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**HEALTH POLICY
INITIATIVE**



HIV STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION

A USAID Global Health e-Learning Course

Stigma and discrimination related to HIV and AIDS have a profound effect on the course of the epidemic. The fear of stigma and discrimination negatively affects the way in which individuals and families protect themselves and provide care and support to those affected. It can make individuals reluctant to disclose their status or access HIV testing, treatment, and care. HIV-related stigma can impede governments from effectively addressing the epidemic, especially because the most-at-risk populations are often the most marginalized groups in society, and they are often already disadvantaged and discriminated against on other grounds. These factors increasingly challenge efforts to stem the epidemic.

The “HIV Stigma and Discrimination” online course is designed to help health policymakers, advocates, and program managers understand and address stigma and discrimination. The course explores and examines stigma and discrimination as they relate to HIV and AIDS, including their importance and effects on behavior and HIV responses, as well as promising practices for addressing them. It also reviews the complex challenges that still remain and the importance of monitoring and evaluation in efforts to reduce stigma and discrimination.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completing the course, participants will be able to

- Define HIV-related stigma and discrimination and related concepts;
- Articulate the negative consequences of stigma and discrimination on people, communities, and program efforts;

- Outline key strategies to reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination;
- Understand key tools used to monitor and measure stigma- and discrimination-reduction efforts; and
- Know where to look for further information or technical assistance.

USAID’s Global Health e-Learning (GHeL) Center

USAID developed the GHeL Center to (1) provide effective, time-efficient continuing education for USAID staff and partners; (2) offer effective, state-of-the-art technical content on key public health topics; and (3) serve as a practical resource to increase public health knowledge and skills. Primary audiences for GHeL courses include population, health, and nutrition officers and foreign service nationals at USAID Missions around the world; USAID staff based in Washington; and public health professionals from collaborating agencies, nongovernmental and governmental organizations, and others interested in improving their basic understanding of public health topics. Courses are accessed at: <http://www.globalhealthlearning.org/login.cfm>.

COURSE CONTENT

The course comprises the following sessions:

- **Understanding stigma and discrimination:** Provides background information about HIV-related stigma and discrimination, including a contextual framework that explains the cycle of stigma, discrimination, and internal stigma.

- **Strategies to address stigma and discrimination:** Presents various strategies that countries and programs have used to combat HIV-related stigma and discrimination.
- **Program guidelines:** Discusses strategies and guidelines that programs seeking to address HIV-related stigma and discrimination should consider.
- **Measuring stigma and discrimination:** Describes the importance of measuring stigma and discrimination in programs and interventions to ensure they are having the intended impact; and presents indices, tools, and measurements that can be used.
- **Helpful tools:** Offers a wide range of training materials, websites, and additional resources for understanding and combating HIV-related stigma.

The course also includes a glossary of terminology and definitions relevant to HIV-related stigma and discrimination.

✔ GETTING STARTED

The “HIV Stigma and Discrimination” course is accessed through the USAID GHeL Center at <http://www.globalhealthlearning.org/login.cfm>. Participants will need to create a username and password to enter the site and access the courses. The course will take about two hours to complete; however, it is self-paced and can be completed at the participant’s convenience. Each session includes a Knowledge Check to assess prior knowledge at the beginning and a Skills Recap at the end to reinforce key messages. After successfully completing all of the course components, participants receive a certificate of completion.

✔ SELECTED RESOURCES

Brouard, P., and C. Wills. 2006. “A Closer Look: The Internalization of Stigma Related to HIV.” Washington, DC: Futures Group, POLICY Project.

Morrison, K. 2006. “Breaking the Cycle: Stigma, Discrimination, Internal Stigma, and HIV.” Washington, DC: Futures Group, POLICY Project.

POLICY Project and Centre for the Study of AIDS, University of Pretoria. 2006. *Siyam’kela: Stigma Resource Pack*. Washington, DC: Futures Group, POLICY Project.

Developing the Course

In consultation with USAID’s Office of HIV/AIDS, the USAID | Health Policy Initiative, Task Order I, identified a team to develop the stigma and discrimination course. Staff from the Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs (JHU/CCP) trained the team on how to create the online course, including format, procedures, and processes for uploading material. Upon completing the draft, several technical reviewers were selected to provide comments and suggestions. The online course is informed by a variety of project experiences, other resource materials, and international best practices. It also draws from the framework presented by Ken Morrison (2006) in the document, “Breaking the Cycle: Stigma, Discrimination, Internal Stigma, and HIV,” prepared under the USAID-funded POLICY Project.

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