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# Tips for trainers: Analysing personal dilemmas

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### • Introduction

This is a way in which staff of an agency can be helped to link some of the root causes and possible needs of a situation to the particular dilemmas of individuals in communities with whom they are working. This exercise is suitable for groups with a maximum of 20 participants, although a smaller group is preferable. The group can be either mixed or single-sex.

Time required: 30 minutes

### • Preparation

Find a quote from a local magazine, a radio programme or book and type it up on the middle of a sheet of paper. It is best to have one copy of this sheet of paper for each participant. The more local the quote the better, since it will help staff to focus better on local needs. If you have time, it would also be good to have the same quote printed large on one piece of flip-chart paper for a second stage of the exercise. You will need pens, prepared sheets of paper, prepared flip-chart sheet, post-it stickers/blank cards, marker pens

### • Method

- Distribute one sheet of paper with the quote to each participant, then ask them to read the quote quietly to themselves and to think about it for a minute or two.
- Next, encourage participants to split into groups of two or three. These can be mixed groups of men and women or single-sex groups; it's up to you, which you think will work better. They should

start to think together about the wider issues which relate to the dilemmas facing the individual in the quote, such as poverty, environmental degradation, healthcare needs etc. It might help for you just to give two or three suggestions like this, just to start them off. Ask them to write *brief* key words for these issues around the edge of the paper, in a circle around the quote.

- Once everyone has written down some key issues for themselves, ask them to draw lines to link specific parts of the quote with the key issues that they have written down. You could give an example, suggesting that they link part of the quote you have chosen with, for example, health care needs, to help them understand what you are asking.
- Give each pair a few more minutes to do this. Each pair should now have a page criss-crossed with lines, joining the original quote to the keywords that they have added.
- Now ask all the participants what this exercise has taught them about this subject and encourage some open discussion.
- Then, if you have time, compare everyone's analysis, since some pairs may have thought of different key words. For this, it would be best to have your quote printed largely in the centre of a piece of flip-chart paper. Ask each pair quickly to write their key words on post-it stickers or cards and to stick them around the outer part of this flip-chart. Next you can ask two volunteers to group the key words, according to their subject. For instance, all the key words to do with poverty can go in the top left corner; all those to do with belief systems can go in the top right corner, and so on (see Figure 1).

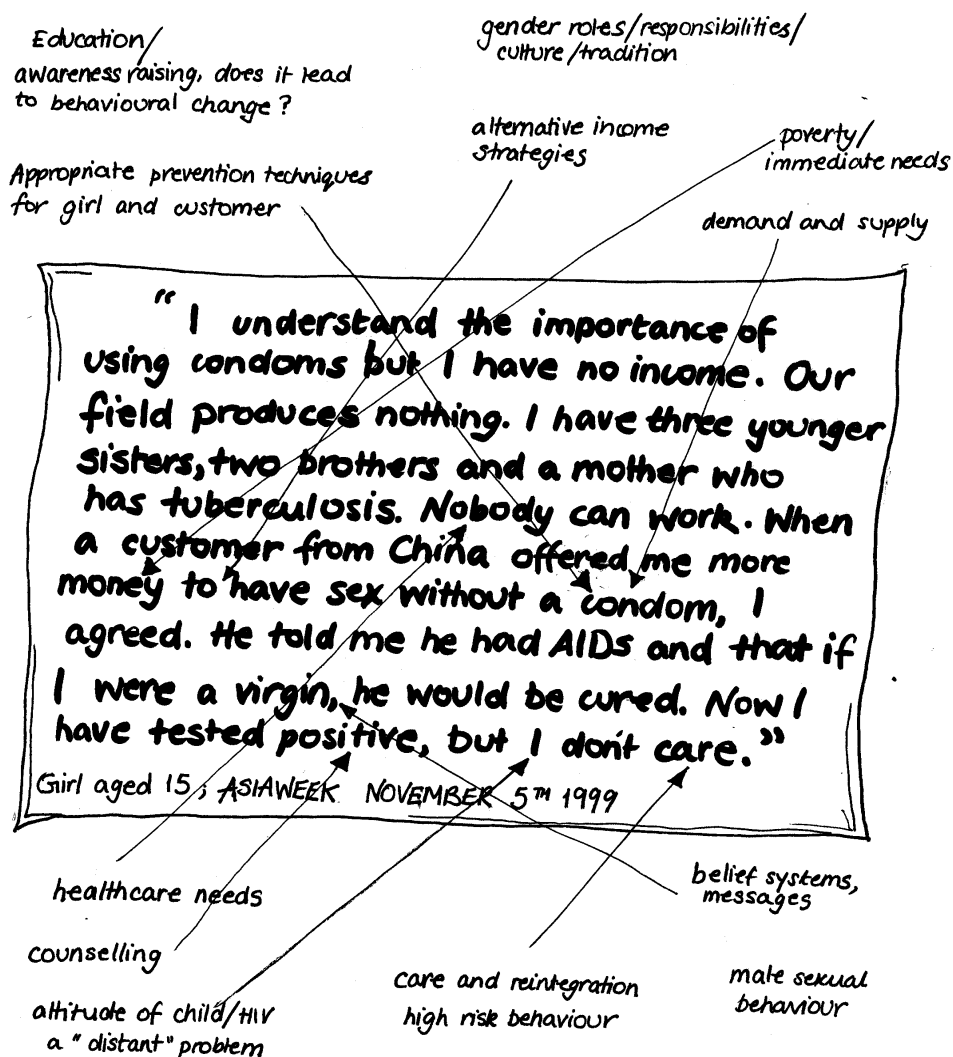


Figure 1. Sheet linking quotes to wider issues as identified by participants

- When this has been done, ask participants to gather around the flip-chart and see if there are any key words written up which some participants may have not included in their own analysis, or which they may disagree with.

One likely contentious key word may be to do with gender issues, for instance. In this case, ask the participants who included it to explain their reasons for doing so. Ask those who didn't to explain their reasons for excluding it. More discussion is likely to follow. Try to make sure it doesn't collapse into an argument though!

### • Conclusion

This exercise should help staff members to link a theoretical understanding of the issues involved in HIV to the personal dilemmas of individuals in the communities with whom they are working. This can help them to use their theoretical knowledge to address practical issues; it can also help them to recognise that HIV is far more than "just" a health problem.

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