

MODULE A Naming the Problem

EXERCISE

WALKING IN SEARCH OF STIGMA



OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

- Identify different contexts in which HIV stigma occurs in the community
- Identify some of the common features of stigma



TIME

1 hour



PREPARATION

Put signs up on trees outside the training room where the walk will take place, saying:

- Well/tap
- Market
- Bus station
- Clinic
- School, etc.

ACTIVITIES

Community Walk

LOOKING FOR STIGMA

Divide into pairs. Ask each pair to go for a "walk and talk" in the area outside the training room, looking for places where stigma occurs. Ask pairs to visit the (imaginary) market, bus station, school, clinic, church and discuss what forms of stigma might occur.

Report Back

Get the whole group to walk to each of the places. At each place ask a few people to role play how stigma takes place in that context.

After each role play, ask: "What kind of stigma is happening here?"



ACTION IDEAS

Over the next week keep your eyes open for stigma at home or in the community. Make a note each time you see stigma. In a week's time we will ask each person to report back what they have seen.

EXAMPLE FROM TRAINING WORKSHOP IN ZAMBIA (February 2002)

School

Orphans—feel inferior, lonely, not accepted, low concentration on studies. PLHA teachers no longer come to class. Other teachers have stopped visiting them. Feel neglected.

Home

Family members hide PLHA in back room. Find it difficult to help PLHA when he has lots of diarrhea—they fear getting infected. They refuse to accompany him when he goes to the clinic.

Clinic

One nurse showed fear of being infected—stayed at a long distance from patients. One patient dropped his TB card and others saw it. This made him very upset and he left the waiting area. It bothered him that people would know he had TB since this is associated with having HIV.

Barber Shop

While waiting for a haircut, a customer reached into his pocket and a condom fell out onto the ground. Another person used a signal to say that the customer has HIV.

Football ground

“Football players have lots of status and are not stigmatized when they are chasing women, but when they become sick, people start to talk about their womanizing behavior.”

Community tap

Women gossip about other women while waiting in line at the tap. Stigma here is directed to people they suspect have HIV or have HIV in their household.

Bars

People loosen up in bars and talk more openly including lots of stigmatizing gossip.

