



Organization of
American States



Community of Practice on HIV and Violence against Women

<http://www.vih-violencia.org/>

Worldwide, the links between HIV and violence against women (VAW) have progressively been integrated in the agendas of governments, non-governmental organizations, international agencies, networks, and organizations of women living with HIV. In 2007, the Assembly of Delegates of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) adopted the Declaration of San Salvador on Gender, Violence and HIV, in order to incorporate the issue in the work of CIM and the Organization of American States (OAS). Within the framework of this Declaration, CIM/OAS is implementing two projects: i) Strengthening capacity to integrate services on HIV and VAW in the Caribbean (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica and, in collaboration with UN Women in Grenada and Guyana); and ii) Integration of policies and programs on HIV and VAW from a human rights perspective in Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala and Panama).

Since late 2006, Development Connections (DVCN) has implemented diverse initiatives centered on the capacity building, tools, production and dissemination of information, public policy dialogue, analysis of promising practices and technical assistance. In 2008, DVCN, with the support of UNIFEM (now part of UN Women), created the Community of Practices on HIV and VAW (CoP HIV-VAW), including in its membership participants of the courses and fora carried out by DVCN jointly with other organizations.

In 2011, OAS/CIM and DVCN decided to join forces to integrate resources and activities in this inter-institutional initiative.

Objective of the CoP

Promote the collective construction of knowledge and the development of capacity on the intersections between HIV and VAW with organizations and individuals, from a gender perspective and a human rights approach.

Participants

- Government entities
- Civil society organizations
- National networks
- International organizations
- Universities
- Parliamentarians
- Media
- Sub-regional cooperation mechanisms

Activities and resources

- Virtual fora
- E- Bulletins
- Web conferences
- Virtual library

Principles of the CoP

- a. **Participation:** The CoP was designed to be a tool for “live” interchange and its development depends upon the extent to which its members get involved, socializing points of view, resources and experiences.
- b. **Diversity:** The CoP promotes a respect for the plurality of perspectives, opinions, experiences and expertise in the area of human rights. The main strength of the CoP is in the diversity of contexts, ideas and resources that it supports.
- c. **Collective construction and management of knowledge:** The CoP utilizes formal instruments of interchange and diffusion of information to promote communication oriented toward multi-directional learning.
- d. **Individual commitment of members:** The values which sustain this fruitful interchange and learning experience are honesty, trust, respect for opinions and the confidential treatment of information, when applicable.

Similarly, competencies such as openness to knowledge, consensual management of possible conflicts and creativity are also highly valued.

How the CoP Works

- a. **Membership:** Membership in the community is based on individual participation with or without institutional representation. The identity of the CoP is progressively determined by its membership.
- a. **Dynamic:** The CoP will serve as a channel in which to share new ideas, resources, best practices, information, tips, as well as feedback and collective work regarding common problems and challenges.
- b. **Participation:** There are various modes of participation, including users of the CoP resources, forum facilitators, providers of information, activity coordinators, students, and bulletin recipients, among others
- c. **Products:** The CoP is not a project, but rather it functions as a tool to promote change by contributing to the exchange of information, successful experiences and technical cooperation.
- d. **Language:** Initially, the CoP will be developed only in Spanish. To the extent that funds are available and participants willing, the CoP may at some point also function in English in order to embrace a wider diversity of experiences and perspectives.

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Visit the CoP at:
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