

# MODULE

# 1

## How to use the *Learner's Handbook*

This Module aims to introduce you to the *HIV Vaccines Learner's Handbook*. It explains why we wrote the *Handbook*, who it is for, how it works and what type of information we cover in the different modules.

In this module we look at:

1. Who is this *Learner's Handbook* for?
2. What topics are covered in each module?





### **1. WHO IS THIS *LEARNER'S HANDBOOK* FOR?**

This *Handbook* is mainly for adult learners who attend education workshops about the HIV vaccine research and development process. It was written to give people the most accurate information possible, and to standardise the messages that we hear in workshops about HIV vaccines.

#### **How does the *Handbook* work?**

During the learning programme, workshop participants will go through the information covered in modules 2–7 of the *Learner's Handbook*. Each module covers a different area of HIV vaccine research and development and builds on the knowledge presented in the previous module. This way of working is based on how adults learn, or what educators call the 'cycle of adult learning' (see below).

Sometimes a group of participants will already have knowledge about a topic or an area that we cover in a module. In this case, the facilitator may spend less time on that module or parts of the module. However, he or she will always build on what people already know, and in this way use the cycle of adult learning. Although it may take about 5–10 days to cover the whole learning programme, some groups may split up these sessions over a few weeks.

#### **The cycle of adult learning**

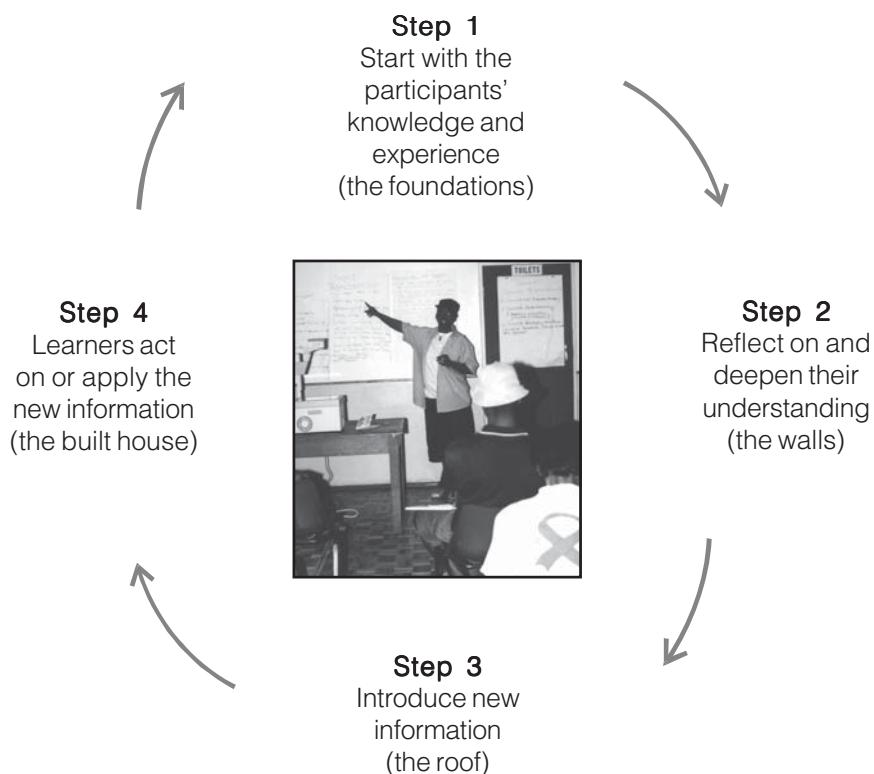
The process of learning has often been compared to building and maintaining a house. Usually a builder begins by digging and laying the foundations, then building the walls, and finally constructing the roof. During the building process, tasks are carried out in a particular order. Only then will the house stand firm. In addition, once the house is built, it needs ongoing maintenance to keep it in good working order.



1. Laying foundations 2. Building walls 3. Constructing the roof 4. The built house



In the same way that we take certain steps when building a house, certain steps should be followed for learning to take place. The diagram below illustrates the four phases of the adult learning cycle. The structure of the *Learner's Handbook* and all the activities that are part of the workshops are designed with this cycle in mind:



**2. WHAT TOPICS ARE COVERED IN EACH MODULE?**

Modules 2–7 cover a number of different areas about HIV vaccine research and development. Here is a short description of what you will find in each module:

In *Module 2: The background to HIV vaccines*, we examine the HIV and/or AIDS pandemic and the impact it has had on the world, sub-Saharan Africa, and South Africa. We explain what HIV and AIDS are, how the immune system works, and how HIV impacts on it. This helps us to understand how vaccines work and why finding an effective HIV vaccine is one of the biggest hopes for controlling the pandemic in the future. We also introduce the history and concepts of vaccines in general.

*Module 3: Science and research* looks at how science helps us answer questions about the world, including questions about human health and disease. We discuss the steps in the modern scientific method; the four stages of developing a new drug or



vaccine; and the four phases of clinical trials in humans. We look at the parties that are involved in approving, running and quality assuring this research. We also look at what a research protocol is, and the guidelines and laws that researchers must follow in designing the protocol.

In *Module 4, HIV vaccine research and development*, we apply the general information covered in Module 3 to the research and development of an HIV vaccine. We explain the difference between preventative and therapeutic HIV vaccines; what is a successful HIV vaccine; the stages and phases involved in the research and development of an HIV vaccine; the different parties that are involved in clinical trials; where these trials are happening in the world and how trial sites are chosen; and, the guidelines, laws and regulations that apply to development of the HIV vaccine clinical trial protocols.

*Module 5: Ethical issues*, examines what ethical principles should guide our research with humans and how these principles need to be balanced. We identify different key requirements for ethical research, and we explore how these principles and standards are put into practice in HIV vaccine trials.

In *Module 6, Legal and human rights*, we discuss which legal and human rights are important to HIV vaccine trial participants and communities and why these are important. We focus on how to ensure that these rights are respected, protected, promoted and fulfilled, and how the draft *SAAVI Preventive HIV Vaccine Trial Participant Charter of Rights* can be used to raise awareness about these rights.

The final module, *Module 7: Community involvement and participation*, reminds us that at the heart of the HIV vaccine research and development process are communities and people. We discuss the importance of community involvement and participation and how we can facilitate this. We also outline the different steps involved in participating in an HIV vaccine trial.

**What are some features in each module?**

- The first page of each module lists outcomes, i.e. what you should know or be able to do after working through the module.
- The outcomes in the *Learner's Handbook* are designed to meet unit standards submitted to SAQA (the South African Qualifications Authority) for registration on the NQF (National Qualifications Framework).



- Throughout each module, there are boxes, called *Word Boxes*. These define or give the meaning of technical or unfamiliar words when they appear for the first time in the *Learner's Handbook*. These words are also highlighted in bold on the main part of the page. It is important to understand what these words mean.
- The *Did you know?* boxes contain additional interesting or important information about a certain topic.
- Sometimes you will also see *Note* boxes that give you extra information or tell you to look at other modules for more information about a certain topic.
- Throughout the *Handbook*, you will see lines running across the grey margins. These are to give you space to write your own notes.
- Each module ends with a summary of the main messages covered in that module.
- Some modules also contain Case studies or Case examples that you will read or use for activities during the workshop.

#### **A note about South African information**

The *Learner's Handbook* was developed mainly for South African audiences and so most examples, case studies, statistics, and legal sections are specific to South Africa. If you are using the *Handbook* in another country, you will need to find out which laws, documents, regulations, statistics, etc. apply there.

#### **A note about language**

The *Handbook* has been written in plain, easy-to-read language. However, this is sometimes challenging when you are talking about complex and technical information, like medical, scientific and legal processes. So we want to encourage you to ask questions or ask for more information if there is anything of which you are unsure. A good time may be at the end of an activity or at the end of a module because this is when the facilitator will be summing up and asking if there are questions.

We hope that you will find the *Learner's Handbook* useful. It is a work in progress and will grow and develop as it is used for different workshops. We welcome your input and comments and will try to include them in future editions. Please send your suggestions to the Materials Developer at *Masikhulisane*, the SAAVI Community Involvement Programme. See the *Masikhulisane* contact details on page ii.

