

## Nutrition Feature

August 2003

### Preventing HIV/AIDS – Education at Food Distribution Sites

400 men, women and children are gathered at Filakit in Meket district, waiting to be given their monthly distribution of food assistance. But as they wait their turn to collect their bag of grain, a group of young performers gather them around in a circle, making a makeshift stage in the middle.



The performers, members of a regional anti-aids club, have a captive audience. Everyone attentively watches the drama that intertwines the story of early marriage and the increased dangers of HIV/AIDS. Based on problems the community face and characters they identify with, even a local priest understands the lessons learnt and no one seems ashamed when audience members ask for a demonstration of how to use a condom. The Save the Children staff member improvises on a wooden walking stick, keenly studied by the diverse crowd eager to learn how it is done.

Save the Children UK, supported by UNICEF, has initiated similar efforts at food distribution sites in Amhara, Somali and Oromiya regions. Working with local anti -aids Clubs, Save the Children is working with the community to monitor the impact and see how these HIV/AIDS activities can be strengthened.

UNICEF is expanding this programme, especially in areas of chronic food insecurity, where food distribution sites are likely to exist regardless of the current rains. In Amhara, for example, 192 DPPB food sites will be targeted over a phased period of time.

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