



Self-Assessment Checklist: Stigma and Discrimination

Introduction

Since the mid-to-late 1990s, there has been a considerable increase in the number and range of non-government organisations (NGOs) involved in responding to the multiple challenges presented by HIV.

This includes NGOs undertaking HIV/AIDS work; NGOs integrating HIV-specific interventions within other health programming, such as sexual and reproductive health and child and maternal health programmes; and NGOs mainstreaming HIV within development, human rights and humanitarian programming. In response to the growing number of NGOs implementing HIV-related programmes, the Code of Good Practice for NGOs Responding to HIV/AIDS was developed by civil society organisations to provide a shared vision of principles for good practice in programming and advocacy to help guide NGO work, and to which NGOs can commit and be held accountable.

The Code outlines and builds a wider commitment to principles and practices, informed by evidence, that underscore successful NGO responses to HIV. It identifies a series of areas that are key to HIV programming and articulates fundamental principles that should be applied to HIV programmes in each of these areas. The principles provided in the Code are aspirational, setting out good practice principles that NGOs can work towards reaching over time.

Self-Assessment

The purpose of this self-assessment checklist is to help NGOs measure where their programs stand in line with Code principles.

In completing this module, you should be able to identify areas in your programs that are already at a best practice or 'outstanding' level, as well as areas that can be developed and strengthened to meet the Code's global standards.

It is expected that your scoring will vary between modules depending to your area of expertise, and as signatories of the Code, we challenge you to use this self-assessment to identify areas that you need to improve upon and develop an Action Plan that highlights how you will make improvements in this area over the next year. An Action Plan template is provided at the end of this module.

Please complete the self-assessment (which will be seen only by yourself and your colleagues so please be honest!) and submit an Action Plan to the Code Secretariat, at which time your organisation will receive credit as an 'Implementing NGO' and a full signatory of the Code.



Self-Assessment Checklist: Stigma and Discrimination

After the period of one year, we will ask you to measure your progress on your Action Plan. If you need help in moving forward, resources on stigma and discrimination are available on the Code website (www.hivcode.org), as well as examples of good practice projects, news, reports and topics of current discussion. For further information, please contact the Code Secretariat (info@hivcode.org).

Stigma and Discrimination

The Code of Good Practice defines Stigma and Discrimination in the following way:

Stigma is a process of producing and reproducing inequitable power relations, where negative attitudes towards a group of people, on the basis of particular attributes such as their HIV status, gender, sexuality or behaviour, are created and sustained to legitimatise dominant groups in society.

Discrimination is a manifestation of stigma. Discrimination is any form of arbitrary distinction, exclusion or restriction, whether by action or omission, based on a stigmatised attribute.

To effectively address stigma and discrimination it is essential that:

- individuals know about their rights, and are supported to respond to stigma, discrimination and their consequences
- communities are supported to examine the nature and impact of stigma and discrimination and play an active role in preventing and eliminating stigma and discrimination
- institutions, such as workplaces and healthcare settings, are supported to promote non-discrimination through effective workplace policies and programmes, and
- laws and policy do not stigmatise PLHIV and affected communities.

The Code identifies that an organisation or programme needs to adhere to four organisational principles if it is to respond effectively to HIV/AIDS Stigma and Discrimination. These principles are:



- Enabling PLHIV and affected communities to understand their rights and respond to discrimination and its consequences.
- Monitoring and responding to systemic discrimination.
- Enabling communities to understand and address HIV/AIDS-related stigma.
- Fostering partnerships with human rights institutions, legal services and unions to promote and protect the human rights of PLHIV and affected communities.



Self-Assessment Checklist: Stigma and Discrimination

This self-assessment questionnaire seeks to assist your organisation/ programme to understand how well it adheres to these principles and through that process identify areas for improvement.

Self-Assessment Instructions

Below you will find a number of 'statements' about stigma and discrimination. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement by marking the appropriate box.

- Y** Yes, we undertake this work/activity
- I** Insufficient, in preparation, or being considered
- N** No, we've not yet tackled this work/activity
- N/R** Not relevant to our work

As an example, please consider the statement:

'Colleagues in my organisation have a good understanding about stigma and discrimination and its causes'.

If you feel your colleagues have a very good understanding of stigma and discrimination and its causes, you would mark the box as follows:

Y **I** **N** **NR**

If you feel your colleagues have some (but limited or insufficient) understanding of stigma and discrimination and its causes, you might mark the box as follows:

Y **I** **N** **NR**

If you feel the statement does not apply to your organisation please mark the 'not relevant' box.

Don't forget to develop an **Action Plan** that highlights HOW you will make improvements in this area over the next year and submit it to the Code Secretariat.



Checklist

A

Enabling PLHIV and affected communities to understand their rights and respond to discrimination and its consequences.

Individuals and communities (including those who are marginalised because of issues of gender, sexuality, age and behaviours) must be able to name their experience as one of discrimination, understand their rights and have sufficient information and resources in order to take action in response to any discrimination they experience.

Please now consider the following statements about how your organisation enables PLHIV and affected communities to understand their rights and respond to discrimination and its consequences:

Y I N NR

1. We provide easily accessible (clear, simple and available) information about the rights of PLHIV.

Y I N NR

2. We provide PLHIV with advice and support to take action in response to discrimination, through individual advocacy services or effective referral to relevant agencies.

Y I N NR

3. We support PLHIV and communities to respond to and address the consequences of discrimination, through peer support, counselling, discussion groups or effective referral services.

Y I N NR

4. We provide a supportive environment for PLHIV within our own organisation by having and promoting workplace policies that address issues of living with HIV.



Checklist

B

Monitoring and responding to systemic discrimination.

Monitoring HIV-related stigma and discrimination, raising awareness about their impact and utilising this knowledge to inform education and advocacy efforts is essential in combating the epidemic. It is important that programmes incorporate a systematic approach to documenting and analysing people's experiences of stigma and discrimination and their efforts to respond to discrimination. Systematic refers to through-out the system i.e. the health care system, or through-out the organisation.

Please now consider the following statements about how your organisation monitors and responds to systemic discrimination:

Y I N NR

5. We help PLHIV and affected communities identify systemic discrimination in particular settings, such as in health care, employment, education and prisons.

Y I N NR

6. We help PLHIV and affected communities identify specific institutions that promote stigmatisation of PLHIV and affected communities, such as police services, immigration authorities, military services, and the media.

Y I N NR

7. We help PLHIV and affected communities prioritise and inform targeted advocacy and education initiatives in settings where discrimination is common.

Y I N NR

8. We inform advocacy efforts to reform laws and policies that stigmatise PLHIV and affected communities.



Checklist

C

Enabling communities to understand and address HIV/AIDS-related stigma.

It is essential for communities to understand the causes and effects HIV/AIDS-related stigma, and to identify their own prejudices and fears in relation to stigma and discrimination if the issue is to be effectively addressed.

Please now consider the following statements about how your organisation enables communities to understand and address HIV/AIDS-related stigma:

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	9. We involve PLHIV and affected communities in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes designed to address stigma and discrimination.
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	10. We enhance community knowledge about the forms, causes and effects of HIV-related stigma and discrimination, including issues of gender, sexuality, age and behaviours.
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	11. We create opportunities for communities to examine their prejudices and address fears and misconceptions about the transmission of HIV.
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	12. We utilise a range of strategies, including public awareness campaigns, participatory workshop activities and active involvement by communities, in the delivery of prevention and care programmes.
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	13. We involve political, religious and community leaders in challenging HIV-related stigma and discrimination.



Checklist

D

Fostering partnerships with human rights institutions, legal services and unions to promote and protect the human rights of PLHIV and affected communities.

Challenging stigma and discrimination requires the promotion and protection of human rights more broadly, for example, protecting the rights of women and children and addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability, such as poverty and inequities in access to education. Only by developing partnerships with human rights organisations and other institutions, including PLHIV groups and networks, is it possible to effectively work together to protect the rights of PLHIV and affected communities.

Please now consider the following statements about how your organisation challenges stigma and discrimination, and promotes and protects human rights:

Y I N NR

14. We develop awareness of HIV-related stigma and discrimination and encourage the development of HIV-related legal and advocacy expertise:

Y I N NR

15. We ensure access to legal advice and advocacy for individuals seeking to enforce their rights:

Y I N NR

16. We ensure access to organisations and individuals who can assist in training staff and volunteers on HIV-related legal issues and referral networks:

Y I N NR

17. We develop joint advocacy strategies and programmes, including among NGOs with human rights expertise and other NGOs responding to HIV/AIDS, to prevent and respond to HIV-related discrimination and stigma:

Action Plan

Key Questions



The Key Questions below address baseline issues that need to be considered first when considering stigma and discrimination. If you answer 'no' to any of these questions, this would be a good starting point for improving your programmes!

<input type="radio"/> Y	<input type="radio"/> N	1. We provide easily accessible information about the rights of PLHIV.
<input type="radio"/> Y	<input type="radio"/> N	2. We provide PLHIV with advice and support to take action in response to discrimination, through individual advocacy services or effective referral to relevant agencies.
<input type="radio"/> Y	<input type="radio"/> N	3. We involve PLHIV and affected communities in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes designed to address stigma and discrimination.
<input type="radio"/> Y	<input type="radio"/> N	4. We enhance community knowledge about the forms, causes and effects of HIV-related stigma and discrimination, including issues of gender, sexuality, age and behaviours.
<input type="radio"/> Y	<input type="radio"/> N	5. We ensure access to legal advice and advocacy for individuals seeking to enforce their rights.



Action Plan

Strengths

In completing the Self-Assessment, we have identified the following strengths in our programmes:

Strengths	Description (as needed)



Action Plan

Areas of Improvement

We have also identified some areas that need to be strengthened. We have prioritised what needs to be done first and have created an action plan for the next year.

Area of improvement	Action Plan

Please post or email a scanned, completed Action Plan to **info@hivcode.org** or **PO Box 372, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland**

Name of Organisation	Contact Person	Email Address
Signed		Date



Feedback

We hope this checklist was helpful to you in identifying where your programmes stand along the lines of good practice in involving PLHIV and affected communities in your HIV response. Your feedback is invaluable to help us revise and improve this tool so please answer any or all of the below questions on the implementation and usability of the checklist, and attach any additional information that you think will help us further refine the tool.

 Y N

1. Are the **instructions** clear and simple?

Detail

 Y N

2. Is the **format** of the questionnaire user-friendly?

Detail

 Y N

3. Is the **content** of the checklist helpful for understanding what programmes that effectively address stigma and discrimination should include?

 Y N

Was anything unclear?

Detail

 Y N

4. Do you consider the module useful to your programming? For example, did it help you to identify strengths/weaknesses in your programmes that you did not know? Is it useful in terms of strategy development to address weaknesses?

Detail

 Y N

5. Is the content of this tool relevant to you in the context of your work in your specific **region**?

Detail

 Y N

6. Did you find the Action Plan to be helpful in documenting the results of your self-assessment and identifying your next steps in improving your program??

Detail