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**Gender, HIV and Human Rights:
A Training Manual**
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UNIFEM is the Women's Fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that promote women's human rights, political participation and economic security. UNIFEM works with and in partnership with UN organisations, governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and networks to promote gender equality. It links women's issues and concerns to national, regional, and global agendas by fostering collaboration and providing technical expertise on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment strategies.

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United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
304 East 45th Street, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10017
USA
Tel: (212) 906-6400
Fax: (212) 906-7605
Email: unifem@undp.org
Website: www.unifem.undp.org

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Gender, HIV and Human Rights

A Training Manual



Foreword

Would the world have a serious AIDS epidemic today if gender inequalities were less pronounced? If more women had greater control of matters related to their reproductive and sexual health? If they enjoyed greater access to economic opportunities and resources so that they would not need to resort to exploitative occupations? If more men were willing to assume responsibility for preventing HIV transmission and for caring for family members who are HIV-positive?

As the 21st century begins, over 33 million adults are living with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Once largely a disease of men in distinct populations, HIV is currently infecting women at faster rates than men in key regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa. The gap between the male and female ratio of people infected by HIV is narrowing in many countries in the world. Current empirical evidence shows that macro economic and political factors exacerbating gender inequalities lie at the core of the epidemic and directly influence the epidemic's rapid spread. Experience has shown that community-based AIDS projects that enhance the economic and decision-making power of women – in partnership with men – work well both to prevent transmission of the virus and to enrich their capacities to care for people who are afflicted by it. So do macro economic and political policies that promotes the status of women in their communities and in the world of work.

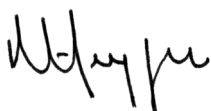
HIV/AIDS requires a gender-specific response. This manual has been prepared in response to this need. It aims to help trainers enhance their understanding about the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS, so that they can then effectively influence a critical mass of change makers in their “spheres of influence” to undertake appropriate responses to the challenges being posed by the epidemic.

This manual shows that neither AIDS nor gender disparities are unbeatable. The manual draws on more than a decade's experience from the field, building on the lessons learned and analysing and synthesising them within the conceptual framework of gender and human rights.

We hope that people who will use the manual find it valuable in their work.



Dr. Peter Piot
Executive Director
UNAIDS



Ms. Noeleen Heyzer
Executive Director
UNIFEM



Dr. Nafis Sadik
Executive Director
UNFPA

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INTRODUCTION TO THE MANUAL

This manual is the product of an interactive and rewarding process. About 200 reports on indicative research in various parts of the world were analysed and the information synthesised together in a manner that could help the reader understand the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS. The reports scrutinised were not necessarily gender responsive but often offered insights that enhanced understanding about the ways in which the epidemic had been affecting and continue to affect the lives and livelihoods of men, women and children across the globe.

This manual is divided into four sections:

- (a) **Section I – Challenges of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic: The Gender & Human Rights Context:** This section highlights the basic facts on HIV/AIDS and the growing global, national, and regional challenges of the HIV/AIDS epidemic within a gender framework.
- (b) **Section II – Gender Concerns in HIV and Development:** This section outlines a one-day training module on “Gender Concerns in HIV/AIDS and Development.” The section describes the structure, agenda and methodology of the sessions, training aids and notes for the facilitator.
- (c) **Section III – Gender and HIV/AIDS: A Human Rights Approach:** This section outlines a two-day training module on “Gender and HIV/AIDS: A Human Rights Approach.” The module describes the structure, agenda and methodology of the sessions, training aids and notes for the facilitator.
- (d) **Section IV – Learnings from the Workshops:** This section presents the insights gained during the use of these modules in various parts of the world. The insights are reflected from the perspective of the facilitator as well as from the perspective of the participants.

The manual offers a set of learning tools presented in a linear learning mode. However, the tools can be used individually and non-sequentially depending on the learning objective a trainer hopes to achieve and on time available.

The tools have been prepared drawing on both qualitative and quantitative information, generated through epidemiological analysis as well as indicative research experiences in various parts of the world. An effort has been made to ensure that the learning experience is culturally neutral, by a presentation of universally applicable facts and discussions.

Because HIV/AIDS is an unfolding epidemic, users would need to update the manual regularly, drawing on information provided through sources such as UNAIDS, UN publications, and the internet.