HIV/AIDS Policy Compendium

Purpose

National HIV/AIDS policies are currently being developed in many countries. These policies include national policies that are developed with broad participation and approved by Parliament, as well as specific HIV/AIDS legislation and policy statements from the Ministry of Health. The process of drafting policies can be difficult and time-consuming due to the variety and complexity of issues related to HIV/AIDS. To provide assistance to those responsible for drafting such policies, the POLICY Project has prepared an HIV/AIDS Policy Compendium. The compendium is a collection of policy statements taken from national policies and international resolutions, which are organized in a database that can be searched by keyword and country. It can help those involved in drafting new policies by providing examples of how policies in other countries deal with specific issues.

Contents

POLICY conducted a detailed and wide-ranging search to identify and collect all existing HIV/AIDS policies. New comprehensive national HIV/AIDS policies and laws will be added to the compendium, as they become available. We encourage and welcome donations of material for the database.

The Policy Compendium contains documents describing national policies or international resolutions. The aim is to collect comprehensive national HIV/AIDS policies and laws, but the compendium also includes national strategy documents, national program plans, and medium-term plans. Such documents do not strictly qualify as policy statements; however, the relevant policy-related wording (text) from these documents has been extracted and included in the compendium.

Comprehensive national HIV/AIDS policy documents are not reproduced in their entirety in the compendium—introductions, situation analyses, specific implementation schemes, and other items are excluded. Furthermore, some national HIV/AIDS policy documents are not yet finalized; draft reports are noted in the citation. Documents that deal with only one aspect of HIV/AIDS legislation or policy are also not included in the compendium either. If a law deals only with testing or ensuring safety of blood supply, it is not cited. The *WHO Directory of Legal Instruments Dealing with HIV Infection and AIDS* (WHO/UNAIDS/HLE/97.1) provides an "overview of current legislation on AIDS worldwide and an historical record of the development of such legislation." The full-text of legislation is usually not included in the WHO directory, but it covers all laws on individual aspects of HIV/AIDS.

Availability

The HIV/AIDS Policy Compendium is available in three formats:

- It can be accessed via the internet at: http://www.tfgi.com/areas/hivaids.htm
- It is available on CD-ROM that includes a runtime version of Microsoft Access. This will allow users who have Windows 95 or Windows NT to run the database on their personal computers.
- It can be requested on a diskette with a zipped file of the database for use with Microsoft Access. The database file is in Access 2.0.

Database Structure

The database includes seven fields: Document ID, Country, Document Type, Statement Type, Heading, Statement Text, and Topics. These are described below.

- **Document ID** = a unique catalog number assigned to each document.
- **Country** = the country (or region in some cases) of the national policy.
- **Document Type** = provides an indication of the nature of the document, such as: resolution, law, sessional paper, position paper, report, strategy, agenda, statement, declaration, manual, national plan.
- **Statement Type** = taken from the text of the national HIV/AIDS policy document, such as: issues, rights, position, goals, actions, and items.
- **Heading** = taken from the text of the national HIV/AIDS policy document.
- **Statement Text** = taken verbatim from the text of the national HIV/AIDS policy document. In many cases, only portions of a section are included.
- **Topics** = 34 terms used to categorize the statements. Topics include blood supply, counseling, education, human rights, notification, privacy, research, testing. The list of topics is available on the search form as a drop-down list.

Searching the Database

Two search forms are available to use. One is a Topic Search that allows selection from the 34 topics with the option of combining a country selection (or just searching for a country selection). The second form is a Full Text Search, which finds words or phrases in the policy statement text.

The statement text reproduced in the Policy Compendium is taken verbatim from the source document. In many cases, however, only portions of a section are included, which can usually be identified by the fact that they end with either "..." or "(continues)". The statement text is in the original language. This is important to keep in mind when searching the statement text. If you want to find all references to women in a particular language, you would have to search using the word for women in that language (for example, femme or mujer). Searching for the topic "Women" will retrieve all major entries (in every language) dealing with women.

The form used to view the Statement Text is linked to a bibliographic entry for the source document, allowing the full citation to be viewed while reading the statement text. A bibliography of the 91 source document citations is also available by request from the POLICY Project.

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