

***Conference Report:***

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**Sessions:** Gender mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS: Moving from theory to practice (Skills workshops)  
**Conference:** 3<sup>rd</sup> African Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance (SAHARA) conference  
**Date:** 10-14 October, 2005  
**Venue:** Dakar, Senegal, West Africa

***Background:***

Through international partnerships between the Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health (ACEWH), the Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec), UNAIDS, and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in South Africa, a stream of sessions exploring issues of gender and HIV/AIDS formed a strong component of the overall programme, in part supported by a generous grant from the Institute of Gender and Health, CIHR. These sessions included a series of practical skills and capacity-building workshops. Below is an outline of the sessions organized specifically through the gender partnerships. As well as these workshops, gender and HIV/AIDS issues were further explored at the conference through a series of "Exchange Encounters" which provided a facilitated forum for discussion and the development of recommendations for further research priorities, as well as through gender-focused parallel sessions on two days of the conference.

**Pre-Conference Session "Engendering Research: Extracting Gender-Relevant Data from Existing Studies"** Monday October 11, 2005: 11:00-1:00 pm  
(total number of participants at session: 150)

This session in the gender stream focused on incorporating gender issues into research design, methodology and analysis. The session began with a theoretical overview of the importance of including gender at every level of the research process. Concrete examples of how research can be strengthened using a gendered perspective were presented.

The application of the gendered lens of analysis to existing studies added another practical element to the skill-sets and capacity of conference delegates, allowing participants to think about and approach existing research in new and meaningful ways. This session highlighted the need to take advantage of the wealth of research that currently exists but needs to be analyzed using different tools in order to enhance its relevance for a gender-based approach. The session concluded by addressing critical questions of how to move from research to advocacy to policy implementation, in keeping with the overarching theme of the conference, "Bridging the gap between research, policies and interventions".

## Speakers and their presentations:

Gender and research theory, design and implementation

*Jacqueline Gahagan, Dalhousie University, Canada*

Engendering action research to influence policy and practice- an example from a four country study (Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia)

*Masheti Wangoyi, TICH, Kenya*

Rapports de genre, négociations sexuelles et prévention du VIH chez les étudiants des universités de Dakar et de Saint Louis, Sénégal

*Solange Bandiaky ; Maïmouna Ndoye, AFARD, Sénégal*

Femmes, Pauvreté et Vulnérabilité face au VIH/SIDA

*Lévy Mutombo, R.D. Congo*

Extracting gender relevant data from existing research- an example from South Africa's National Educators Survey

*Nompumelelo Zungu-Dirwayi, HSRC, South Africa*

From research to advocacy to policy

*Patrick Orege, NAC, Kenya*

*Jerotich Seii Houlding, UNAIDS, East and Southern Africa*



*Fig.1.1 Nompumelelo Zungu-Dirwayi, from the HSRC in Cape Town, speaks at the pre-conference session about the merits and methods of extracting gender-relevant data from existing research.*

## **Capacity-building workshops**

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### **Workshop 1: “Taking Stock: Voices of Theory, Voices of Experience”**

Tuesday October 11, 2005: 5:30-6:30 pm

*(total number of participants at session: 100)*

The first capacity-building workshop explored some of the theoretical background and contemporary debates surrounding gender mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS policy and practice, contextualizing the development of gender-based thinking and gender mainstreaming in the recent past, and providing cutting-edge updates on current theoretical perspectives on the subject. As well, speakers explored current thinking around core applications of these perspectives to promote engendered approaches in policy, programme development, and research.

Following the theoretical exploration, experience-based presentations from East, Central, West and Southern Africa served to link the theoretical inputs on current approaches to the on-the-ground experiences of those directly engaged with gender issues in practice. Speakers addressed successful techniques and experiences of gender mainstreaming and gender programming, as well as barriers to application. Participants discussed practical opportunities for moving forward in the engendering of research, policy, programmes, and community development.

#### **Speakers and their presentations:**

A critical look at the use of gender theory in responses to HIV/AIDS

*Tammy Shefer, University of the Western Cape, South Africa*

Challenges/obstacles to theories of mainstreaming

*Doo Aphane, Swaziland*

HIV/AIDS: Gender from the community perspective

*Herman Lupogo, TACAIDS, Tanzania*

Experiences of Gender and HIV initiatives from Southern Africa

*Sisonke Msimang, OSISA, South Africa*

### **Workshop 2: Building Skills, Building Capacity: Using Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) to Facilitate Gender Mainstreaming**

Wednesday October 12, 2005: 5:30-6:30 pm

*(total number of participants at session: 35)*

Facilitated by: *Erika Burger, Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Canada*

*Barbara Clow, Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Canada*

This skills-based session focused on promoting capacity to conduct actual gender-based analyses to HIV and AIDS policies, programmes and research. Following an introduction to the key concepts and ideas behind gender-based analysis, this interactive session allowed participants to break off and work in small groups, using prepared scenarios and worksheets specifically designed to bring forward complex issues around how gender-based analysis can be applied to HIV/AIDS specific contexts, specifically in a sub-Saharan African context. Participants were asked to identify the potential gender issues within their respective scenarios, and provide possible suggestions for policy responses. Following these discussions, the small groups reconvened into one, and the results shared amongst all participants.



*Fig.1.2 Participants at the Gender-Based Analysis skills-building workshop*

### **Workshop 3: Men and Masculinities**

Thursday October 13, 2005: 5:30-6:30 pm

*(total number of participants at session: 30)*

Facilitated by: *Joseph Amuzu, Commonwealth Secretariat, UK*

This interactive session was facilitated by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in conjunction with EngenderHealth's Men as Partners programme. In this workshop, notions of masculinity were questioned and challenged, and the specific and differential role of men in the HIV/AIDS epidemic was explored. Through facilitated discussion and scenarios, participants were asked to look at their own notions of masculinities and femininities, the

processes through which we are all socialized into gender roles, and what the impacts of this socialization is in terms of HIV/AIDS treatment, support, care and prevention.



*Fig.1.4 Joseph Amuzu from the Commonwealth Secretariat, facilitating the interactive Men as Partners session*

### **Distribution of materials at the SAHARA conference:**

The Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health had a booth set up for display at the conference (please see photo below), profiling its work and providing a venue for distribution of gender and HIV/AIDS-related material, in particular ACEWH and partnership publications. Distribution included the following publications:

- 150 copies of "Gender Mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS: Taking a Multisectoral Approach" co-authored by ACEWH and the Commonwealth Secretariat, 2002
- 100 copies of International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS conference report, 2004- English
- 75 copies of the summary of the International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS conference report, 2004- French
- 100 copies of "Gender Mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS: Seminar Proceedings" from 7<sup>th</sup> AIDS Impact Conference in Cape Town, published by the HSRC, October 2005.
- 200 copies of the pamphlet, "Gender and HIV/AIDS", by ACEWH.



Fig. 1.3 ACEWH and its work on HIV/AIDS and gender is profiled through a display booth at the conference.

### **Closed partnership meeting and formation of Gender Reference Group:**

Partners from ACEWH, ComSec, HSRC and UNAIDS used the networking opportunity in Dakar to meet and discuss future directions, as well as roles and responsibilities within the partnership. Such a meeting was especially important in helping map out the actions that need to be taken leading up to the Toronto International AIDS conference in 2006.

As well, over the course of the conference, an international gender reference group was established to ensure that there is a network in place to facilitate the sharing of gender and HIV/AIDS-related information and the dissemination of conference outcomes.

Members of the gender reference group include:

- Bridgette Prince (South Africa)
- Erika Burger (Canada)
- Jerotich Seii Houlding (South Africa)
- Sisonke Msimang (South Africa)
- Masheti Wangoyi (Kenya)
- Solange Bandiaky (Senegal/United States)
- Levi Mutombo (D.R. Congo)

## **Conference Outcomes:**

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The gender skills sessions of the 3<sup>rd</sup> SAHARA conference:

- Promoted an enhanced understanding of the role of gender in the HIV/AIDS epidemic and of key areas of gender-based vulnerability in the sub-Saharan African context;
- Extended consciousness of gender-based perspectives in HIV/AIDS to actual capacity to integrate gender into policy, programming and research;
- Promoted those models and approaches to integrating gender into HIV/AIDS that have proven successful;
- Identified critical gaps in existing research on HIV/AIDS;
- Formed a reference group that will form the basis for future consultations and knowledge platforms around gender and HIV/AIDS research;
- Worked towards a consensus statement of key issues and research activities needed to support the development of an African Agenda for Gender Mainstreaming.

A final report of the gender stream is in the process of being compiled through cooperation between all partners, and will be published through the HSRC press in Cape Town upon completion. An interim draft copy has been included with this report. It will be distributed through SAHARA networks, which were strengthened and enhanced through the Dakar conference. Enclosed, please find a copy of the seminar proceedings from the 7<sup>th</sup> AIDS Impact Conference in Cape Town. As with the 7<sup>th</sup> AIDS Impact Report, the Dakar gender proceedings will be sent to regional partners in East, Central, West and Southern Africa, as well as to various African National AIDS Councils and the Commonwealth Secretariat. They will also be distributed through ACEWH networks within Canada. As well as summarizing the presentations and discussions around gender and HIV/AIDS at the 3<sup>rd</sup> SAHARA conference, the Dakar gender proceedings publication will provide hands-on tools and resources for skills-building in the area of gender and HIV/AIDS, effectively moving from a theoretical to a practical approach.

A final report for the wider conference, beyond the gender stream, is currently being completed by all partners and will be made available through the SAHARA website at [www.sahara.org.za](http://www.sahara.org.za).

## **Participants List:**

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The following individuals were recruited to participate specifically in the gender stream of the Dakar conference. Asterix indicates they were sponsored by ACEWH's partnership funds. Funded and partially-funded Canadian participants at Dakar are indicated by \*\* and include: Erika Burger, Barbara Clow, Suzanne Dansereau, Jacqueline Gahagan, Margaret Haworth-Brockman and Sarah Pugh (see below list for affiliations).

<i>Participant's Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
*Tammy Shefer	University of the Western Cape, South Africa
*Doo Aphane	Women's Legal Rights Initiative, Swaziland
Sisonke Msimang	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, South Africa
*Jerotich Seii Houlding	UNAIDS, Southern Africa
*Bridgette Prince	HSRC, South Africa
**Jacqueline Gahagan	Dalhousie University, Canada
**Sarah Pugh	HSRC/ACEWH, Canadian International Development Agency-funded intern (through the Government of Canada's International Youth Internship Programme)
*Nompumelelo Zungu-Dirwayi	HSRC, South Africa
Joseph Amuzu	Commonwealth Secretariat, UK
**Barbara Clow	ACEWH, Canada
**Erika Burger	ACEWH, Canada
**Margaret Haworth-Brockman	Prairie Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Canada
**Suzanne Dansereau	St. Mary's University, Canada
Masheti Wangoyi	Tropical Institute for Community Health, Kenya
*Patrick Orege	National AIDS Control Council, Kenya
*Herman Lupogo	TACAIDS, Tanzania