

TIME TO END HIV-RELATED STIGMA: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION TO ELIMINATE ALL FORMS OF HIV-RELATED STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION



Stigma towards people living with HIV, other key populations and communities impacted by HIV who are "being left behind"¹ continues to slow our progress on HIV and even reverse the successes we have had.

Every day people affected by HIV continue to experience rejection, exclusion, harassment and even criminalisation because of HIV. The attitudes of others in our societies, that are often reinforced by laws and policies, beliefs and traditions, can create fear and discrimination that isolate people affected by HIV and drive them away from health, education and other services.

¹ gay men and other men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender people, people who use drugs, indigenous populations, people in prisons and other incarcerated people, migrants, and women and girls.

Globally we are measuring our progress in testing and treatment of HIV, but the impacts of HIV-related stigma in homes, workplaces, schools, clinics and in law continue to lead to poor uptake of testing, denial of HIV services to certain groups and people dropping out of treatment. We have been tackling HIV-related stigma for a long time and we have found things that work, but we are not tracking or reporting on them which means they are then not recognised or shared.

This is the reason that the *Global Partnership for Action to Eliminate all forms of HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination* was created.

The Global Partnership is an initiative to focus attention on our work around stigma, to support better interventions and to celebrate and replicate our successes across the world.

The Global Partnership is made up of leading HIV organisations that are providing the structure, advocating for resources and, most importantly, providing a global platform for communities and civil society to lead this work.



The Global Partnership recognises that the key to ending HIV-related stigma is the work of communities and civil society leading interventions in the different settings and areas of people's lives; households, workplaces, education settings, justice systems, health settings and emergency and humanitarian settings.



The partnership understands that high-level commitments will only be met if governments and civil society work together; if stigma is challenged in every setting; and if the work of civil society is well-supported to deliver on interventions that push for change.

The partnership has brought together groups of organisations that have worked on responding to HIV-related stigma and can offer knowledge, experience, ideas and tools to countries to support their work to end this stigma. This group is called the Global Partnership Technical Working Group. The group is made up of 10 UN agencies and 24 civil society organisations and can provide technical support when asked by governments or civil society working in a focus country.

SO HOW ARE COUNTRIES GETTING INVOLVED IN THIS GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP?

Countries have been invited to join the partnership and to share the work they want to do towards ending HIV-related stigma. Countries don't need to make more commitments or pledges than they already have signed up to, but rather think about the real work they will do to actually end HIV-related stigma.

The first wave of invitations was sent to 30 countries in December 2019. Many of these countries have now officially joined the partnership and others are in the process. A second wave will be sent out to further countries.

Each country has been asked to choose the three settings where they think they can make the greatest difference in tackling HIV-related stigma.

Governments and civil society then need to work together to select the interventions for each setting, using the guidance created by the partnership drawing on the experiences of successful work already undertaken in their own country. They then need to find money for these activities from donors already supporting HIV work in the country.

SO, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US, OUR COMMUNITIES, NETWORKS OR ORGANISATIONS?

Communities and civil society are the key to ending stigma because we know the daily realities for people, and we know what works. The Global Partnership provides an opportunity for us to be supported to do what is needed - not just locally but nationally, working together with different partners. The partnership can only work if civil society leads this work alongside government.



WHAT SHOULD WE DO NEXT?



- We need to know where our country is in the process.
- We need to find out which civil society organisations are involved and ensure that all groups are represented. Reach out to focal points, national networks in your country or region² to find out more about your country's plans.
- We need to be ready to lead especially if the work is just beginning. There is support available for organisations who can address HIV related stigma and discrimination in support of the Global Partnership aims. There is support for civil society to support national consultations, develop interventions, to track and monitor progress and to promote and advocate for wider civil society engagement.

BE PART OF THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP AND HELP END HIV RELATED STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION!



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