

Sexual and reproductive health and rights of people living with HIV

Alejandra Trossero
Senior HIV Officer

Outline

- What are the SRHR of people living with HIV?
- What do we know?
- What do we still need to know?
- What are some of the current challenges?
 - Stigma and discrimination
- Closing the gap

What are the SRHR of people living with HIV?

■ Rights to access to services

- Contraceptives and safe abortion
- STI screening and treatment
- Cancer prevention and care
- Support and Counselling

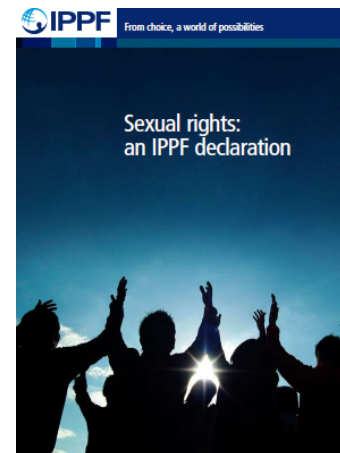
■ Rights to information

- Sexuality and reproduction
- Policies and laws – criminalisation
- Rights and responsibilities

■ Rights to choice

- Sexual partner
- Starting a family
- Disclosure

Foundations of Sexual Rights in IPPF



Strategic Framework

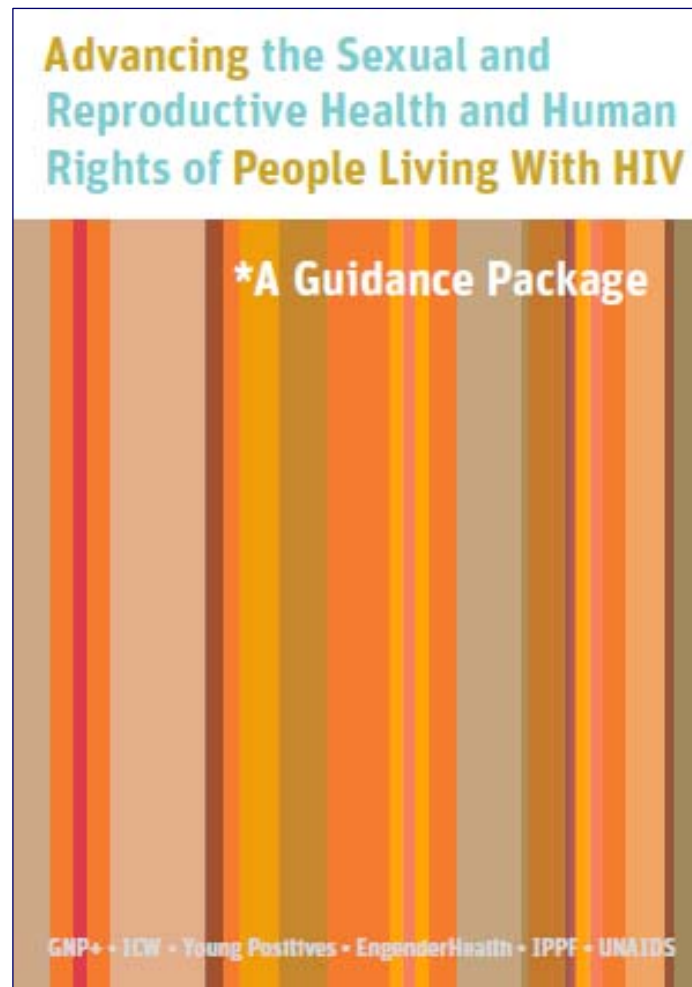
“IPPF envisages a world in which every woman, man and young person has access to the information and services they need; in which sexuality is recognised both as a natural and precious aspect of life and as a fundamental human right; a world in which choices are fully respected and where stigma and discrimination have no place.”

Declaration

“This vision seeks to respect, protect and advance the rights of all persons to sexual autonomy and to promote sexual health and rights within a framework of non-discrimination.”

What do we know?

- SRHR of PLHIV is an issue that has been around for long time but has gained attention recently:
 - PLHIV are living longer fulfilling lives
 - ARV become more effective
- Many guidelines and tools have been developed over the past years.



What do we still need to know?

- There needs to be a common understanding of what the SRHR of PLHIV actually involves
- How to address the SRHR needs of specific groups
- How do we operationalise the commitments and declarations made – translating policy to practice
- Gain a better understanding of the effects of stigma on PLHIV – (Stigma Index)

Stigma Index in UK

867 people interviewed around the UK
(London, Belfast, Brighton, Cardiff, Dundee,
Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, York ...)

35 community researchers, all people living with
HIV interviewing peers

Asking questions about the last **12** months,
about experiences of living with HIV, accessing health and other
services, stigma and discrimination, living positively and sources of
support



Stigma and discrimination remain a big challenge in the UK

46%

reported their rights may have been abused in the last 12 months

17%

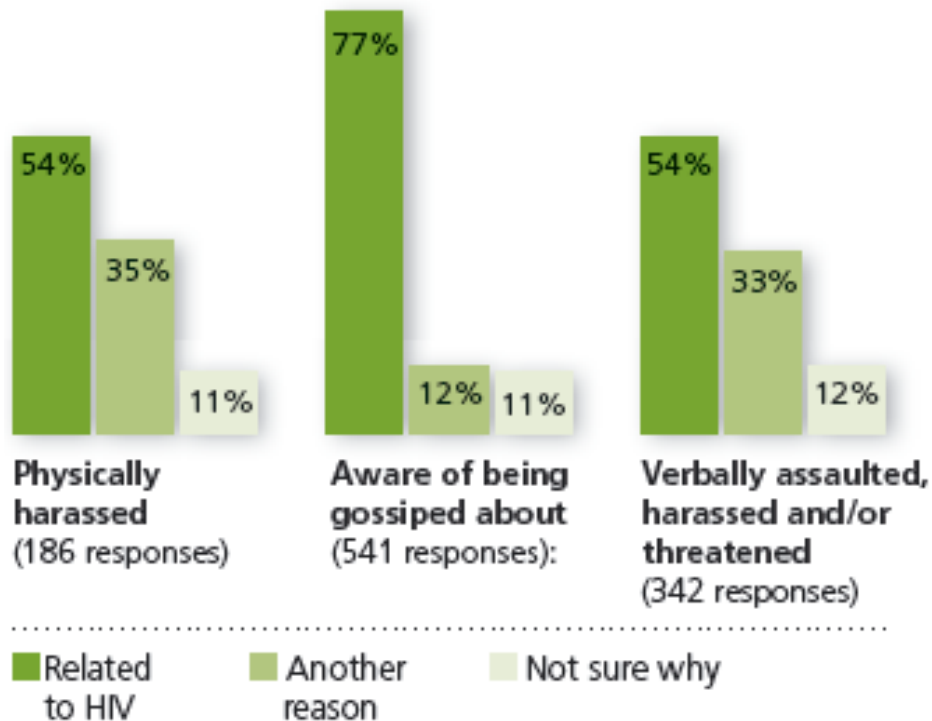
reported having been denied health services in the last 12 months

31%

have not had a constructive conversation with their health care provider

"There is a need to educate about people's rights. For one to identify that they have been discriminated against they need to know their rights"
RESEARCHER, LONDON, MAY 2009

PARTICIPANTS REPORTING HARASSMENT IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS—PERCEPTIONS OF THE REASON



People living with HIV are leading in the response to stigma

45% of participants reported challenging someone stigmatising them in the last 12 months

84% reported supporting other people living with HIV to overcome stigma

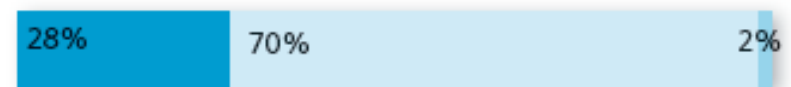


"I don't need an HIV support group; I need understanding, people to understand I am not going to die from this."
PARTICIPANT, SOUTH YORKSHIRE, JUNE 2009

DO YOU KNOW OF ANY ORGANIZATIONS OR GROUPS THAT YOU CAN GO TO FOR HELP ...?



HAVE YOU SOUGHT HELP FROM ANY OF THE ABOVE ORGANIZATIONS OR GROUPS?



IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS HAVE YOU SUPPORTED OTHER PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Non-response

Services need to be improved to meet the needs of people living with HIV in 2009

“It’s about what we ourselves are going to about it and that the Government is interested in the results that make me feel I am being listened to.”

Stakeholder, Scotland, October 2009

“When the nurse put on two gloves I was so humiliated, I mean who taught her to do that? If this is going to make a difference you can ask me anything you like.”

PARTICIPANT, LONDON, MAY 2009

Although **88%** of people know of services available to them,

only **28%** have used these services for support relating to stigma and discrimination.

“For me, HIV is a diagnosis not a lifestyle choice. With medication and support I just get on with it. This research will shake things up a bit and give people’s fears and opinions a timely makeover.”

Researcher, August, 2009

2010 and beyond

- Continue collecting evidence on stigma and discrimination (Russia, Belarus, Turkey, etc)
- More analysis and qualitative research in the UK
- Foster bridges between international actors, policy makers, civil society, people to debate and forge solutions
- Contribute towards an anti-stigma movement

Closing the gap

- Understand the current situation in terms of availability, access and barriers to SRH services by PLHIV in Europe.
- Ensure concrete actions on SRHR of PLHIV are included in the EC implementation plan and monitor how Member States are addressing this issue.
- Use existing opportunities to advocate for inclusion of SRHR of PLHIV in policy and practice – e.g. Fundamental Rights Agency