



# WORLD AIDS DAY 2014

CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT AND GUIDING MESSAGES

I can't change my HIV status but

you can change your attitude

**ZERO STIGMA**  
**ZERO DISCRIMINATION**



health

Department:  
Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**BROTHERS  
FOR LIFE**

# WORLD AIDS DAY 2014

World AIDS Day is commemorated each year on the 1st of December and is an opportunity for every community to unite in the fight against HIV, show support for people living with HIV and remember those who have died.

The UNAIDS World AIDS Day theme for 2011 to 2015 is: "Getting to Zero". This year, South Africa will focus on ZERO DISCRIMINATION, without losing sight of the other 'zeroes': zero new HIV infections and zero AIDS related deaths. We call on all South Africans to join our **Zero Stigma, Zero Discrimination** campaign for World Aids Day 2014.

The aim of this campaign is to ensure that the rights of people living with HIV and AIDS are not violated, and that discrimination on the basis of HIV, AIDS and TB is reduced, and ultimately eliminated.

## HIV AND AIDS IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa has been relentless in its mission to turn the HIV, AIDS, and TB epidemics around and there are notable achievements to celebrate. A review of our efforts in addressing the HIV and AIDS epidemic over the past 20 years, paints a mixed picture. There have been many scientific advances in HIV treatment and we now have a much better understanding of the virus. More people are receiving antiretroviral treatment, which means HIV infection rates are decreasing. There is also a scientific optimism around the benefits of treatment as prevention, and progress towards a cure and vaccine.

However, despite these advances, stigma and discrimination still persist for many people living with, or affected by HIV. World AIDS Day 2014 is an opportunity for all South Africans to remind themselves that HIV is still a reality and that it is incumbent on all of us to continue fighting prejudice, stigma and discrimination.

## WHY STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION MATTER

Stigma and discrimination can be as devastating as the illness itself and may mean abandonment by a partner or family, social exclusion, job and property loss, school expulsion, denial of medical services, lack of care and support, and violence for those affected by them. These consequences, or fear of them, mean that people are less likely to come in for HIV testing, disclose their HIV status to others, adopt HIV preventive behaviour or access treatment, care and support.

Every sexually active South African is at risk of contracting HIV. We call on all South Africans to recognise that HIV and AIDS are chronic diseases, and that people living with HIV can have full and happy lives. We each have a responsibility to treat those who are struggling with an HIV-positive diagnosis with compassion, those struggling with AIDS with care, and ourselves and our sexual partners with respect. Addressing stigma and discrimination is important in mitigating the impact of HIV.



**Cindy Pivacic, 56. Her partner infected her whilst he was aware of his HIV status.**

**"It took me six years to actually go public about my status. Rejection, that I think is probably the greatest fear that you are going to be rejected, however, after the six years I decided well you know what, if people don't want to be around me well, I don't need them. "**



**Mongezi Sosibo, 23 years, student, loves writing. Upon discovering his status, he accused one of his girlfriends of infecting him.**

**“ I stigmatised people living with HIV, until I became HIV-positive.”**

## **STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE THEME**

**Fear of stigma prevents people from knowing their status.** People are fearful of going to a clinic or HIV testing service because they don't want their neighbours to gossip about them. Some do not disclose to their partners because they are afraid of being abandoned. If we all know and share our status and disclose without fear of judgment or rejection, we can conquer the disease.

**Fear of stigma puts people with HIV at risk: It is not easy to receive an HIV-positive diagnosis.** Even though treatment is available there is no cure for HIV. People have to learn to live with a chronic disease and manage the side effects of the drugs. It is a heavy burden for anyone to carry alone. Many people have suicidal thoughts or even attempt suicide as a result of the stigma they suffer or fear.

**Fear of stigma prevents people from accessing treatment.** Fear of being seen at the clinic, or fear that a family member or loved one may find the drugs and discover the truth stops people from accessing the treatment that is their right and could lower the levels of HIV in their bodies. People who access treatment can live long and full lives, have HIV-negative babies and HIV-negative partners. Stigma may also compel people to conceal medicines, which could result in inconsistent doses.

**Stigma and discrimination affect women and girls disproportionately.** Women tend to experience greater stigma and discrimination than men, and are more likely to experience it in its harshest and most damaging form. They also often have fewer resources to cope with it. Gender-based violence is a consequence of stigma faced most often by women. Women and girls have reported violence at the hands of their partners when requesting that they use condoms, making use of voluntary testing and counselling, refusing sex within or outside a relationship or when they reveal an HIV-positive diagnosis.

**Magnified effects among socially vulnerable groups.** Stigma and discrimination are daily realities for people living with HIV and for people belonging to groups that are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection. Such groups include sex workers, men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, prisoners, and people with tuberculosis. Members of these groups are already stigmatised and are likely to face more discrimination than others when diagnosed with HIV, including being refused services. The layered stigma that people in these groups experience further heightens the challenge of meeting their needs with respect to HIV. They may avoid, or delay, seeking help for fear of being “found out”, humiliated, and/or treated differently by health workers, and in some instances are prosecuted and imprisoned.



**Koketso Mokhetoa, 23 years. She was born HIV positive and doctors told she would not make it past 13 years of age and she would not have any children. Today she is 23 and a mother to a healthy HIV-negative baby.**

**“I met a guy by the name of Tyrone and I told him about being HIV positive, he didn't really take it well, honestly speaking he didn't, so we both did a couple's test, and he still couldn't believe it, but then the support groups helped him a lot ... helped us a lot”**

## **THE RATIONAL BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN THEME AND DESIGN**

A sustained dialogue around stigma and discrimination among South Africans must take place over the next year, starting on World AIDS Day 2014. Two programmes have been launched to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, stigma and discrimination.

### **The Stigma Index**

SANAC's People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLHIV) sector – National Association for People Living with AIDS (NAPWA), Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and Positive Living Women's Network – together with the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), WITS Reproductive Health and HIV Institute (WRHI), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), SANAC and the Department of Health are working together to undertake the first National Stigma Index Survey among PLHIV in 18 districts across South Africa (two per province). This study will include over 10 000 participants who are HIV positive and older than 15 years.

The Stigma Index will measure self-reported stigma and discrimination experienced by PLHIV and will ultimately inform the development and implementation of national policies and programmes that protect the rights of PLHIV. An update on the survey will be released on World Aids Day 2014 and it is anticipated that the final report will be released by April 2015.

### **The implementation of a stigma reduction programme**

A provincial Stigma Index Survey was undertaken between October 2011 and August 2012 in the Eastern Cape and involved a sample of 799 people living with HIV, drawn from three local municipalities in the OR Tambo district: King Sabatha Dalindyebo, Nyandeni and Ngquza.

To respond effectively to this provincial Stigma Index and the national Stigma Survey, which is currently underway, key role players, which include SANAC's PLHIV sector and the Provincial Council on AIDS, will develop a co-ordinated stigma and discrimination strategy in the Eastern Cape. It will inform the development of a model for the work of partners at both provincial and national levels once the national Stigma Index has been completed.

No policy or law alone can combat HIV and AIDS related discrimination. All South Africans must confront the fear-based messages and biased social attitudes, to reduce discrimination and stigmatisation of people living with HIV and AIDS.

## CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

This strategy encompasses a long-term approach that will take into consideration the findings of the National Stigma Index Survey and the development of a countrywide stigma reduction programme with the involvement of the PLHIV sector. The following activities will be included in this strategy: to underline the theme: Zero Stigma and Discrimination

- Mobilise South Africans to recognise and protect the human rights of people living with HIV and AIDS.
- Begin a series of community dialogues on stigma and discrimination, led by people living with HIV.
- Create a more enabling environment through the visibility of people with HIV and AIDS as part of any society.
  - The tagline **"I can't change my HIV status"** is a way to say that an HIV positive individual must be able to disclose his or her HIV status, without fear or prejudice
  - The tagline **"You can change your attitude"** challenges people to reflect on their attitude towards people living with HIV and if it is negative, to change it.
  - The theme **Zero Stigma, Zero Discrimination** challenges all South Africans to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, stigma and discrimination.
- Revive and sustain the HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) Campaign. Successful treatment will make it possible to live a fulfilled, long life with HIV, and people will be more willing to be tested for HIV, to disclose their status, and to seek care if necessary.

Andikwazi ukusitshintsha isimo  
sam se-HIV kodwa wena ungayitshintsha  
indlela ondiphatha ngayo

**ZERO STIGMA**  
**ZERO DISCRIMINATION**

## TOOLS AND PRODUCTS

**Watch and share visual material:** A group of HIV-positive people have told their stories and experiences of stigma and discrimination. These are not stories of despair and hopelessness, but stories of courage and hope, and tell of how key people in their lives helped them to overcome challenges. These stories have been captured on video, in photographs and in text. They are available free of charge on the SANAC website for civil society, the private sector, media and others to use in their World AIDS Day campaigns.

**The SANAC website – [www.sanac.org.za](http://www.sanac.org.za).** The SANAC website provides information about the campaign and its activities. The stories, a calendar of events and a section for downloadable material and ideas for World AIDS Day 2014 are available on the website. The following materials are available and can be used in conjunction with the toolkit:

- **Email / banner:** I can't change my HIV status, but you can change your attitude
- **Poster:** To encourage everyone to act against HIV stigma and discrimination
- **Pull-up and stage banners:** To brand World AIDS Day programme events/venues
- **Leaflet:** To encourage everyone to act against stigma and discrimination and popularise key messages
- **Social media banners:** To promote messages through social media
- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Zero-stigma-ZeroDiscrimination>. "Like" the page, invite Facebook friends to the page and participate/contribute in the discussions. Share photos and messages in the photo gallery
- **Twitter handle on World AIDS Day:** #ZEROHIVSTIGMA
- **HIV Testing Services:** See SANAC website for your closest testing facility

Ndi nga si shandukise tshiimo tshanga  
tsha HIV thedzi vhone vha nga  
shandukisa ndila ine vha mmpfara ngayo

**ZEROSTIGMA  
ZERODISCRIMINATION**



## **Template for submitting information to the National Calendar of Events:**

Use this template to inform SANAC of your events and activities.

<b>Date and time:</b>	
<b>Event / activity:</b>	
<b>Venue and location:</b>	
<b>Lead organisation or department:</b>	
<b>Contact person and details:</b>	



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