

International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS

The concept of an International Institute for training in Gender and HIV/AIDS was first identified in 1999 during informal discussions between the Maritime Centre of Excellence for Women's Health (MCEWH) and the Commonwealth Secretariat (COM SEC), about the severe impact of HIV/AIDS on men, women, girls and boys all over the world. Of particular concern is the disproportionately increasing rate of infection among females.

In 2000, COM SEC invited MCEWH to participate in a co-publication on Gender, Health and HIV/AIDS as part of its Gender Management Series (GMS). The Women's Health Bureau, Health Canada, generously provided initial funding for this initiative. The co-publication, *Gender Mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS Strategies/ Management: A Reference Manual for Governments and Other Stakeholders*, will be available in April 2002.

MCEWH and its COM SEC partners, particularly policy makers in African and Caribbean Commonwealth countries, identified the need to develop a knowledge transfer mechanism for the GMS series. This would include, among other mechanisms, a set of practical training materials on gender mainstreaming and management for regional, national, and international HIV/AIDS policy and program development.

MCEWH, with COM SEC as a collaborating partner, sought funding from International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR). Funding was approved by IDRC's Global Health Equity Program and three CIHR institutes: The Institute of Gender and Health; The Human

Development, Child and Youth Institute; and the Institute of Infection and Immunity. Together, IDRC and CIHR contributed financial support to host a Feasibility/Design Workshop for the proposed International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS, January 16-18, 2002 in Halifax, Canada.

The encouragement received from participants of the Feasibility/Design Workshop was a clear indication of feasibility and support for further development of the International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS. Next steps will include the hosting of a Satellite Workshop during *AIDS 2002*, World AIDS Conference, July 2002, in Barcelona, Spain. The purpose of the Satellite Workshop will be to increase our international network of stakeholders and to inform future directions for development of the institute. In September 2002, we will host a Curriculum Design workshop to establish a core of training modules for the Institute and a pilot International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS is scheduled to take place in the summer of 2003.

We have developed an International Gender and HIV/AIDS listserv. To subscribe, email: listserv@is.dal.ca and in the message text type: "SUB gender-hiv first name last name". Please leave the subject line blank and do not include signatures.

If you have any questions or you would like additional information, please contact Research Assistant, Aileen Reynolds at aileen.reynolds@dal.ca or 902 470 7790.

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