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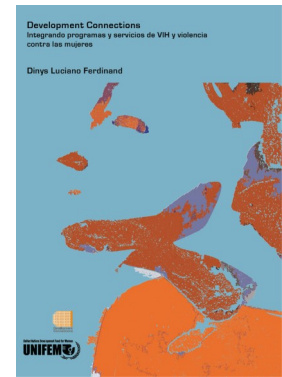
Development Connections (DVCN)

Capacity Building for Integrating HIV and Violence against Women Programmes and Policies

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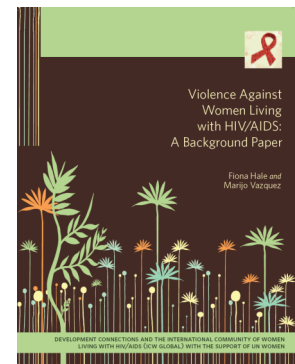
Background

With the increased interest in addressing the links between HIV and VAW and the current limited, but solid body of evidence upon which to base programmes and policies, developing capacity to continue creating evidence, to strengthen workforce and organizational competencies, and to promote inter-sectoral coordination, is crucial. Since 2007, Development Connections, in collaboration with governmental agencies, NGOs, regional networks, and international agencies, has implemented a capacity building strategy aiming to “enhance the ability of individuals, organizations, communities and systems to address the intersections between HIV and VAW according with their **context** characteristics and **needs**.”



Why is a capacity building strategy a necessary component of integrated programmes and policies on HIV and VAW?

- It will increase the number of organizations, people and communities able to integrate interventions on both issues and therefore multiply gains many times over.
- The initiatives addressing the links between HIV and VAW will gain more visibility on all levels, enhancing their status in the public agenda, public investment, and sectoral and programmatic priorities.
- Systems, organizations, communities and workers can gain knowledge, skills and resources for assessing the quality of their work and identifying the gaps, challenges, and also opportunities to address structural determinants, intermediate factors and consequences of both problems.
- Capacity building involves a focus that supports change within and between organizations working on both issues; reinforcing participation, coordination, education and collaboration.
- Capacity building strategies that use a social determinants approach, linked to gender equality and human rights, can be an important means for addressing gender inequities and their intersection with other social markers (ethnicity, income, age, disability, sexual orientation, etc.) and therefore build stronger organizations and systems through civic participation of women’s groups, PLWH, and community groups.



Development Connections—Connecting resources for sustainable development

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- It is a way to create common ground on the intersections between HIV and VAW, upon which all levels can work together.
- It will guide the re-orientation of programmes and policies toward an adequate integration.

Approach of the capacity-building strategy

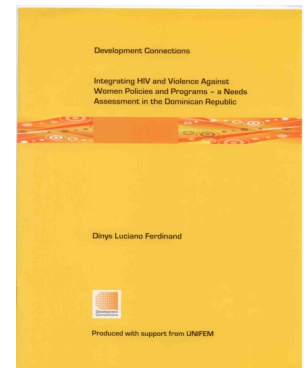
This strategy has used a **constructivism approach** which is based on the following assumptions:

- Learning for performance, based on the specific needs and characteristics of participants' local environment and work context.
- It does not use standardized curriculum or interchange activities, but rather interventions customized to the participants' prior knowledge and interests.
- It emphasizes hands-on problem solving through fora, working guides and group discussions aimed at facilitating the development of creative thought, the ability to solve problems, conceptual comprehension, maintaining interest and synchronization between theory and practice.
- Facilitators, tutors and coordinators of activities focus on making connections between facts and fostering new understanding among participants. The activities and learning strategies are tailored to participants' responses and interests, while encouraging them to analyze, interpret, and predict information.
- Activities and learning strategies focus on promoting dialogue, interchange and networking among participants. Emphasis is put on strengthening the relationships between individuals and organizations.



The strategy has three components:

- **Six editions of the training course on “Empowerment, HIV and VAW”** to develop competencies for integrating HIV and VAW in prevention, treatment, care and support.
- **Production and dissemination of information:** Manuals, article compilation, needs assessment, 36 learning resources, and an e-bulletin.
- **Community of Practices (CoP)** to facilitate the creation and use of knowledge through fora, document repository and essay contests, and sharing novel ideas, information, tips, feedback, resources.



“This course provides an ample range of new information and an innovative approach to address HIV and VAW. The content tailored specifically to the Latin America and the Caribbean context based on a wide theoretical framework makes it a unique learning experience.” Participant from the Online course on Empowerment, HIV and VAW in Latin America and the Caribbean. 2007