

Gender Assessments: Moving to gender transformative approaches

1. What is the gender assessment tool?

The [UNAIDS Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV 2010–2014](#) presented a set of strategic actions that can enable countries to better respond to the needs and uphold the rights of women and girls within HIV responses. See [additional information](#) if you would like to read more of its history.

A mid-term review highlighted that systematic approaches to data collection would better inform planning and budgeting to ensure that HIV responses are gender transformative and work for women and girls in communities. Based on this need, UNAIDS led a process to develop a [gender assessment tool](#) to align the tool with the global instruments guiding and supporting the HIV response, including the Global Fund.¹

The gender assessment tool supports countries to use a gender lens to assess HIV epidemics, contexts and responses to make HIV responses gender transformative, equitable and rights based.

Additionally, the Stop TB Partnership has developed a [Protocol](#) to conduct an integrated Tuberculosis (TB) Communities, Rights and Gender (CRG).² This protocol is informed by the UNAIDS gender assessment together with national TB programmes and TB affected communities. It enables an assessment of gender related barriers that prevent access to TB prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care and support services. In addition to focusing on gender, it looks at the intersectionality between gender and accessibility, availability, acceptability and quality, stigma and discrimination, freedoms, participation, TB key and vulnerable populations and remedies. The [2020 TB communities accountability report](#) includes a call to action for all high burden countries to complete a TB CRG Assessment by 2023.³ The global network of women affected by TB – [TB WOMEN](#),⁴ is now working to further this initiative.

WAGF Advocates can provide leverage to the gender assessments to influence changes during the review of national strategic plans (NSP) and they can support advocacy to inform funding requests submitted to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund).

Gender assessments help to identify the needs of women and girls. The information and data collected can influence strategic planning processes and increase the advocacy power of women's rights organisations and as well provide leverage to obtain political commitment to address these needs.

Data generated from assessing gender inequalities, identifying the contributing factors and determining the responsiveness of policies and programmes to gender inequality, norms and barriers will help identify entry points for strengthening the integration of gender into the HIV and sexual and reproductive health response for policy development, advocacy and planning and programme implementation & monitoring. (UNAIDS, 2019).

¹ The review was conducted against the backdrop of the Sustainable Development Goals (3), the 2016 Political Declaration on Ending AIDS (7), the UNAIDS Strategy 2016–2021 (4) and the Global Fund Strategy 2017–2022 (9) to align the GAT with the global instruments guiding and supporting the HIV response as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

² See http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/communities/Investment%20Package_TB%20CRG%20Assessment_10.02.2020.pdf

³ STP Community Delegation *A Deadly Divide: TB Commitments Vs. TB Realities* (2020)

http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/communities/The%20Deadly%20Divide_TB%20Commitments%20vs%20TB%20Realities%20FINAL%20OHLM%20Report.pdf

⁴ <http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/communities/TB%20Women%20Strategic%20Plan%202021-2025.pdf>

Gender assessments also enable countries to better understand how gender inequality shapes their HIV response, to identify gender-related barriers that hinder access to HIV services, and to determine how well national HIV responses are addressing this inequality to meet the needs of women and girls especially those from key and vulnerable populations.

Creating this action in your country requires strategic collaboration and financial commitments from development partners, ministries responsible for health, gender or women's affairs, youth, education, justice, law enforcement and economic and social development, local authorities as well as nongovernmental and community-based organisations and including the Global Fund. The gender assessment process requires:

- Preparation for the gender assessment
- Knowledge of your HIV and TB epidemics and country context
- Identification of your country's HIV and TB responses
- Analysis and use of gender assessment findings for gender-transformative HIV and TB responses
- Development of costed national action plans to mitigate and overcome identified gender-related barriers.

2. Where have they happened?

Gender assessments have been conducted in Benin, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. These countries are at different stages of the process – some are just commencing the process and others have finalised their gender assessments. Other countries are currently doing the preparatory work prior to launching their gender assessment.

TB CRG Assessments have been performed in a total of 20 countries, namely: Bangladesh, Benin, Cambodia, Cameroon, DR Congo, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, South Africa, Tajikistan, Tanzania, and Ukraine.⁵

3. Gender assessments for HIV, TB and malaria

Conducting gender assessments can pave the way for more significant, transformational HIV responses that lead countries to achieve gender equality. Other important gender assessments across TB and malaria include:

- UNAIDS reviewed the HIV GAT in 2017 leveraging the lessons learned from the [gender assessment tool for national HIV and tuberculosis \(TB\) responses](#)
- [The Malaria Matchbox](#) is an important tool that should be scaled up as an innovative approach to guide gender integration into malaria policy and programme approaches. It helps to ensure equity in malaria programmes by connecting data on access and utilisation of healthcare services in accordance to malaria programmes in each country.
- The TB CRG Assessment described above and the TB Stigma Assessment.⁶

⁵ <http://www.stoptb.org/communities/default.asp#CRG>

⁶ <http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/communities/STP%20TB%20Stigma%20Assessment%20Implementation%20Handbook.pdf>

4. Call to action: How can you get involved?

COVID-19 has generally derailed our progress across HIV, TB and malaria.

We must build on the momentum and political will to end gender inequality – and to ensure the rights and needs of women and girls affected by HIV - in all their diversity - are clear.

Now is the time to convene women in communities to call for gender assessment. The Gender Assessments provide a clear plan on how to ensure this happens in your country. It all starts with securing political will. Engaging with leaders who share your desire to ensure that your country is able to conduct a Gender Assessment often results in success. The following can be done to create momentum:

- Advocate that your country conduct a gender assessment which includes reviewing programmes on HIV, TB and malaria.
- Contact UNAIDS in [your country](#), or the [Stop TB Partnership](#) or the [RBM Partnership to End Malaria](#) to determine what is happening in your country and offer a partnership with them, as a local community partner, with the ability to provide links and support.
- Benefit from national networks and seize opportunities to share information on what is happening in the gender assessment field.
- Engage with your governments and, if you have access, with champions, including your First Ladies who can sometimes provide tremendous support.
- Request workshops to strengthen national plans in the next twelve months and even consider writing a statement to appeal for the gender assessment to be conducted.
- If your country has performed a gender assessment, ensure that a review is made of your country's funding requests to the Global Fund and assess how many of those recommendations are being supported.

Women4GlobalFund (W4GF) is a dynamic global platform of women and gender equality advocates who share a deep commitment to ensuring that Global Fund programmes are gender-transformative to meet the rights and priorities of women and girls in all our diversity. For more information, please contact [Sophie Dilmitis](#) or [Fezile Kanju](#), co-lead Global Coordinators, | [WEB](#) | [FACEBOOK](#) | [TWITTER](#)