



# Violence Against Women

## Women's Human Rights and HIV/AIDS

"The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights."  
-Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1993

"Violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace. Violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms."  
-Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995

"We . . . resolve to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable."  
-Millennium Declaration, 2000

"Gender equality and the empowerment of women are fundamental elements in the reduction of the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS"  
-Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, 2001

### Violence Against Women is both a Cause and a Consequence of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic

Violence against women, especially forced or coerced sex, increases women's vulnerability to HIV infection.

Violence and fear of violence limits a woman's ability to negotiate safe sexual behavior, even in a consensual union.

Women who are infected with HIV or who are perceived to be infected may face violence and/or abandonment.

Fear of violence and stigma can dissuade women from seeking information on HIV/AIDS, getting tested for HIV, disclosing their HIV status, and seeking treatment and counselling.

Since violence can affect women's willingness to be tested, it can also have a detrimental effect on larger HIV control, treatment, and prevention programmes.

-World Health Organization

For the Health of Women, For the Health of the World: No More Violence

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence ■ 25 November—10 December 2004