

Johanna Kehler

Johanna Kehler is a researcher and rights advocate and has worked on issues of human rights, gender and HIV for over 20 years. Johanna received her Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology at Humboldt University, Germany, in 1992, based on research she conducted in rural areas of South Africa.

Living in South Africa since, Johanna has worked in various human rights organisations in South Africa, and is, since 2004, the director of the AIDS Legal Network (ALN). Over the years, Johanna has served in various national structures, including the Human and Legal Rights Technical Task Team of the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), and is currently the Chairperson of the Technical Expert Group of the SANAC Women's Sector.

Johanna has a strong background in policy analysis and rights advocacy, and over the past 20 years worked on various projects highlighting gendered barriers to accessing rights and available resources; developed resource and training manuals on human rights and HIV; conducted research on stigma, gender violence and HIV; and written extensively on issues of human rights, gender, gender violence and HIV, exploring especially women's realities, risks and needs based on and in the context of HIV.

Focusing primarily on the impact of legislative and policy provisions on women's risks and vulnerabilities to HIV exposure, transmission and related violence and rights abuses, Johanna has also been actively involved in research and advocacy activities at a national, regional and global level, including in the context of legislative trends towards criminalisation of HIV exposure and transmission, provider-initiated HIV testing during pregnancy, coercive sterilisation of women living with HIV in Namibia and South Africa, and prevention of vertical transmission of HIV programmes.