

Stop and think!

The terms HIV and AIDS make us stop and think. Some people's immediate response is to deny that AIDS is present to avoid fear, blame or negative attitudes. Individuals may deny that they could be infected, both to themselves and others. Community and church leaders may deny that anyone in their area is infected. Government officials and leaders may deny the full impact of AIDS in their country.

Millions of people around the world have already died because of AIDS. Many, many millions more are infected with HIV – the virus that leads to AIDS. Those affected are often young adults with children and elderly parents to support – the very people on whom communities build their futures. Though HIV can infect anyone, it is the poor who suffer most from the effects.

Sex and drug abuse using needles are the main ways in which HIV is spread. People usually feel uncomfortable talking about these issues, and this is one reason why HIV has spread so rapidly. Infection rates around the world continue to grow. None of us should ignore the challenge to slow the spread of HIV and AIDS.

