

Rights in the time of COVID-19

Lessons from HIV for an effective, community-led response.

Seven takeaways:

1 COMMUNITIES ARE CENTRAL

Engage affected communities from the beginning in ALL response measures—to build trust, ensure suitability and effectiveness, and to avoid indirect or unintended harms and ensure the frequent sharing of information.



2 NO STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION

Combat all forms of stigma and discrimination, including those based on race, social contacts, profession (healthcare workers), and those directed towards marginalized groups that prevent them from accessing care.



3 SUPPORT THE MOST VULNERABLE

Ensure access to free or affordable screening, testing and care for the most vulnerable and hard to reach.



4 REMOVE BARRIERS TO ACTION

Remove barriers to people protecting their own health and that of their communities: fear of unemployment, healthcare costs, presence of fake news/misinformation, lack of sanitation infrastructure and so forth.



5 NO CRIMINAL SANCTIONS

Restrictions to protect public health must be of limited duration, proportionate, necessary and evidence-based and reviewable by a court. Put in place exceptions where necessary for vulnerable groups and to ameliorate the consequences of such restrictions. Blanket compulsory bans are rarely effective or necessary. Individuals should not be criminalized for breaching restrictions.



6 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Countries must work to support each other to ensure no country is left behind, sharing information, knowledge, resources and technical expertise.



7 BE KIND

Support and protect health care workers. Be kind to each other. Join and support efforts that build trust and amplify solidarity, not sanctions.

