

The SOPHIA Forum is a UK-based voluntary network launched in 2005, which seeks to raise awareness of how HIV affects women, both in the UK and globally.

Sophia's objectives are:

The protection and promotion of the good health of women, in particular women who are HIV positive or who are at risk of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV by:

- (a) promoting prevention and treatment for women living with HIV, both in the UK and internationally;
- (b) increasing awareness and understanding of women's sexual health, HIV and AIDS amongst health and other professionals, service providers and the public.

In all our work, Sophia Forum endeavours to uphold the principle of "GIPA" - ie the meaningful involvement of women living with HIV in all that we do.

The forum is the UK Chapter of the UNAIDS Global Coalition on Women and AIDS.

Achievements:

In June 2008, we held an event to raise awareness among the *business* sector of how HIV affects women's job-security and livelihoods, both in the UK and internationally.

In November 2008, we held an event to raise awareness amongst the *legal* sector of how punitive attitudes and legislation, both here in the UK and internationally are damaging the rights and lives both of HIV-positive women and their children.

In October 2009, we co-hosted an event with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, entitled "In sickness and in health: women HIV and the *health* sector response", to raise awareness of the specific issues facing women in relation to HIV-health care.

We have launched our 'Conversations for Change' dinners, enabling our supporters to raise awareness in their own *communities* of how HIV affects women by stimulating discussion and providing information packs, thus promoting change.

You can read about all these events on our website.

We have a growing database of over 700 'friends of SOPHIA', as well as a growing facebook group of over 400.

**Useful Resources and Links specific to this evening's focus:
"Health and Safety: the links between HIV and gender-based violence"**

Sophia Forum

The UK Chapter of the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS
Registered Office: c/o Positively Women, 347-349 City Road,
London EC1V 1LR
Tel: +44 20 7704 0606 / Fax: +44 20 7704 8070
www.sophiaforum.net



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Charity No. 1131629



The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS:

<http://womenandaids.net/tags/violence.aspx> (Resources specific to violence and women, including multi-country study by World Health Organization)

World Health Organization, Women and Health:

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2009/9789241563857_eng.pdf
(Report on specific health needs of women and the health sector's response)

Institutional Violence:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jun/22/africa-hiv-positive-women-sterilisation> (Guardian article on reports of forced sterilization of HIV positive women)

<http://www.icw.org/files/The%20forced%20and%20coerced%20sterilization%20of%20HIV%20positive%20women%20in%20Namibia%202009.pdf> (Full report on forced and coerced sterilization of women in Namibia)

Pozfem UK:

<http://www.poz-fem-uk.org/docs/WomenHIVandSexualHealth.pdf>
(Discusses issues such as violence, immigration, and treatment by health care staff specific to the UK)

Human Rights Watch:

<http://www.hrw.org/legacy/english/docs/2005/03/21/africa10357.htm>
(Addresses various issues of gender violence including property rights, domestic violence, sexual abuse and abusive HIV testing practices)

Network of Sex Work Projects: (Resources about sex workers and violence)

<http://www.nswp.org/safety/violence.html>
<http://www.walnet.org/csis/papers/dsid-0109.html>

UNIFEM, Gender and HIV/AIDS:

http://www.genderandaids.org/modules.php?name=News&new_topic=9
(Link to different references on gender-based violence and HIV)

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