

Challenging stigma and other barriers



Despite the medical and scientific breakthroughs and tools to prevent and treat HIV, legal, cultural and socio-economic barriers continue to deny people their rights and fuel new infections.

We believe that these structural drivers prevent progress in HIV prevention and treatment. Problems such as poverty, gender inequality, lack of access to education and health, lack of equal rights and discrimination continue to fuel the epidemic.

No person should experience stigma or discrimination, and we address HIV stigma, homophobia and gendered attitudes through our digital channels – by engaging and challenging our audience through posts and comments on social media, by publishing personal stories on Avert.org that encourage empathy and understanding, and through our news coverage of these issues.

Real-life conversations

[Our Talking HIV series](#) displays real-life conversations between people affected by HIV, breaking down barriers around HIV stigma, sharing your status, accessing support services, dating older people, and sex education.

Putting stigma in the spotlight

We invested in a new programme of small grants to citizen journalists in Southern Africa to support them to develop [Stories for Change](#), a video series exploring stigma. Each episode features a first-person experience – from challenges in accessing healthcare services, homophobic and transphobic discrimination, to overcoming self-stigma and mental health issues.

We also worked with rights organisation [Positive Vibes](#) to increase the reach of their stories of change highlighting ‘othering’, discrimination and oppression, but also hope – publishing a series of blogs and

vlogs developed through the KP REACH programme's citizen journalism initiative, Key Correspondents.

Challenging stigma around HIV, sex and sexuality

As part of our collaboration with the gay social networking app [Hornet](#), we developed a range of content for a campaign aiming to open up the conversation around gay sex, condoms and choice. Progress eliminating stigma and self-stigma around HIV, sex and sexuality remains slow and is constraining the opportunities new scientific advances provide for sexual health and sexual choices.

Campaign content looked at new HIV prevention options such as PrEP and U+U and their impact on attitudes to condoms and sex – highlighting the importance of understanding prevention options not judging people's choices.

Find out more about the [impact of our work](#).

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