



PER 262/5(B)

22 August 1996

Dear Ms Rokiah,

Planning for the Social & Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS in the Developing World

... For your information, please find enclosed a copy of the publicity flyer for the 1997 workshop with the above mentioned title. Since you attended the last workshop, you will recall this workshop is an annual advanced study workshop for professionals organized by the School of Development Studies in the United Kingdom. Also this year the workshop provides an opportunity for planners and policy makers to learn new techniques, share ideas and experiences and to develop novel strategies and tactics in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

You might want to distribute the flyer to people/organizations you feel would benefit from attending the workshop.

Best regards,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ameerah Haq'.

UNDP Regional Representative

Associate Professor Rokiah Ismail
Lecturer
Department of Medicine
Faculty of Medicine
Universiti Malaya
50603 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia



JABATAN PERUBATAN,
Fakulti Perubatan,
Universiti Malaya,
50603 Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia.
Teleks: UNIMAL MA 7568841
Fax: 603 7557740
Talipon : 7502429, 7502867
: 7502299



DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE,
Faculty of Medicine,
University Malaya,
50603 Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia.
Telex: UNIMAL MA 7568841
Fax: 603 7557740
Telephone : 7502429, 7502867
: 7502299

24 Februari 1997

Encik Kananatu
Seksyen Bahagian Sosial
Unit Perancangan Ekonomi
Jabatan Perdana Menteri
50502 Kuala Lumpur

Tuan,

**Bengkel "Socio-Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS"
Malaysia - Jun 1997**

Lanjutan daripada perbincangan kami tempoh hari, bersama-sama ini saya sertakan kertas kerja bagi bengkel tersebut.

Untuk makluman tuan, kami ingin menjemput 2 orang penasihat/fasilitator dari luar negeri (seorang Economist dan seorang Sociologist) bagi mengendalikan bengkel yang akan diadakan. Oleh yang demikian saya ingin memohon bantuan kewangan bagi menampung perbelanjaan mereka melalui UNDP "technical assistance".

Kami juga ingin memohon bantuan kewangan bagi menampung pembayaran penginapan dan elaun makan untuk 30 orang peserta dalam negeri yang dijemput menghadiri bengkel tersebut.

Saya amat berharap permohonan bantuan ini mendapat mendapat kelulusan dan pertimbangan daripada pihak tuan. Kerjasama pihak tuan di dalam perkara ini amatlah dihargai.

Sekian, terima kasih.

Yang benar,

Profesor Madya Rokiah Ismail
Jabatan Perubatan
Fakulti Perubatan

Planning for the Social and Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS in Malaysia (June 24-28, 1997)

Introduction:

The HIV epidemic has been spreading throughout the globe for more than 15 years, and it has been with us in Malaysia for at least 12 years. The HIV virus has been slowly but surely spreading throughout our population, without taking heed to social status, educational level, or upbringing. It affects anyone. Never has this world experienced a disease epidemic that lasts for so long without being able to curb its spread and prevent the devastating effects it has on the individual, society and nation. For, to date, there is no cure for this infection and there are no vaccines as yet to prevent the spread.

This epidemic can be seen in **three waves**:

1. The HIV epidemic (silent spread)
2. The AIDS epidemic
3. The Socio-Economic impact of the AIDS epidemic to national development.

1. The HIV epidemic:

Since 1985, Malaysia has been facing the HIV epidemic with increasing numbers of people becoming infected with HIV, but still remaining healthy and perhaps, not knowing that they are infected, continuing to pass on the virus to others through risky behaviour. Although the official figures of HIV infection in the country has been reported as being 18,000, this is a gross underestimate. For one, the figures presented are predominantly among the intravenous drug users (IVDU). This is because the IVDUs are actively tested before entering the drug rehabilitation centres, remand centres etc. What happens to the rest of the population, who may be practising risky behaviour, but do not perceive themselves at risk, therefore do not present to the clinics to have their blood tested for the HIV antibodies. What about the spouses of men who practise risky behaviour and bring the infection back to their unsuspecting wives? Are we looking at a potential epidemic that may be far worse than we care to ponder? How do we handle a situation that could be a potential disaster? These are questions that we may not be able to answer, but nevertheless, needed to be faced and challenged. However, nation-wide, unlinked, anonymous seroprevalence studies may give some idea as to the magnitude of the problem in the country.

2. The AIDS epidemic:

It takes anything from three to ten years for a person infected with HIV to progress to AIDS. During this long period of being well (healthy carrier) these individuals are able to continue working and contribute to society. However, when they develop ill-health with the progression to AIDS, they need medical care and other health care services. This is the time when the Health sector will be hit hard, because of the pressure put on the health care system to provide the added services. In this epidemic, the health sector will be the first and hardest hit of all the sectors. The AIDS epidemic will add a tremendous burden on the health budget. If this second wave (the AIDS epidemic) is not anticipated, it will paralyse the health care programme of any country. The snow-ball effects of the AIDS epidemic is going to affect other sectors of the nation... the labour and services sector will be affected soon enough because of the ill health due to AIDS, disability, hospitalisation and eventually premature death of these individuals. In order to anticipate the effects on the workforce, we have to look at the death rates (from other causes, before AIDS) in this age group 20-55 years, and also with AIDS, in which case, early deaths and loss of man/woman power will certainly affect national development.

3. The Socio-Economic Impact:

National development depends on the continuous availability of skilled and committed workforce. The continued investments made by the government in education and human resource development over the last decade has seen the country developing at a rapid rate. Malaysia is now rapidly catching up with other Asian tigers in our Vision to become a developed nation by the year 2020. Should we then allow the AIDS epidemic to devastate a country that we so carefully planned in the last 39 years?

The socio-economic impact of the AIDS epidemic is far worse than the burden put on the health sector. The Health care services will be heavily taxed by the number of people needing medical and other health care services, but this can be overcome by improving the health care services and training of more health care providers. But what is most important is to have a coordinated effort among all sectors of the population working together to curb this epidemic and making the strategy of "abolishing HIV/AIDS" as our top priority.

Granted, changing peoples' behaviour is the single most difficult thing to do, but with intense campaign on prevention of spread of HIV/AIDS, and strategies on how to tackle this problem, may lead people to understand the value of life. The current "fear" tactic and high-handed way of handling this campaign against AIDS is counter-productive. What we need to do is to get the general public on our side, and get them involved in their value of life. In this way, it is their choice in matters of life and death.

Objectives:

1. To identify the social and economic impact of HIV and AIDS in Malaysia
2. To identify the socio-economic issues pertaining to the future development of Malaysia
3. To create and integrate the capacity to plan for HIV/AIDS into all relevant sections of the Malaysian system, governmental, private, NGO, regional and national.
4. Setting up of a Steering Committee:
To explore the possibility of setting up a **National AIDS Research and Coordinating Centre (NARCC)**

Strategies:

1. By looking at the current statistics and doing projection studies, the modelling of the epidemic can be done.
2. Understanding of Health Economics and knowing the epidemic will allow planning for the economic impact of HIV/ AIDS in Malaysia.
3. To look at Issues in Social Planning for the Long-term Impact of HIV/AIDS in Malaysia.

ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED

1. Projection studies and modelling of the epidemic in some African countries have shown that there has been a high morbidity and mortality in the populations studied, and there were difficulties in getting smoothly run multisectorial programs. Where the impact of HIV/AIDS is still 'low' in developing countries, carrying out multisectorial plans may be met with a lot of resistance from various sectors, because of the perception that AIDS is not a big problem (except India and Thailand). This is because sectors other than Health, have low or no awareness of the long term implications of the HIV/AIDS epidemic to national development. This together with low political commitment can be disastrous to the development of any country.

This study workshop is design to equip the participants with the tools for assessing the impact of HIV/AIDS and planning for its consequences. The importance of prevention will be stressed, with its related education and other interventions is not doubted. However, the workshop will begin with the premise that over the next 10-15 years there would be a large number of people with AIDS in many countries. Vital plans should be made to cope with the increased mortality, morbidity and associated impact.

The workshop will be conducted in a mixture of lectures, panel discussions and small group discussions.

Some of the important **topics** to be discussed are :

Introduction & overview of HIV/AIDS,
The Epidemic in 1997, social & economic issues
Data Construction, Collection and Availability,
Planning, Economic, Social Analysis,
Health Economics, Social Impact,
Modelling using EpiModel, DemProj and AIM for HIV/AIDS projection,
Impact on demography, health parameters (CBR, Annual Population Growth, IMR, TB etc.), NGOs Response, Private Sector Response, Donors and Government Response.
Health services and provision of care by GOs and NGOs.

Scope

The scope of the workshop will encompass various areas of HIV/AIDS and organised in the form of lectures, brain-storming, small group discussions, plenaries and plan of action.

The introductory lectures on the first day will cover various issues related to HIV/AIDS globally and focussing on Malaysian scenario specifically. The participants chosen will be people directly working or will be working in areas related to HIV/AIDS at their various agencies - government and non-government.

The second day will be plenaries on the social structure and planning and macro-economic implications of HIV/AIDS in Malaysia.

Various areas to be looked at are:

- social structure
- economic impact
 - * labour
 - rehabilitation of drug addicts
 - * investments, etc.
- welfare services
- strengthening of family structure
- cost of care
 - * hospitals
 - * staffing
- research and development
- training
- NGO participation and outreach work

The third day will focus on looking at the current strategies and assessing its impact on the spread of HIV. Brainstorming on the success / drawbacks of the current strategies and small group discussions on the planning for the future management of the AIDS epidemic as we approach the 21st century.

The fourth day will be focussed on the plenaries from the various small group discussions on their strategies in fighting AIDS from their agencies point of view. This will then be open to discussion in the final plan of action. They will also explore and discuss the possibility of setting up a Coordinating Centre for AIDS Prevention, Research and Training, which will be a Centre of Excellence for HIV/AIDS for this region.

The participants will be contributing directly to the final plan of action for Malaysia. Therefore they will come to the workshop prepared with their own departmental strategies in tackling the problem of HIV/AIDS from their various work perspectives.

Roles and Responsibilities:

On the last day of the workshop the **Plan of Action** has to be formalised. This will involve the holistic view of how Malaysia will tackle the AIDS epidemic, in relation to the social, economic, and health services.

The roles and responsibilities of various agencies - government, non-government and the private sector, must be clearly defined. It will be further stressed that all these agencies will have to work closely together and complement each other to enhance this fight against the menace of AIDS in Malaysia.

Total Number of Participants: 24

Sociologists
Economists
Planners
Health Economists
Health Planners
Health Care Providers
Statistician
Epidemiologists