

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR'S RESPONSE TO AIDS

A TRAINING MANUAL FOR AGRICULTURE SECTOR WORKERS

**Introduction and Methodological
Guide to the Manual**



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This is a living document. It will be reviewed and updated as and when needs be. We therefore welcome your comments. Please send comments to:

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FOREWARD

Nearly 30 years after the first cases of AIDS were diagnosed in Africa, the epidemic remains a medical and development challenge. Although originally seen as a health problem that could be eradicated by medical means, HIV has proven to be a long lasting challenge and has shown that its effects extend far beyond the medical realm. It was not until 1988, however, that the epidemic finally came to be seen as a direct challenge to agriculture, food security and rural livelihoods. Despite declining and stabilizing trends in HIV prevalence in recent years, the disease remains an issue of concern for agricultural development and food security, particularly in rural areas of countries where HIV prevalence has stabilized at high levels. There is now a sizable body of knowledge not only on the linkages between AIDS and agriculture, but also on the impacts of the disease on food security and household livelihoods.

HIV prevention and mitigation of the socio-economic impacts of the disease cannot be detached from overall development efforts, including the Millennium Development Goals. Indeed, effective responses to AIDS requires addressing a broader set of issues, such as poverty, food insecurity and gender inequalities, that render people vulnerable to HIV and its impacts.

For many years the agriculture sector cited lack of tools and guidelines, as well as low capacity, as barriers to its participation in national and local efforts to respond to the epidemic. It is against this background that FAO has developed this manual as a tool for enhancing analytical and operational capacity of agriculture sector workers. The initiative for the development of this manual was taken by the Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW), whose mandate includes being the corporate focal point for AIDS at FAO. The first draft of the manual was produced through a joint effort between ESW staff and external consultants. The manual was subsequently field tested and reviewed at a workshop convened for that purpose in Arusha, Tanzania from 19 to 30 October 2009.

We encourage various stakeholders to use this manual in its original form, or to adapt it to different situations according to local needs and realities.

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INTRODUCTION

The AIDS epidemic is multifaceted and requires coordinated responses from all sectors, but the agriculture sector has until now played a minor role. Given the higher prevalence of HIV in many developing countries (particularly in sub-Saharan Africa) and the high percentage of rural populations in these countries, the number of rural people infected and affected by HIV is large. In the last 25 years over 25 million people have died of AIDS-related causes. Though the epidemic may be stabilizing, it is in no way declining. Thus the agriculture sector has the potential, even the responsibility, to be a major player in responding to the epidemic. The sector has to endeavour to reduce vulnerabilities, mitigate impacts and build resilience against the epidemic. Consequently, development actors in rural areas – including FAO, Ministries of Agriculture and rural NGOs – need to build their capacity to effectively respond to the epidemic.

Research has shown that the AIDS epidemic is a serious threat to farming, forestry, fishing and livestock raising for several reasons:

- HIV and AIDS can have devastating impacts at the community and household levels, jeopardizing livelihoods and food security;
- Coping responses by affected rural populations can contribute to driving the epidemic and mortgage the future of rural children and food security.

Although at present insufficiently recognized, the agriculture sector has a unique and crucial role to play in responding to the epidemic. The sector has an immense responsibility to contribute to the prevention of the epidemic and the mitigation of its impacts, in coordination with the health and other sectors.

OVERALL GOAL OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The modules that constitute the manual “Building Capacity for the Agriculture Sector's Response to AIDS” are intended to:

- Enhance the conceptual, analytical and programmatic capacity of organizations working in the agriculture sector to understand how the AIDS epidemic affects their area of activity in the sector;
- Expose trainees to ideas and programmes that may be developed or upscaled to strengthen community, household or organizational resilience in the face of the epidemic.

While the programme is targeted at national and sub-national level, it is expected that bilateral and multilateral agencies, as well as civil society organizations involved in this area of work, will find this manual useful. Indeed FAO, which is a pivotal organization in the agriculture sector, seeks to facilitate capacity building of its own offices and staff to respond to requests for assistance in the area of AIDS and Agriculture¹ from Ministries of Agriculture (MoAs), from the UN system as well as from NGOs. FAO encourages its country offices to play a proactive role in developing responses to the AIDS epidemic in the agriculture sector, in close collaboration with key national and international partners engaged in the fight against AIDS.

¹ AIDS and Agriculture is understood in a broad sense as covering rural livelihoods, food security, farming, fisheries, forestry, livestock raising, etc.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MODULES

The training modules are designed to support capacity-building at the country level to respond to the challenges of HIV and AIDS in farming, fisheries, livestock production, forestry, and the other sub-sectors critical for rural livelihoods. The training manual should be considered as a reference guide, to be adapted by countries based on local needs and contexts. We expect that learners will acquire enough knowledge to handle requests for technical assistance in a variety of technical areas covered by this manual.

Further, we expect that this manual will enhance the capacity of staff working in the agriculture sector to:

1. Participate actively in international and national efforts against AIDS through a multisectoral approach.
2. Contribute to policy and programme development towards the prevention and mitigation of the impacts of HIV and AIDS on the agriculture sector.

These objectives are to be achieved by fostering understanding of causal factors and inter-relations between AIDS and agriculture. Further elements include communicating with specialists in health and other sectors, as well as supporting the formulation of policy and strategies on AIDS in the agriculture sector. This requires the ability to use both an “AIDS lens” and an “agriculture lens” to examine HIV and AIDS issues in general and agriculture issues in particular. As will be shown, such lenses can enable staff of organizations working in rural areas to identify and highlight HIV and AIDS issues which might otherwise be ignored, but which are important for food security and rural livelihoods, as well as in mitigating the epidemic.

It is important that organizations working in the agriculture sector identify areas of comparative advantage rather than spreading themselves too thin or attempting to intervene in areas in which they do not have the technical expertise. For example, it is inconceivable that the agriculture sector will play a direct role in activities such as providing AIDS-related counselling and testing services or medical treatment for people living with HIV. This is the role of organizations in the health sector. Rather, organizations working in the agriculture sector must learn to design policies and programmes that include measures to reduce rural poverty, malnutrition and migration (which are factors associated with risk of infection) and provide guidance on, for example, crops, cultivation techniques and nutrition, which can strengthen community resilience to the epidemic, especially among AIDS-affected households.

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METHODOLOGY

The modules can be used either for *self study* by individual learners or in group settings such as workshops and technical meetings. It is recognized that some learners working for NGOs in rural areas will not have easy access to the Internet. The essential information about different aspects of HIV and AIDS in agriculture is therefore provided in hard copy in the modules. Learners working alone and who do have internet access have the option of downloading and reading a considerable variety of supplementary documents. Learners who are studying alone should refer to the UNAIDS office in their country of service if they wish to have more information about the epidemic and response strategies. For specific information about agriculture sector initiatives on strengthening food security and community and family resilience to HIV and AIDS, the FAO country office and Ministry of Agriculture may be the best sources of information. It must be noted, however, that agriculture-sector initiatives *specifically addressing HIV and AIDS* are still rare and we encourage learners to collect and share such materials for wider circulation.

The training manual consists of 11 modules, divided into three parts. The four modules in “Part I: Background and rationale” are intended to provide the learner with a general overview of the epidemic and its linkages to the agricultural sector in broad terms. Thus, they serve as a background to the following four modules (5-8) in “Part II: Agriculture sub-sectors”, which enable the learner to gain information about, and build skills in responding to HIV in four agriculture sub-sectors. The last section “Part III: Policy and leadership”, composed of modules 9-11, addresses issues related to policy and leadership. These issues have been deliberately chosen because of their crucial role in enabling an effective sector-wide response to the epidemic.

	Introduction and Methodological Guide to the Manual
PART I: BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE	
Module 1	AIDS and Agriculture: Conceptual Overview
Module 2	HIV and AIDS: Some Basic Facts
Module 3	Linking HIV to Agriculture, Rural Livelihoods and Food Security
Module 4	The Role of Nutrition in the AIDS Response
PART II: AGRICULTURE SUB-SECTORS	
Module 5	AIDS and the Fisheries Sub-Sector
Module 6	AIDS and the Livestock Sub-Sector
Module 7	AIDS and the Forestry Sub-Sector
Module 8	AIDS and the Commercial Agriculture Sub-Sector
PART III: POLICY AND LEADERSHIP	
Module 9	Developing AIDS Policies in the Agriculture Sector
Module 10	Leadership and Resource Mobilization
Module 11	Programme Monitoring and Evaluation

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Although the modules could be used selectively, all learners should study Part I in order to have an overall understanding of HIV challenges, particularly in the agriculture sector. The modules in the sub-sectors part are designed for specialized audiences working in relevant fields. Finally, the modules in the third part are compulsory because they provide general information and strategies without which it is impossible to design or implement programmes.

OUTLINE OF EACH MODULE

1. Aims and objectives

Each module begins with a statement of general aims and specific learning objectives related to the specific area covered.

2. Questions for reflection

Several questions are provided to encourage the learner to think about key issues and challenges related to impacts of HIV and AIDS in a certain area of the agriculture sector, as well as vulnerabilities of that sector.

3. Introductory remarks

There is a brief introduction to each module that summarizes the most important concepts that will be covered and their relevance to the work of organizations working in the agriculture sector.

4. Readings

The bulk of the module comprises sections that explain research finding, policy issues and specific examples of responses to AIDS by the agriculture sector covered in that particular module.

5. Learning reinforcement activities

Following the readings, the learner may choose to complete at least one of several learning activities. The activities are designed to give learners an opportunity to apply analytical and other tools to solving challenges of AIDS in the agriculture sector. The learning activities can be done by individuals studying alone or by groups of participants in workshop settings.

6. Summary remarks and lessons learned

After completing the learning activities, the learner may read and discuss a summary of the main issues and concepts covered by the training module.

7. Acronyms and abbreviations

This list is provided to help learners to “spell out” the complex variety of acronyms and abbreviations that are common in both HIV and AIDS strategies and agriculture sector practices.

8. References and further reading

The last part of each module is a bibliography, including references to documents cited in the readings and annexes. Many references presented are accessible via Internet and the electronic links are provided.

9. Annexes

Supplementary readings, charts or relevant examples of HIV-related interventions in the agriculture sector are presented in one or more annexes.

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ANNEX 1 – Evaluation form

1. Your feedback is very important and will be used to make improvements to this training manual.
2. Please take 5-10 minutes to respond to the following questions and send the completed form to: Gabriel Rugalema at Gabriel.Rugalema@fao.org or to Libor Stloukal at Libor.Stloukal@fao.org.

Module # _____ **Title:** _____

(a) Module Learning Objectives

How would you rate the achievement of the ‘overall learning objectives’ for the module?

(1 is low and 6 is high)

- Objective #1: _____

1	2	3	4	5	6
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- Objective #2: _____

1	2	3	4	5	6
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- Objective #3: _____

1	2	3	4	5	6
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(b) Learning Content Evaluation

1. **Keep** → Which parts of the module did you find the most useful and why?

2. **Drop** → What topics/areas (if any) would you reduce or eliminate and why?

3. **Add** → What topics/areas (if any) would you add or give more time or text to cover?

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4. **Modify** → What changes would you make to improve the value of the content/topics of the module and why?

5. **Relevance** → How would you rank the relevance of the content/topics of the module to your work?

(1 is low and 6 is high)

1	2	3	4	5	6
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Comments: (Including potential areas for in-country follow-up action.)

(c) Learning Experience Evaluation

1. Overall, how would you rank the usefulness for the module as a learning experience?

(1 is low and 6 is high)

1	2	3	4	5	6
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Comments:

2. How would you rank the organization of the module (e.g. sequence)?

(1 is low and 6 is high)

1	2	3	4	5	6
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Comments:

3. How would you rank the quality of the reading materials, charts, tables and diagrams?

(1 is low and 6 is high)

1	2	3	4	5	6
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Comments:

4. If you are in a workshop setting, please rate the quality of small group exercises and discussions.

(1 is low and 6 is high)

1	2	3	4	5	6
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Comments:

(d) Additional comments

Please provide any further observations, comments or requests about the training module.