

Promoting human rights in the context of HIV and AIDS means:

- Encouraging people to respect each other's rights, and to treat others as they themselves would wish to be treated
- Making sure that education, and access to health care are available to everyone
- Educating people to help them overcome the fears, ignorance and prejudices that lead them to abuse the rights of others

Protecting human rights means:

- Supporting and defending people whose rights are threatened or abused
- Remediating and compensating for abuses when they occur
- Working to change the conditions of poverty, powerlessness and dependence that make people vulnerable to abuse of their rights

Internationally accepted human rights

The human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS are abused in countries all over the world. The following are human rights and examples of how those rights are being abused. ICW is against any abuse of the human rights of HIV positive people.

Liberty, security and freedom of movement

Abuses:

- Compulsory HIV testing
- Quarantine, isolation and segregation such as quarantining HIV positive sex workers and segregating HIV positive prisoners

Freedom from inhumane or degrading treatment

Abuses:

- Isolation, for example of HIV positive prisoners
- Participation in drug or medical trials without fully understood and informed consent

- Physical, emotional and psychological abuse of HIV positive women

Right to marry or have relationships and children

Abuses:

- Forced abortion or sterilisation
- Compulsory pre-marital HIV testing
- Discrimination against same sex relationships
- Forced pregnancy
- Forced wife inheritance
- Forced taking of children

Equal access to health care

Abuses:

- Lack of appropriate drugs, condoms, clean syringes and diagnostic and treatment procedures
- Refusal to care for or treat people with HIV - including refusal of hospital beds
- Home based care without any back-up systems in place
- Lack of access to drug use treatment centres

Education

Abuses:

- Lack of access to information which enables people to make informed choices
- Refusal to provide education because of HIV status

Equal protection of the law

Abuses:

- Denying access to legal advice or services
- Compulsory testing of those accused in rape/abuse cases before a guilty verdict is pronounced
- Prosecution of HIV positive sex workers

Privacy

Abuses:

- Lack of confidentiality or disclosure of test results without consent
- Compulsory reporting of people with HIV to health authorities (making HIV a notifiable disease)
- Partner tracing and notification without consent
- Compulsory testing of newborn babies

Self-determination

Abuses:

- Banning organisations by people vulnerable to or affected by HIV
- Lack of access to understandable information which enables people to make informed choices

Shelter, social security and housing

Abuses

- Denial of access to housing or social services
- Eviction by landlords because of HIV status

Work and security

Abuses:

- Dismissal from or discrimination at work
- Limited or no insurance coverage or other benefits
- HIV testing as a precondition of employment