Aids: Women more at risk

By Nation Reporter -

The nationwide campaign for the prevention of the spread of Aids Acquired Immune Deficiency

Syndrome should focus more on children because of their special role in the home and in society.

Minister for Health, Mr Mwai Kibaki, said yesterday.

Although there are as many men as women who are carriers of disease in the country, Mr Kibaki said pregnant women are more at risk.

Every time an HIV positive woman becomes pregnant, she is closer to developing full

Aids," the Minister said.

Mr Kibaki: "The vertical transmission of Aids to children- mother to child - occurs if the mother has the virus, whatever the HIV status of the father. Focusing on women means thinking of a little more than half the population of any society - this may be the more important half."

The Minister made the remarks when opening a one-day workshop on Women, Children and Aids at the Kenyatta International Conference' Centre.

The workshop was organised

by the Kenya Medical Women's

Association and was held on the

eve of the World Aids Day to be

commemorated today all over the

world.

On Kemron, the Minister said:

"As I speak to-you now, Aids remains a fatal and incurable disease

and even if we had a cure for

it, our greatest emphasis' would

still be placed on prevention."

He asked medical practitioners

and the, public to spend time with

widows and orphans of Aids victims

who are themselves free of

the virus, but are nonetheless

stigmatised and, rejected by the

community.

Mr Kibaki said children of

Aids sufferers may end up in the

streets with no one to care for

them.

. The chairman of the association,

Mrs Florence Manguyu,'

said the impact of the disease on

women and 'children created new

challenges to society.