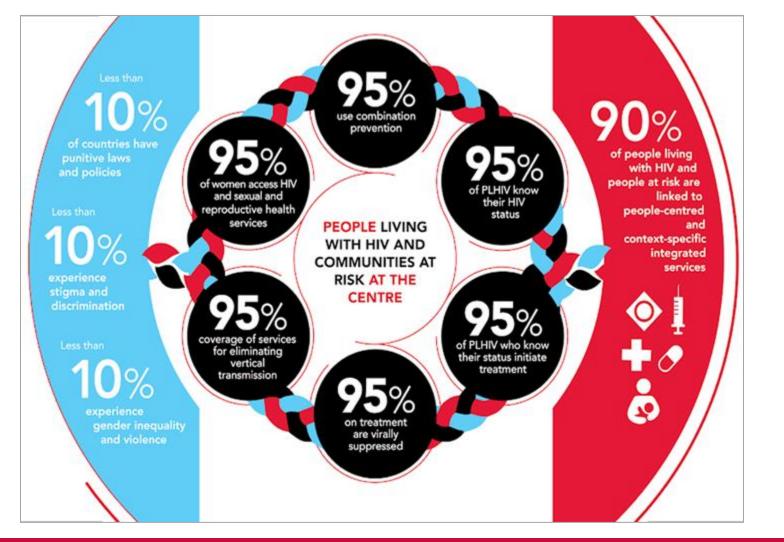
Stigma and poor mental wellbeing: A global community approach to identifying and addressing common barriers to living well with HIV

S Cole-Haley¹, M Cascio², DD Diallo³, G Maldonado⁴, N Mkhize⁵, QV Ortega⁶, S Vernhes⁷, Y. Wu⁸, M Bogart⁹, F Spinelli⁹, C Kim⁹, J Garrido¹⁰



Figure 1. UNAIDS top-line targets for 2025³



¹4M Network, London, UK; ²European AIDS Treatment Group, Bruxelles, Belgium; ³SisterLove, Atlanta, GA, USA; ⁴TruEvolution, Riverside, CA, USA; ⁵AIDS Foundation of South Africa, Durban, SA;⁶FLUX, Los Angeles, CA, USA; ⁷AIDES, Paris, France; ⁸HIVStoryTaiwan, Taipei, Taiwan;⁹Gilead Sciences, Inc., Foster City, CA, USA; ¹⁰Apoyo Positivo, Madrid, Spain

Background

- Inequities in socially marginalized and disenfranchised communities continue to drive disparities in HIV transmission rates, testing, and linkage and retention to care.^{1,2}
- People and their communities are the focal point of the UNAIDS Global 2025 targets (Figure 1), reflecting the need to break down the social, political, and structural barriers and deliver services that respond to the specific needs of those that continue to sit on the outer margins of care.
- Previously described expert-led, long-term success (LTS) framework identified the importance of person-centric approaches to address the multifaceted needs of all individuals and to support the LTS vision of 'every person living with HIV being able to live their best life'4.
- Communities have the power to mobilize the demand for services, support health systems, influence social attitudes and norms, and facilitate a more enabling environment for equitable access to HIV care.
- Ten community leaders representing diverse, key populations and global regions were brought together to identify and prioritize the collective barriers to living well with HIV and inform potential solutions in this Gilead Sciences, Inc sponsored initiative.

Description

- The HCC program included a dynamic, stepwise process of planning, discussion and prioritization over three meetings. Outputs from the first two meetings are presented here (Figures 2 and 3).
- Regional and community-level experience informed a combination of pre-work, deep discussion, live polling, and consensus agreement across the meetings.

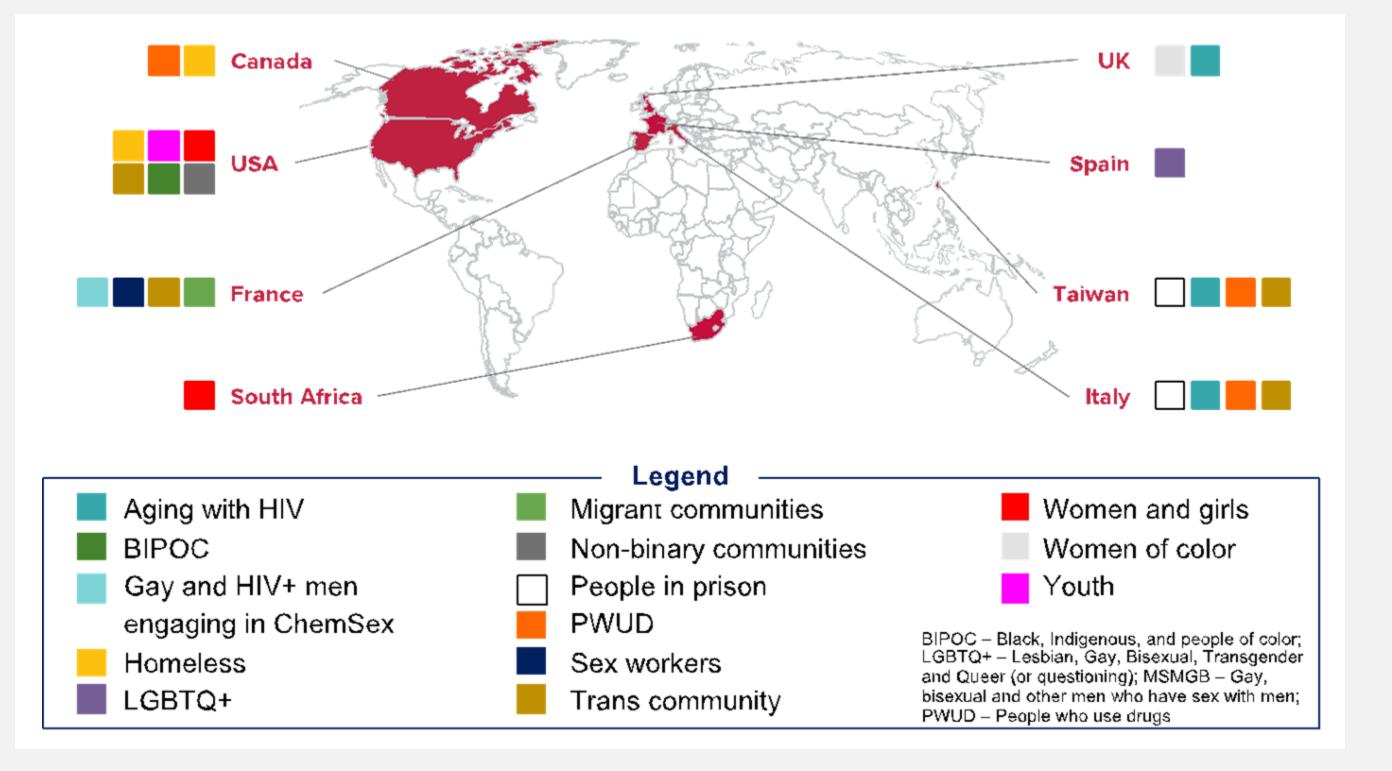
Figure 3. The HIV Community Council comprised ten community experts representing key populations across the globe

- A literature review, reporting the prevalence and impact of HIV-related stigma and poor mental wellbeing and interventions to address them, informed the pre-work and contributed to the discussion and prioritization of potential solutions to overcome the global challenges within the communities represented.
- The HCC program was sponsored by Gilead Sciences, Inc.

of identified barriers

Pre-work to inform meeting priorities	Meeting 1 July 2022	to m	Pre-work o inform neeting riorities	Meeting 2 September 2022		Pre-work to inform meeting priorities	Meeting 3 January 2023
Meeting 1 (To understan of successful HIV and good across region identify unme	Meeting 2 Objective: To discuss the gaps in addressing stigma and poor mental wellbeing as well as available tools that could be useful to help identify and prioritize potential areas for intervention			Meeting 3 Objective: To discuss and agree on solutionfocused recommendations and a call to action addressing challenges to the achievement of successful longterm management of HIV and good health			
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Lessons learned

In recognition of the fact that living well with HIV can mean something different to everybody and in acknowledgement of the LTS framework,⁴ the Council prioritized four elements that enable people to live well with HIV through a series of discussion, pre-work and poll (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Four fundamental elements to living well with HIV from a community lens

"If we can have stability and healing in



"We can't end HIV clinically without

• Based on the agreed definition of living well with HIV, HCC members identified seven global barriers to living well with HIV through a process of shared personal/community experience, prioritization and consensus.

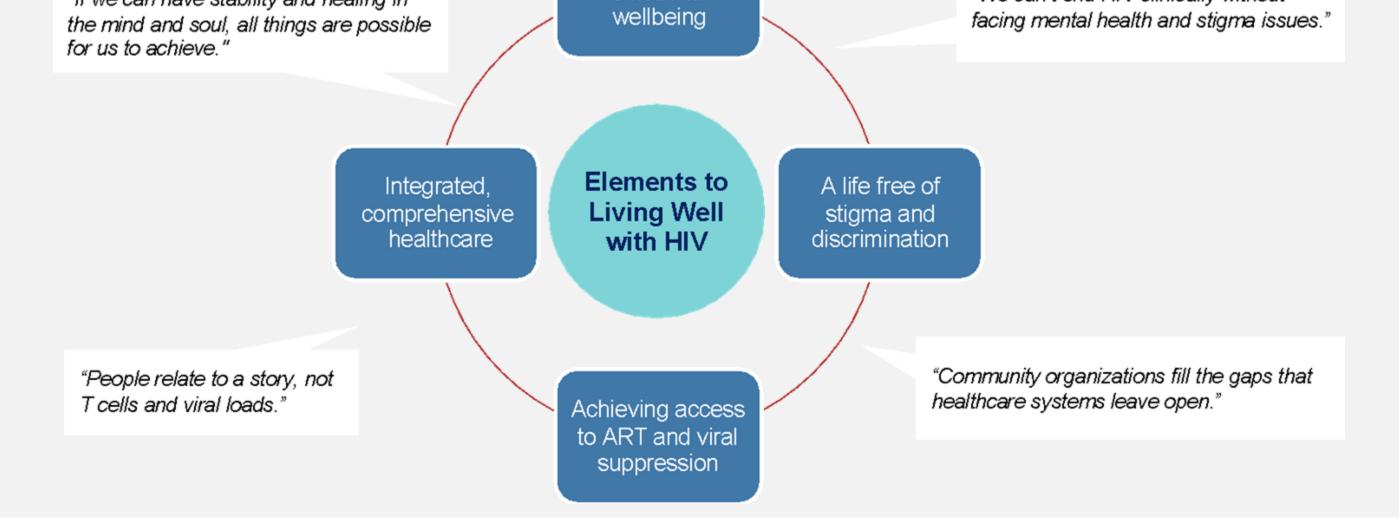
Figure 5. Seven key barriers to living well with HIV

Stigma

Stigma intensifies marginalization of those groups in greatest need of HIV support

Mental wellbeing

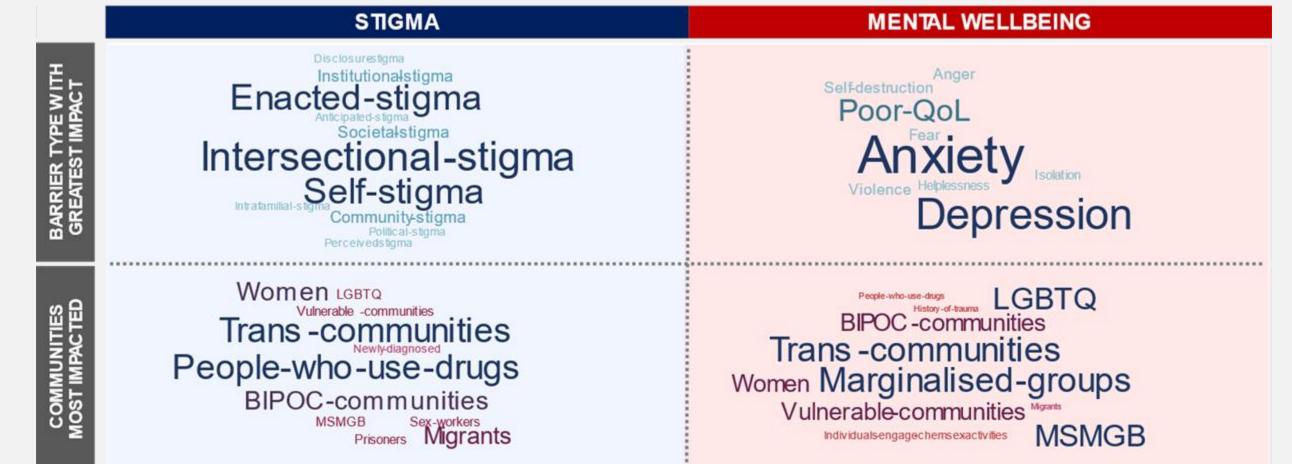
Poor mental wellbeing and isolation negatively impacts access to all health services and treatment adherence



Accessibility	Policy		Comorbidities	
Lack of non-judgmental, accommodative health	Governments and policymakers		Multiple, often life-threatening conditions,	
facilities contributes to poor quality of care	are failing to prioritize HIV		impact people's longevity and QoL	
Empowerment	Socio-economic factors			
Limited HIV information and awareness among H	Social and health determinants drive disparities in HIV			
hinders social support, shared decision-making a	transmission rates and testing			

- Although subject to some regional and community differences and nuances, HCC members agreed that these barriers were experienced by all the communities and regions represented.
- Stigma and poor mental wellbeing were unanimously selected as the two highest priorities for action given their multidirectional and intersectional influence on other barriers and, from a practical and lived-experience perspective, were the ones that they as a community felt most empowered to address.
- The HCC was asked to identify which types of stigma and poor mental wellbeing most impact their community and region, and free-text answers were captured through a pre-meeting survey. Larger font size shows the most common response, and smaller text showing less frequent answers.

Figure 6. Barrier types and groups most affected by stigma and poor mental wellbeing



- The second meeting focused on the co-creation of solution-based statements that the community can consider to facilitate improvements in HIV-related stigma and mental wellbeing.
- These statements reflected global, regional and community-specific priorities and were accompanied by examples of existing or theoretical tools and interventions that the HCC believed could inform development and implementation.

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Figure 7. Six solution-based statements to address HIV-related stigma and poor mental wellbeing

To address HIV-related stigma, we need to...

Reframe HIV ... develop stories that 'frame HIV in the context of everyday life' and the wider experiences and stigmas that intersect with HIV and people's' identities, lifestyles or groups they belong to

Use the power of 'one's own story' ... by enabling individual influencers and content creators to disseminate

To address HIV-related poor mental wellbeing, we need to ...

Place poor mental wellbeing and the need for care in context for people living with HIV ... who are often affected by a myriad of intersecting issues such as racism, domestic abuse, and poverty

Bolster community-based support networks for

These results informed the second HCC discussion, during which members shared their experiences of tools and interventions to address HIV-related stigma and poor mental wellbeing that could have the greatest, positive impact on those communities most affected.

Conclusion and Next steps

engaging and relatable messages across different platforms

Elevate the U=U message ... integrate intergenerational and intercommunity opinions when developing solutions that manage and elevate the U=U message more effectively

mental wellbeing ... by providing formal mental health first aid training and tools

Bridge the gap between clinical support and community-based care ... for those with more severe mental health issues to ensure they do not fall under the radar

- This project explores the collective and regional- and community-specific barriers facing marginalized and disenfranchised communities living with HIV to identify potential solutions by which they can be addressed.
- As advocates for those disproportionately affected by HIV, the HCC members were uniquely placed to share their insights, experiences and priorities and elevate the community voice and agreed that stigma and poor mental wellbeing are the greatest barriers to living well with HIV across the cross-sectional communities that they represent.
- The HCC has since held a final meeting to develop the six solution statements into a set of actionable recommendations that facilitate access to care and make it possible for everyone, everywhere, to live well with HIV.

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