

MASIMANYANE

WOMEN'S RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL

Incorporating MASIMANYANE WOMEN'S SUPPORT CENTRE

Building local, national and global partnerships to eradicate violence against women

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER FOR WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV

Preamble

At the national conference hosted by Masimanyane Women's Support Centre, a joint statement was developed as follows:

We the woman comprising of NGO's, networks and Trade Unions, Health Professionals, researchers, women living with HIV, traditional healers gathered in East London from 20th-21st October to discuss the development of a Human Rights Charter for women living with HIV.

There were representations from 8 out of the 9 Provinces. Women living with HIV were the dominant group. The objective was to listen to the voices of the women living with HIV and to surface how stigma and discrimination affects their lives. These lived realities reveal how extensively their human rights are violated due to their status.

Recognising that HIV affects women disproportionately and that it has its roots in gender inequality this conference expressed its deep concern that this inequality results in structural violence, interpersonal violence, cultural violence and permeates the justice system, Health Care system, education systems, religious and cultural systems as well as in the workplace.

1. This conference makes an urgent call to the Minister of Health and the entire Health Department to immediately address the involuntary or unintended disclosure of women living with HIV, particularly mothers whose status is openly revealed in the Road to Health Card. This practice is deeply discriminating and puts women at risk of violence from the Health Care Institutions, partnerships, families and community. We urge government to stop this practice with immediate effect.
2. There is an urgent need for government to list Cervical Cancer as one of the opportunistic disease for HIV/Aids and to develop a policy and programme to address these concerns.

3. We call for a review of the current Thuthuzela Centre model and to acknowledge that this model is not functioning optimally. We demand that the model be changed and that it is properly resourced with trained personnel and adequate funding.
4. Some policies at a local level propose a HCT testing model for women in order to determine the status of men. This approach burdens women and undermines their human rights. It increases violence towards them.
5. This conference urges Government to develop stronger prevention programs that reach the entire population and to ensure effective justice and redress for survivors especially women and girls living with HIV/Aids.

In the spirit and intention of the Addis Ababa Declaration of 2013, we demand that the State upholds its obligations under this declaration, the CEDAW Convention and the AU Protocol on Women, to do all in its power to reduce HIV infections and to provide the support to women living with HIV and be enacting these demands made by the women at this Conference held in East London in October 2014.