



Atlantic Centre of Excellence
for Women's Health

Workshop Summary

Gender Mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS: Moving from Theory to Practice
3rd African Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance (SAHARA) Conference
October 10 – 14, 2005
Dakar, Senegal

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Background

The Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health (ACEWH) has been working in the area of Gender and HIV/AIDS since the formation of a partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec) in 1999. Together, our organizations developed the concept of an International Institute that would raise awareness and deepen understandings of the role of gender in the HIV pandemic. The initiative came to fruition in 2004, with the establishment of a regional partnership with the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa and the launch of the Inaugural International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS in Johannesburg.

The tripartite partnership forged in 2004 continues to rest on shared principles and perspectives. We are all concerned about the persistence of gender based vulnerabilities to HIV/AIDS experienced by women and men, girls and boys around the world; we are all aware of the need for more training, research and networking opportunities regarding the social, specifically gendered, dimensions of the pandemic; and we are all committed to social justice through social transformation. Our common outlook and commitments are enabling us to strengthen the partnership through new collaborations. In April 2005, for example, ACEWH, ComSec, UNAIDS and HSRC co-hosted a plenary session on gender mainstreaming and HIV/AIDS at the 7th AIDS Impact Conference held in Cape Town, South Africa. In October 2005, the partners collaborated on building a gender stream throughout the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS & Health Research Alliance (SAHARA) conference in Senegal, West Africa; we also worked together to organize and deliver many workshops and skills building sessions on gender and HIV/AIDS.

The Gender Stream of the Sahara Conference

The 3rd Annual African Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance (SAHARA) Conference was held in Dakar, Senegal from the 10th to the 14th October 2005. ACEWH was able to contribute to the planning and delivery of the gender stream as a result of core funding for our programs from the Bureau of Women's Health and Gender Analysis, Health Canada and as a result of a generous grant from the Institute of Gender and Health, CIHR.

The following sessions were among those delivered as part of gender stream of the conference:

- Engendering Research: Extracting Gender-Relevant Data from Existing Studies
- Taking Stock: Voices of Theory, Voices of Experience
- Building Skills, Building Capacity: Using Gender-Based Analysis to Facilitate Gender Mainstreaming
- Men and Masculinities



Conference Outcomes

The gender skills sessions of the 3rd SAHARA Conference helped to:



- Deepen understanding of the role of gender in the HIV/AIDS pandemic, particularly the key areas of gender-based vulnerability in the sub-Saharan Africa context;
- Enhance individual and collective capacity to integrate gender into policy, programming and research;
- Elucidate emerging and persistent obstacles to understanding gender-based vulnerabilities and to formulating and implementing gender appropriate responses to the epidemic;
- Facilitate formation of an international Gender Reference Group to share information and resources to address the gender dimensions of the HIV/AIDS pandemic;
- Foster new and strengthen existing partnerships to address gender vulnerabilities and inequities for those infected or affected by HIV and AIDS.

Further information on our Gender and HIV/AIDS program and on the International Institute can be found at: www.acewh.dal.ca

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