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POSITIVE WOMEN'S NETWORK FINDINGS OF PWN'S GENDER & HIV STUDY

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- ▶ Purpose of the Study
- ▶ Summary of Key Findings
- ▶ Summary of Key Recommendations
- ▶ Conclusion

Gender, HIV and AIDS Study

- In 2013 PWN undertook an exploratory study which sought to identify the most critical policy, legal and structural (social, cultural, economic) gaps that contribute to gender-based disparities, in relation to HIV and TB prevention, treatment and care
- The Study was carried out in Gauteng, Eastern Cape and surrounding peri-urban places, and targeted mainly women living with HIV, who are defined as oNonkululeko
- The findings and recommendations of the study sought to inform the development of the essential packages, which address the identified gaps that constrain WLWHV from full access to HIV and TB prevention, treatment, support and care services.

SUMMARY OF THE KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ The research findings showed that the HIV epidemic in South Africa remains highly feminized.
- ▶ Women living with HIV, and women in general, are not recognized as a sector in the NSP
- ▶ While women between the age group 15-24 are recognized as a vulnerable group, there is no funded coordination strategy to address that vulnerability.
- ▶ GBV, especially intimate partner violence, is one of the major drivers of HIV infection. However, there is no costed policy framework that comprehensively addresses gender based violence in SA, and hence efforts against GBV lack focused collaboration
- ▶ Despite poverty being an underlying factor and perpetuating the untoward effects of living HIV for women, there is still no clear poverty eradication strategy.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS - CNTD

- ▶ Young women and girls are exposed to destitution, going without even sanitary towels, which inadvertently exposes them to transactional sex.
- ▶ There are gaps in the delivery of HIV care, particularly the lack of capacity of frontline healthcare workers to adequately respond to the gendered needs of HIV positive women. This perpetuates stigma and discrimination.
- ▶ Many women still experience shortages of drugs and diagnostics in cervical cancer and TB care.
- ▶ Women living with HIV are conspicuously absent in the governance structures of AIDS committees at clinic, district and provincial levels.

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

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- ▶ Women as a sector within the NSP, PSPs and DSPs.
- ▶ A coordination framework to respond to the needs of young women and girls.
- ▶ Strengthening of the health systems so that they adequately respond to individualized needs of women.
- ▶ A costed strategy on the elimination of gender based violence.
- ▶ Sustainable strategies to eradicate poverty and address basic livelihoods needs.

CONCLUSION

The research study was successful in identifying the most critical policy, legal and structural (social, cultural, economic) gaps that contribute to gender-based disparities. Furthermore, the findings of the study, to this date, have provided guidelines for the development of the essential package, which address access to services identified. The essential package is set to be a critical resource in addressing disparities related to HIV and TB prevention, treatment, support and care.

THANK YOU

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