

A Checklist For Community Research For Global Policy Reform and National Action: Community Engagement To Implement The 2017 WHO Consolidated Guideline On The Sexual And Reproductive Health And Rights Of Women Living With HIV

Translating Community Research Into Global Policy Reform For National Action: A Checklist For Community Engagement To Implement The WHO Consolidated Guideline On The Sexual And Reproductive Health And Rights Of Women Living With HIV

March 2018



We are happy to announce the launch of a Generic Checklist to support the in-country implementation of the 2017 WHO Consolidated [guideline](#) on the SRHR of women living with HIV. To guarantee the guideline's effective implementation and fulfil its groundbreaking women-centred spirit and principles, its uptake must include the meaningful engagement of women living with HIV in all their diversity. Understanding and having ownership of the guideline and its new and existing recommendations (RECs) and good practice statements (GPSs) are essential components to ensure positive impact on the health and well-being of women living with HIV.

With financial support from the World Health Organisation (WHO)¹ and with

wider advisory and collaborative support from global, regional and national networks of women living with HIV, Salamander Trust has developed this generic Checklist to support community advocacy around policy reform and national action. This generic Checklist supports women living with HIV to access improved and respectful care that results in better Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) outcomes.

Although access to treatment has increased, research has clearly shown that many women living with HIV struggle to access SRHR services and face violence, including stigma and discrimination, in their home, their community and in health care facilities. To advance women's health it would be beneficial for policy and program makers to uphold the SRHR of women living with HIV: both to ensure their own intrinsic rights; and to enable women living with HIV to access the healthcare they want. The new guideline clearly reflects this as the issue of violence is addressed throughout.

The Checklist highlights six specific stages and 15 steps to support this process, which takes on average 4 months. The stages suggested here have been adapted from the [UNAIDS 2014 Gender Assessment Tool: Towards a gender-transformative HIV response](#) and the [UNAIDS and STOP TB PARTNERSHIP Gender assessment tool for national HIV and TB responses - Towards gender - transformative HIV and TB responses](#).

¹ Department of Reproductive Health and Research, including the Special Programme for Human Reproduction (HRP)

Draft Stages and Steps

Stages and Steps	Timeline (<4 months in total)
STAGE ONE: Obtain high-level commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 1 – Convene an advisory group of women living with HIV Step 2 – Secure High-Level Commitment Step 3 – Develop a resource plan Step 4 – Secure a lead organiser to support the process 	<u>6 weeks</u> <u>2 weeks</u> <u>2 weeks</u> <u>1 week</u> <u>3 weeks</u>
STAGE TWO: Conduct a desk review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 5 – Review the REC and GPS and agree the desk review outline Step 6 – Conduct the desk review Step 7 – Share the draft report with the advisory group Step 8 – Finalise the report 	<u>1 month</u> <u>3 days</u> <u>10 days</u> <u>1 week</u> <u>1 week</u>
STAGE THREE: Conduct a review workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 9 – Organize a workshop with women living with HIV Step 10 – Identify Workshop Participants Step 11 – The Workshop 	<u>1 month</u> <u>2 weeks</u> <u>1 week</u> <u>1 week</u>
STAGE FOUR: Use The Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 12 – Identify Priority Initiatives Step 13 – Develop an Advocacy Plan Step 14 – Develop a Communication Plan Step 15 – Develop a Fundraising Strategy 	<u>1 week</u>
STAGE FIVE: Monitoring and evaluation	<u>Ongoing</u>
STAGE SIX: Sharing the work	<u>Ongoing</u>

Comments from those engaged in this work

“The development of this Checklist is an example of how networks of women living with HIV can take lead and participate confidently in policy development and implementation. What is essential to successes are resources and opportunities to enable our participation. We remain grateful to Salamander Trust for their leadership and to all the women living with HIV involved thus far to develop this Checklist. ICW believes that this work will provide evidence that is women led at country levels towards the full implementation of WHO consolidated guidelines on the SRHR of women living with HIV.” **Rebecca Matheson, ICW Global Director.**

“For a long time we lacked a tool to support national action to roll out the WHO Consolidated guideline for women living with HIV. This generic Checklist gives our communities practical and specific navigation so that we ultimately benefit from the developed guidelines.” **Sveta Moroz, Head of the Board, Eurasian Women's Network on AIDS**

“The Checklist puts the power back into women’s hands to advocate for the health care that is our right. The WHO Guidelines bring forward the sexual and reproductive health needs of women living with HIV, grounded in our own experiences of exclusion and violence and of resilience, caring, and solidarity. The Checklist helps us to advocate for and monitor the implementation of these critical guidelines.” **Laurel Sprague, Executive Director, GNP+**

“The checklist is important as a product resulting from combined labour of sisters across the world, capturing community voices in all our diversities - signifying the importance we place on our voices as our data.” **Martha Tholanah, ICW Zimbabwe Member**

The Participatory Process behind the Consolidated Guideline

This guideline was uniquely grounded by an initial global values and preferences survey, which was led by women living with HIV, to assess their own SRHR priorities. The process of starting with this survey first placed their values and preferences at the heart of the guideline. The report of its findings, [“Building a safe house on firm ground: key findings from a global values and preferences survey regarding the SHRH and human rights of women](#)

[living with HIV](#)”, was then used by WHO to shape the guideline, ensuring a woman-centred and human rights based approach.

This guideline consolidates existing recommendations specific to women living with HIV, along with new recommendations (REC) and good practice statements (GPS). This is all based on the available evidence from peer-reviewed publications and a global values and preferences survey, commissioned by WHO in advance of the new guideline.

This guideline supports front-line health-care providers, programme managers and public health policy-makers to better address the SRHR of women living with HIV. Given the significant difference in scope, compared with the 2006 guideline on this topic, this 2017 guideline was viewed as a new submission by the WHO Guidelines Review Committee, rather than an update of the 2006 guideline.

Proposed Activities for Guideline Implementation

The chart below outlines the work Salamander Trust has been commissioned to support around developing this generic Checklist and rolling out at national levels. The Checklist is designed to support women living with HIV and their allies in the full implementation of the new WHO Consolidated guideline in their own country.

Phase 1 (Supported by WHO and concluded now)
A generic Checklist developed, designed by/for women living with HIV in all their diversity, to: i) assess how aligned or not current policies, programmes and services are to the new guideline; ii) build advocacy to ensure the new and existing REC and GPS in the guideline into action; and to iii) assess meaningful community engagement in reviewing the national situation and in implementing the guideline.
Phase 2 (Supported by UNAIDS and conducted by the end of April 2018)
This will include a workshop with women living with HIV and key partners to pilot the use of the Checklist in Kenya to strengthen an enabling environment, including addressing barriers faced by women living with HIV, such as criminalisation and discrimination in health care settings. Salamander Trust will support Women Fighting AIDS in Kenya (WOFAK) appointed by UNAIDS), as it implements the steps mentioned in the generic Checklist (created in phase 1).
Phase 3 (Supported by UNAIDS and WHO if funds are available)
This phase would expand the pilot national work with women living with HIV to (an)other country/countries, integrating lessons from Phase 2 regarding the use of the Checklist.

If you want to use this Checklist

The Checklist is accessible [here](#), and in pdf form [here](#). Please contact country WHO and UNAIDS offices, informing them of plans to utilise the Checklist and request their support in seeking funding. Please keep in touch with us at Salamander Trust to help track Checklist use and impact. Given that this Checklist will go through a review following the Kenya experience, we welcome your feedback and will publish any revised versions of the Checklist. As the Checklist highlights, it is important to document any impact stemming from engaging with the Checklist, and share this with Salamander Trust. Your experiences and insights are important and can be shared and built on elsewhere. Thank you!

Background Reading

If you would like to learn more about the whole guideline development process, and the associated research, click on the links below.

- **Global Values and Preferences Survey:** [‘Building a safe house on firm ground: key findings from a global values and preferences survey regarding the SHRHR and human rights of women living with HIV’](#), Salamander Trust et al, 2015
- **Specific Survey Findings:** a) ‘Violence. Enough already’: findings from a global participatory survey among women living with HIV’. [JIAS, 2015](#). b) ‘How does living with HIV impact on women's mental health? Voices from a global survey’. [JIAS, 2015](#).
- **The participatory survey process:** c) ‘Sexual and reproductive health and human rights of women living with HIV: a global community survey’. [WHO Bulletin, 2016](#). d) ‘Ethical, strategic and meaningful involvement of women living with HIV starts at the beginning’ [Journal of Virus Eradication, 2016](#).
- **Consolidated guideline on the SRHR of women living with HIV.** [WHO, 2017](#).
- **Comments by members of the Global Reference Group for the background process on the new guideline,** [2016](#).
- **Other products** from the collaborative process, as of November [2017](#).
- **The Generic Checklist,** March [2017](#) and, in PDF, [here](#).

For more information about the Checklist and the whole process, contact: Alice Welbourn, Salamander Trust on alice@salamandertrust.net