

issues in AIDS research

Ndinya-Achola, JO

Abstract:

Much of the past research in AIDS concentrated in the epidemiology, virology, immunology and pathogenesis of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. However, current research activities incorporates aspects intended to modify human behaviour with a view to slowing down the spread. But a more comprehensive control of the AIDS epidemic can only be affected when a vaccine and, or effective anti HIV drugs are developed. Perspectives into AIDS research will therefore involve more vaccine and drug trials. How will these studies be conducted? To date there is no satisfactory animal model for HIV, and although chimpanzees have shown a promising role as animal models, this role which is not very good for the chimpanzees, is not entirely satisfactory for humans because of the long-incubation period and natural history of AIDS. Human subjects must therefore bear the burden of this research. Unlike in the past when ethical considerations in AIDS research in Africa and other developing countries were less stringent, these newer aspects, initiate more appropriate ethical issues to be instituted. It is also appropriate, to recognize contribution of human subjects in developing countries which should determine the pricing policy for AIDS drugs and vaccines in future