

## How to use this innovative tool

The tool was field-tested in five countries: Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, the Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania. The tool was adapted and translated into Kiswahili and used to train HIV/AIDS programme managers and service providers in two regions: Mbeya and Lindi (the United Republic of Tanzania).

**“I am a role model in the society and my male fellows will be astonished if I bring gender issues as a man. But because I am a role model, I will do it.”**

*(Provider who was trained in Lindi, the United Republic of Tanzania)*

The tool can be used to:

- Train programme managers and service providers to incorporate gender-responsive actions into their daily work.
- Integrate gender into pre-service and/or in-service basic HIV/AIDS training curricula.
- Engender relevant national HIV/AIDS strategies, frameworks, guidelines and operational plans.
- Integrate gender-responsive actions into district health and HIV/AIDS plans.
- Sensitize senior programme managers and policy-makers to gender and HIV issues.
- Remind programme managers and service providers of key gender-responsive HIV/AIDS strategies.



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## Where to order, free of charge

The tool is aimed at programme managers and health-care providers in the public and private sectors who wish to set up, implement and evaluate gender-responsive HIV/AIDS programmes.



**Integrating gender into HIV/AIDS programmes in the health sector**  
Tool to improve responsiveness to women's needs

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The Department of Gender, Women and Health (GWH) at the World Health Organization (WHO) advocates and promotes gender equality in health for women and men around the world.

## World Health Organization Department of Gender, Women and Health

Avenue Appia 20  
1211 Geneva 27  
Switzerland

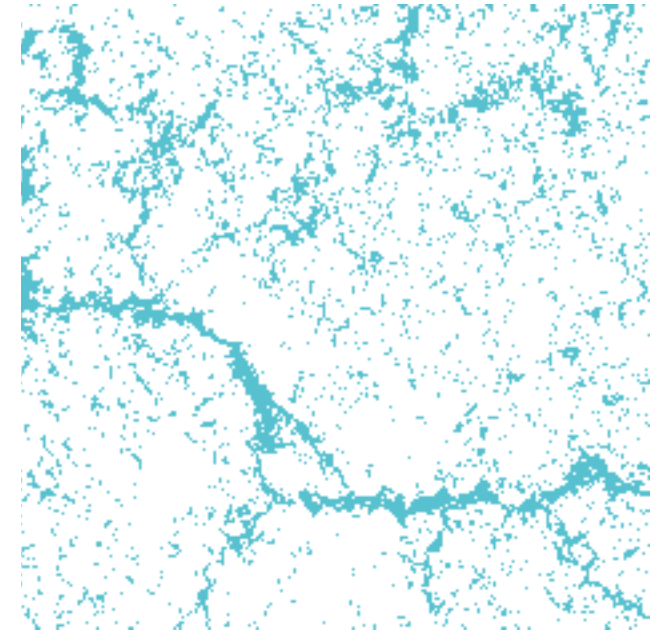
Fax: +41 22 791 15 85  
genderandhealth@who.int  
www.who.int/gender

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## Integrating gender into HIV/AIDS programmes in the health sector

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to women's needs



**Department of Gender,  
Women and Health**

## Gender inequalities make women and girls vulnerable to HIV/AIDS

Deborah in Uganda lost her husband to AIDS and is herself infected.

Her brother-in-law tried from the very beginning to inherit her, but she categorically refused so as not to infect him and his wife. He harassed her for almost a year; when she held firm and refused, he cut off all financial support to her and her four children.

Now, Deborah has even fewer means to afford AIDS treatment and to offer her children a better future – which in turn makes them more vulnerable to HIV.

Deborah's circumstances are but one example of how gender inequalities fuel the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Women and HIV/AIDS: some facts at a glance

- Globally, 50% of all people living with HIV are women.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, young women (15-24) are three to six times more likely to be infected than men in the same age group.
- In some Asian countries, e.g. Cambodia and India, women are increasingly infected with HIV within the context of marriage.
- Access to ARV therapy quadrupled from 7% in 2003 to 31% in 2007. In many countries, women have access to treatment in proportion to their expected need.
- Although in most parts of the world women live longer than men, AIDS has driven women's life expectancy below that of men in Kenya, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Many factors make women vulnerable to HIV infection and AIDS. For example:

- Young women may not have the power to say whether, with whom and when to have sex, or negotiate the use of condoms. Hence, condom promotion and risk-reduction efforts may not work with many women unless they address this reality.
- Some women may fear or experience violence or abandonment by partners if they test positive and disclose their HIV status. This is a barrier to HIV testing.
- Mothers may need permission from their partners and family to seek health care and have child care responsibilities. As a result they may have less access to health services, including those for HIV.

## Gender-responsive programmes can improve the quality of HIV/AIDS services

HIV programmes that take into consideration the social, economic, cultural and political realities of clients have several advantages: they better inform and empower clients; improve quality of care and access to and use of services; and enhance health equity by promoting social justice.



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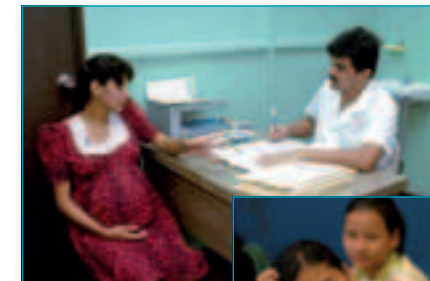
## A hands-on WHO tool to integrate gender into HIV/AIDS programmes

WHO has developed a new tool to guide the effective integration of gender into HIV/AIDS programmes in the health sector, and hence, improve their responsiveness to women's needs.

In addition to describing basic steps in gender-responsive programming, which can be applied to all HIV/AIDS programmes, the tool suggests practical actions to address key gender issues in four service delivery areas:

1. HIV testing and counseling
2. Prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV
3. HIV/AIDS treatment and care
4. Home-based care and support for people living with HIV

The tool also provides examples of gender-responsive interventions from the field, and resources such as: counseling role plays for risk reduction and HIV treatment adherence; examples of gender-sensitive communication messages; and protocols for addressing the risk of violence among women as a result of HIV status disclosure.



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