

COUNTRY REPORT:

**DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

National Report of the DPR of Korea on Activities for Control and Prevention of HIV/AIDS

The Activities for Control and Prevention of HIV/AIDS

AIDS cases were first reported in 1981. Since then, AIDS has rapidly spread throughout the world making it one of global issues with very serious socio-economic nature.

It becomes one of the biggest problems in the world as it gives rise to the ever-increasing numbers of orphans bereaved of parents.

This HIV/AIDS situation which becomes more and more serious day after day urgently demands the international community to take a thorough measure to prevent its epidemic.

Taking into account the potential danger of infiltration of HIV, which takes the life of a number of adults and children in different regions and countries of the world, threatens human resources and puts an obstacle to socio-economic development of the country, DPR of Korea has prepared the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Strategy to respond effectively and makes every effort to implement it.

The DPR of Korea has not yet reported HIV/AIDS. However, the worldwide issue of HIV/AIDS which becomes more serious demands us to pay close attention to it.

Comrade **Kim Jong Il**, the great leader of the Korean people is very much concerned about the prevention of HIV/AIDS entry into our country and gives meticulous guidance to this work.

The government of the DPR of Korea mapped up the HIV/AIDS prevention and control strategy and is implementing it, directing its deep attention to HIV/AIDS prevention.

The Constitution of the DPR of Korea, Public Health Law, Law on Sex Equality, Family Law, Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children, Law on Education legally guarantees the health and well-being of women and children and a system was established to take care of them at the expense of the state in the DPR of Korea.

As a result of establishment of socialist way of life in all sectors of social life, a socialist ethical and moral standard, sound and noble, is being pursued in all aspects of individual life as well as collective life such as marriage, family life and sexual relations.

In addition to it, traditional way of life and customs handed down from generation to generation has a positive influence on the establishment of sound social moral standard among people.

In our country, young people are well aware of their missions and duties they assume before the state and society by being engaged in the various forms of education network and socio-political organizations and strive for building a strong and prosperous country with their wisdom and enthusiasm.

In the country, social and economical policies to promote women actively take part in the social productive labour have been adopted, which have contributed to sustain the equality of the sexes in the true sense of works.

The children have been called the “Kings” in the country and brought up and educated free by national policies.

It could be noted that all these things described above become positive factors not to develop and prevail HIV/AIDS cases in the country.

However, in respect of the epidemiological nature of HIV/AIDS and V.D, which are wide spread in different regions and countries, and the current global trends of rapidly increasing cases of HIV infections, it is required to take the effective preventive measures against it with strict precaution, not being satisfied with current situation of zero HIV infected case in the country.

Especially, dramatically increased number of cases of HIV infection in the neighboring countries indicates that there is constant risk of importation of HIV and that it is urgently required to take more effective measures to respond on it.

Accordingly there exists the comprehensive system for prevention and control of HIV/AIDS in DPR Korea, including strategy system of information and IEC system, which successfully contribute to the purpose.

From the outset the HIV/AIDS cases were reported in the world, the DPR of Korea organized National HIV/AIDS Prevention Commission, established HIV testing labs in every provincial anti-epidemic station including the central one as well as blood centers, main border cities and counties and port quarantine stations to make a thorough test on HIV/AIDS.

From the end of 1980s to nowadays, annually approximately 50,000 have been tested on HIV, of which no HIV positive have been found among the nationals, while some foreigners were found HIV positive and had returned to their home country which have experience of care and treatment of such cases at their requests.

Current National HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Strategy

The DPR of Korea maintains following strategic principles in the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

- To promote the social education to establish the sound cultural and ethical norm in all aspects of life
- To establish the nationwide effective epidemiological HIV/AIDS surveillance system so as to implement the proper preventive and control activities to respond to the global HIV/AIDS situation.
- To inform the incidence, the epidemiological treatment and prevention of AIDS in various regions and countries as well as to strengthen exchange and cooperation.

The Government of DPR of Korea has conducted various activities for prevention of HIV/AIDS on the basis of the above strategic principles.

On the one hand, it has intensified the activities of all relevant institutions and branches of the society centering on the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and on the other hand, continued the activity for prevention and control of HIV/AIDS on the nationwide scale.

Meetings of representatives from all relevant institutions which take part in the national HIV/AIDS prevention and control campaign are held and various kinds of activities for HIV/AIDS prevention are conducted in each organization or jointly.

The DPRK has a well-regulated network of health education ranging from the central to the grassroots levels on a nationwide scale making possible various IEC activities for improving awareness of the communities on HIV/AIDS to be launched with different styles and methods.

National workshops are organized to contribute to greater capacity building of relevant personnel.

In addition, all therapeutic and preventive institutions are regularly conducting HIV/AIDS testing for all patients and populations of the concerned communities.

Issues confronted in control and prevention of HIV/AIDS

As no AIDS case and HIV infected case has been identified in the country up to now, information and education related with HIV/AIDS has been conducted passively without targeting entire population.

HIV/AIDS education is limited to the educational facilities for professionals such as medical universities and colleges. Furthermore, the information on HIV/AIDS only includes the basic information like the route of infection, general symptoms and available preventive measure, without offering comprehensive knowledge such as the characteristic nature of HIV infection transferring to AIDS case, various clinical types and global achievements of treatment and care of HIV/AIDS cases as well as the world trends of research work on HIV/AIDS.

IEC activities for the population and children also contain limited information on HIV/AIDS and the things are same in counseling for clients attending the service delivery facilities such as hospital and clinics

As result, awareness of HIV/AIDS among population and children is on a low level and in case of health professionals who have completed the formal education they are lacking knowledge of whole range of issues involved in HIV/AIDS.

Currently HIV/AIDS surveillances are being implemented by the health workers responsible for the contagious disease surveillance in the Anti-epidemic facilities under the national health system.

As the country has not seen a single HIV positive case and AIDS patient, the material and technical foundation to respond effectively to the importation of HIV/AIDS is not sufficient.

It is important to access the HIV surveillance to the periphery.

And the integrated HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control system should be existed, involving all the relevant government and non-government agencies and communities, including Ministry of Public Health.

So far HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control activities have only been implemented among the public health sector, especially in the anti-epidemic establishments, which gave the understanding that this issue is only limited to the health sector.

Positive conditions to implement the HIV/AIDS and STI Prevention and Control activities

There are some favorable conditions to implement HIV/AIDS and venereal disease Prevention and Control in nationwide scale in DPR of Korea

From central to the periphery there exists well-organized health care system where professionally educated health workers are working.

In addition to this, predominant section doctor system could also be attributable to the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control activities.

In the central provincial levels, there are universities and colleges of medicine producing a number of health professionals every year.

There are also departments responsible for the health education for general public in the central and provincial levels, which the county level has the designated health workers for this purpose.

All the population including the young people is enrolled in the social communities and organizations, which make it possible to educate them through social education network..

Strategy plan to strengthen the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control activities.

Effective and reliable HIV/AIDS and venereal disease surveillance system will be established.

- Monitoring and reporting system of epidemiological information and surveillance on HIV/AIDS and venereal disease will be established from national level down to the bottom.
- Keeping the principles of accessing the HIV/AIDS surveillance to the periphery, HIV testing facilities will be expanded from the important counties and cities including those in the bordering areas to the whole areas in the country so as to complete nationwide surveillance system.
- Epidemiological surveillance shall be intensified on all blood institutions and units in order to prevent the spread of AIDS virus through blood and blood items and the system of testing AIDS virus will be reinforced and expanded.
- Target population for HIV testing will be strictly identified and promoted to take part in the HIV test voluntarily.
- Competent health workers shall be trained for effective HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control activities.
- Equipment, reagents and supplies required for the existing and newly opened HIV testing centers shall be adequately upgraded and reinforced.
- Education will be intensified by means of propaganda through newspaper, broadcasting, press and publications and social organizations to establish a sound moral way of life all over the society.
- Schools on every level will give education on HIV/AIDS and venereal disease in conformity with the characteristics of students.
- Equipment and supplies for monitoring of HIV/AIDS prevention and control shall be provided.
- International cooperation and exchange shall be developed in realizing the target of HIV/AIDS prevention and control.

In the future, too, the DPR of Korea will continue to thoroughly carry out the policy for HIV/AIDS prevention so that it will remain HIV/AIDS - free country forever.