

EDITORIAL

Gizaw Tsehai.*, MD

The Ethiopian Journal of Health Development has contributed significantly by highlighting current topics on health on its special issues. The Journal is one of the few that has managed to reach the health professionals through the Ethiopian Health Professionals Union at the periphery where it is most needed.

This special issue is devoted to the activities of the AIDS Control Programme. The Ethiopian AIDS Control Programme which was established in 1985 as a national task force, has gone a long way in such a short time to become one of the leading AIDS control programmes in Africa. There are a number of reasons for this; the first one is the commitment of the Peoples Democratic Republic Government of Ethiopia which had given and still continues to give its unreserved support to the programme. The commitment of all the other ministries, religious organizations and non-governmental organizations to educate the population so that the progress of the disease will be curbed before it reaches uncontrollable proportions.

When the National Task Force on AIDS was established in 1985, there were no cases reported in Ethiopia. Soon after, in 1986 two cases were identified and the prevalence of the human immunodeficiency virus in females with multi-partner sexual contact was 0.6% .To date 808 cases have been reported to the World Health Organization from Ethiopia and the HIV prevalence rate in females with multi-partner sexual contacts in the major urban towns has reached 37 to 55 per cent. It is at this crucial stage that the Ethiopian Journal of Health Development devoted a special issue to this important topic. In this issue you will be able to see how much work has been done in all areas to support the prevention and control activities.

The Ministry of Health would like to take this opportunity to thank the Editorial Board of the Journal for bringing this important subject to the attention of the health professionals of Ethiopia. I would also like to urge the health professionals to give due consideration to the problem and help us to curb the spread of this disease. However small, the research you do in your areas of duty, the cases you diagnose and report to us, the health education efforts you are undertaking in order to increase the awareness of the population, the patients that you counsel and help in their time of hopelessness is significant contribution and I would like to thank all of you for your efforts. I will also like to assure you that the Ministry of Health and the Department of AIDS Control would always be there to support your endeavour to fight against AIDS.

Minister* of Health