

# Sexual and reproductive health of women living with HIV/AIDS

Guidelines on care, treatment and support for women living with HIV/AIDS and their children in resource-constrained settings



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# CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	III
Abbreviations and acronyms	IV
Executive summary	1
1 Introduction, background and diagnosing HIV infection in women	5
1.1 Introduction – the need for this document	5
1.2 Background	7
1.3 Diagnosing HIV infection among women	8
2 Sexual and reproductive health of women living with HIV/AIDS	11
2.1 Promoting sexual health	11
2.2 Providing high-quality services for family planning	16
2.3 Improving antenatal, intrapartum, postpartum and newborn care	28
2.4 Eliminating unsafe abortion	39
2.5 Combating sexually transmitted infections, reproductive tract infections and cervical cancer	43
3 Sexual and reproductive health of women receiving antiretroviral therapy	55
3.1 Promoting sexual health	57
3.2 Providing high-quality services for family planning	57
3.3 Antiretroviral treatment during pregnancy and childbirth and postpartum	59
3.4 Eliminating unsafe abortion for women receiving antiretroviral therapy	60
3.5 Combating sexually transmitted infections among women receiving antiretroviral therapy	60
References	62

# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>AIDS</b>	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
<b>HIV</b>	human immunodeficiency virus
<b>HPV</b>	human papillomavirus
<b>IUD</b>	intrauterine device
<b>NRTI</b>	nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor
<b>NNRTI</b>	non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor
<b>RTI</b>	reproductive tract infection
<b>STI</b>	sexually transmitted infection
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The sexual and reproductive health of women living with HIV/AIDS is fundamental to their well-being and that of their partners and children. This publication addresses the specific sexual and reproductive health needs of women living with HIV/AIDS and contains recommendations for counselling, antiretroviral therapy, care and other interventions.

Improving women's sexual and reproductive health, treating HIV infections and preventing new ones are important factors in reducing poverty and promoting the social and economic development of communities and countries. Sexual and reproductive health services are uniquely positioned to address each of these factors.

## EQUITY AND RIGHTS

Gender plays an important role in determining a woman's vulnerability to HIV infection and violence and her ability to access treatment, care and support and to cope when infected or affected. The current scope of HIV interventions and policies needs to be expanded to make gender equity a central component in the fight against HIV.

All women have the same rights concerning their reproduction and sexuality, but women living with HIV/AIDS require additional care and counselling during their reproductive life. HIV infection accelerates the natural history of some reproductive illnesses, increases the severity of others and adversely affects the ability to become pregnant. Moreover, infection with HIV affects the sexual health and well-being of women.

## HIV AND SEXUAL HEALTH

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