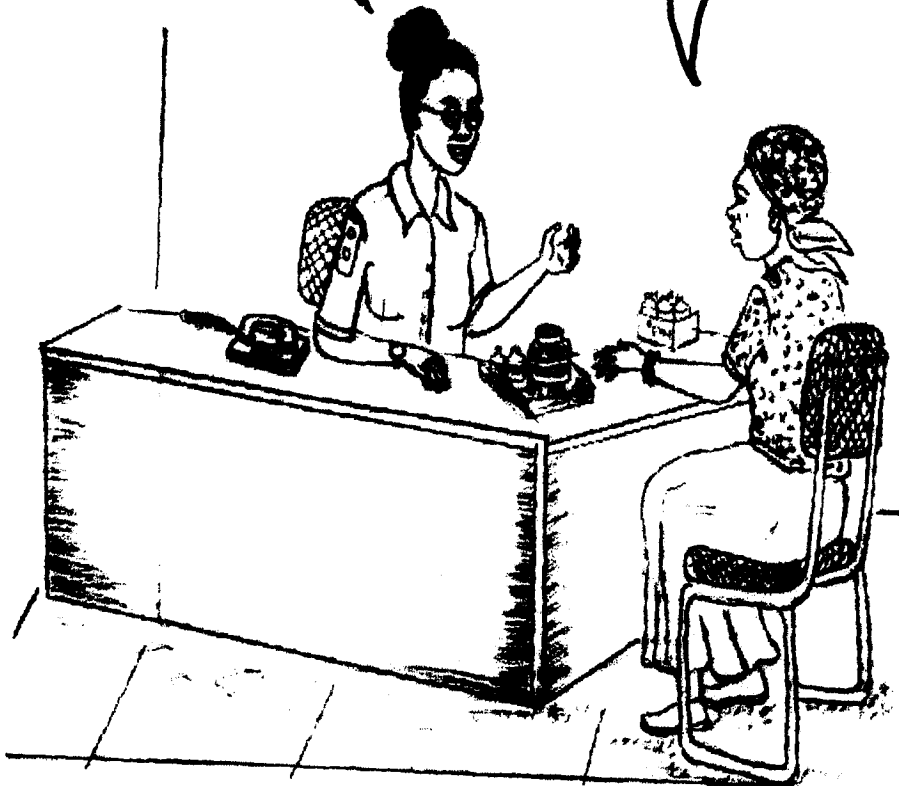
Good morning Mrs. Toivo.  
How is Emma? What can I  
do for you today?

Good morning sister  
Emily. Emma's condition  
gets worse. I really don't  
know how to look after  
her. Please tell me how to  
deal with fever and  
diarrhoea.



Emma is really suffering. You should not be afraid of her. You can measure her temperature with your hand or a thermometer. Give her headache tablets if her temperature's high.

Oh, I see! Sometimes her body gets so warm. I'll also cool it down with a wet cloth after I've given her a Panadol. What about diarrhoea and skin sores?



Good. I am glad you mentioned it. For diarrhea, I'll give you gloves for bathing and handling linen. Emma loses a lot of water when she has diarrhoea. You should mix this sachet of powder with water and give it to her to drink.

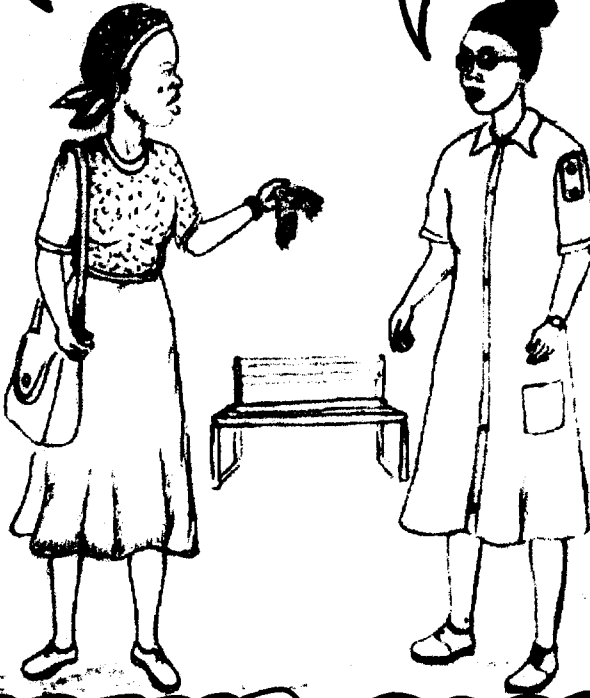
Oh, I see. But I really don't know how to prepare this drink.



It's very simple, you know. Boil one litre of water. Let it cool before you mix it with the sachet of powder. Give her a cup after she goes to stool.

Can I use the gloves when I wash and clean the sores?

Yes, you can. Use the gloves to clean the sores and cover her with clean cloth every day.



Thank you very much. You have really helped me a lot. I was so scared to touch my daughter with my bare hands.

Please, come back again if you need anything else. Your daughter also needs your love. Say "hello" to Emma for me.

Oh, just one important thing again. You must bring Emma to the hospital if she has a fever and a stiff neck, or if she has blood in her stools. If she vomits and cannot keep down fluids, you must also bring her here.

Thank you. I certainly will sister Emily.



Mrs Toivo took Emily's advice. Two months later, she decided to tell the members of her community about how to care for people living with AIDS. She gave a talk at community meeting.

Thank you for your interest in attending the meeting. I was scared of looking at people with AIDS. With the right information, we can prolong the lives of the people we love.

Thank you. We have certainly learned a lot. We can now make a difference in our village Oshoitayi.



Emma was really happy that her mother was brave and proud to talk to their community about HIV/AIDS.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1) Why was Mrs. Toivo worried about touching Emma?
- 2) Did Mrs. Toivo love Emma? How do you know?
- 3) Why is it necessary for relatives of people living with AIDS to consult nurses?
- 4) Can we touch HIV-positive people who have skin sores? Why?
- 5) What are some of the symptoms that care givers have to watch out for in AIDS patients?
- 6) Is it easy to care for people living with AIDS? Please discuss.
- 7) How did Mrs. Toivo help the community?
- 8) How did Mrs. Toivo's frankness about Emma's sickness help her daughter?
- 9) How did Mrs. Toivo's open talk at the community centre help her?

Written by Africans for Africans, this booklet is one of a growing series prepared during UNESCO training workshops to produce gender-sensitive materials for HIV/AIDS prevention for southern African countries.

When gender concerns are integrated into post-literacy materials which recognize local conditions, peoples' attitudes, values and beliefs, dreams and aspirations, they provide a powerful tool for tackling the HIV/AIDS pandemic currently ravaging southern Africa.

The series is an effort at filling the void left by medically oriented and didactic materials. They are based on the assumption that effective materials can help people change their attitudes, which in turn, will bring about positive changes in their behaviour.

These booklets reflect the way people communicate in southern Africa in the 21st century – their images, customs, attitudes and beliefs. They are aimed at helping readers – women and men, young and old – to raise issues and seek answers to questions concerning their risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.