





SCIENCE COMMUNITY AND YOUTH IN THE HIV RESPONSE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

AIDS 2018 POST-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

The Kingdom of Eswatini, 26-27 March 2019



Regional Action to Reduce HIV stigma and discrimination

Emmanuel Ndlangamandla
Executive Director
Coordinating Assembly of NGOs



Presentation Outline

1. Introduction
2. What is Stigma
3. What is discrimination
4. Impact of Stigma and discrimination



I am honored to be invited to make a presentation on stigma and discrimination. This presentation will define what stigma and discrimination; will explore the nurture of the crisis . Identify causes stigma and discrimination to thrive in our countries and ascertain how it impacts on the agenda for ending AIDS. We will then share ideas on some strategies to end stigma and discrimination from various facets



- In December 1999, a young female activists Ms Gugu Khumalo was stoned to death in South Africa for daring to openly speak out about her HIV status during the World AIDS Day
- This murder was a stern warning to the world of challenges of fighting the epidemic in societies that were in denial, in fear and prone to attaching labels



What is stigma and discrimination

- Stigma and discrimination is largely seen as retreat from human rights
- There is rise in arrests for men who have sex with men, men who have sex with men, sex workers
- In one one country in Asia 12,000 drug users have been killed due to a government aggressive policy
- Rise in populism, xenophobia and authoritarianism are factors that undermine human rights globally and perpetuate stigma and discrimination.



What is stigma ?

- It is a process of devaluing, discrediting, seen as disgrace, perceived to be of less value.
- Link and Muham (2001) stated that stigma exist when four factors exist: people distinguish and label, dominant cultural practices link labelled persons to undesirable characters, labelled persons experience status loss and discrimination that leads to unequal outcomes
- HIV related stigma builds on other prejudices such as gender, sexuality, race. Stigma associated with HIV is linked with marginalized and stigmatized behaviors like sex work, drug use, having sex with same sex, transgender sexual practices

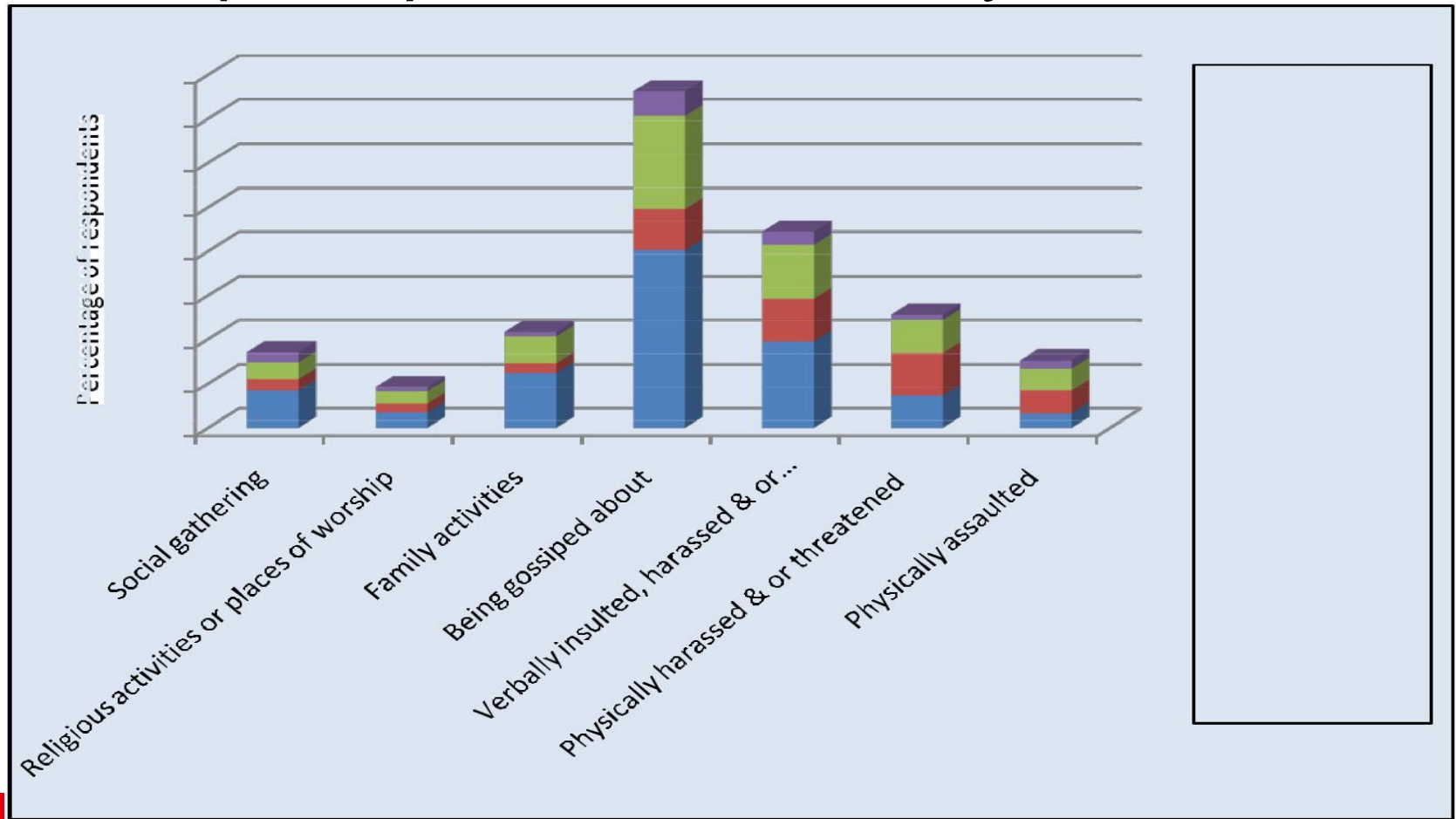


What is discrimination?

- Discrimination is defined as when a person is treated unjustly, unfair, or prejudicial manner on the basis of belonging or perceived to belong to a certain group of people.
- Discrimination take 3 forms: a) **Direct** – an individual who has stereotype) b) **structure** which entails an institutional induced discrimination and c) **self** where an individual internalizes negative social attitudes leading to diminished confidence



Some perceptions identified by SWANEPHA





Where is stigma is prevalent

- Stigma is seen in general population, health care workers, core workers, caregivers, individuals, families, communities, institutions such as media, place of work and governments policies and programmes



Types of Stigma

- a) **Self stigma:** internalized stigma breaks ones confidence to seek help; result in shame and feeling of worthlessness, limits meaningful self urgency
- b) **Governmental Stigma:** discriminatory laws, rules and policies
- c) **Health Care Stigma:** Mandatory testing, minimal care, isolation of patients with HIV, breach of confidentiality
- d) **Employment:** Social isolation, mandatory testing, loss of employment
- e) **Community Stigma:** Rejection by family, divorce
(www.avert)



- It is stated in the UNAIDS report 2018, “Stigma and discrimination has terrible consequences. The very people who are meant to be protecting, supporting, and healing people with HIV often discriminate against them denying access to treatment, care and support, denying critical services resulting in new infections and death”



What is its impact ?

- Its end result is suffering and dehumanizing PLHIV, men who have sex men, transgender
- Undermines the end of AIDS global agenda
- Feeling ashamed, dirty and afraid, withdrawal from society, isolation leading to inability to access treatment, care and support
- It undermines the 90 90 90 agenda
- People who fear being stigmatized or discriminated are less likely to adhere to treatment
- Undermine the SDG call for no one to be left behind yet millions are left behind
- Universal Health Coverage cannot succeed if stigma persist



Who are affected?

- a) People living with HIV and AIDS**
- b) LGBTI**
- c) Transgender**
- d) Disabled**
- e) Those who inject drugs**
- f) Sex Workers**



Proposed strategies to ending stigma and discrimination

a) **At individual level**

- Know the facts. Educate yourself about mental health problems. ...
- Be aware of your attitudes and behaviour. We've all grown up with prejudices and judgmental thinking. ...
- Choose your words carefully. ...
- Educate others. ...
- Focus on the positive. ...
- Support people. ...
- Include everyone.



b) Institutional

- Governments should repeal discriminatory laws
- Repeal criminalization of sex work, same sex relations
- Create understanding of human rights
- Protect human rights of marginalized groups



c) Health care setting

- Health care workers to offer human rights based services for all population
- Discipline negative behaviors
- Reinforce confidentiality between health care worker and client
- Provide friendly differentiated services
- Reach out programmes for communities at risk



d) Media

- Ethical and human rights centred reporting
- Gender sensitive reporting



e) Civil Society Organisations including NGOs, FBOs, CBOs and organisation for affected populations

- Intensify advocacy against stigma and discrimination
- Advocate against negative laws
- Set up programmes to reach out to stigmatized/discriminated communities
- Intensify prevention messages and linkages to care



f) Workers and employers

- Enact human rights centred wellness policies
- Workers to fight stigma amongst themselves
- Advocate for labour laws that protect stigmatized communities



g) Regional Action

- Need to understand the state of stigma and discrimination in the SADC region
- Intensify advocacy for member states to repeal discriminatory and laws that criminalizes certain behaviors
- Conduct research, document progress and disseminate
- Provide funding to fight stigma and discrimination



Conclusion

We will never end AIDS unless we end Stigma and discrimination. Our region should act and act now. Dr Mandela once said “We shy away from the truth but death wont shy away when it comes. The scourge is hindered by stigma and discrimination. This is the time to tell the truth and come out in the open”

I thank you.