



Stand together

NAMIBIA WOMEN'S HEALTH NETWORK



Salamander Trust
TRANSFORMING THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT HIV



Salamander Trust

Salamander Trust was created to challenge, catalyse and transform the way we think about HIV and AIDS. It aims to promote the health and rights of people who are marginalized by societies worldwide as a result of their gender, HIV status or sexual and reproductive health.

We achieve this by training, global advocacy and research. We also support the International Community of Practice Network of over 1,000 organizations around the world, who are users of the 'Stepping Stones' training programme on gender, generation, HIV, communication and relationship skills.

Websites: www.salamandertrust.net
www.stepsstonesfeedback.org
Email: info@salamandertrust.net

Social Films

Social Films is run by Dr Dominique Chadwick; an independent film-maker, researcher and trainer in participatory video projects. She specialises in running participatory media projects for marginalized groups. Social Films is committed to using film and media projects to inform and advocate towards social change among the most deprived communities.

Website: www.socialfilms.org
Email: dom@stuff.co.uk

Namibia Women's Health Network

Namibia Women's Health Network (NWHN) is a community based organisation founded by 14 women living with HIV in 2008. Its vision is to see women and girls living with HIV and AIDS leading the social and economic justice movement and sitting at different leadership platforms. It provides advocacy, information, education, skills and capacity building to women, girls and adolescents living with HIV and AIDS to empower them to achieve their goals.

NWHN currently connects 2000 network members, representing the 14 regions of Namibia. It has a steering committee of 28 young women, with two women representing each region.

Website: www.nwhn.wordpress.com
Email: namibiawomenshealthnetwork@gmail.com
j.gatsi@criaasadc.org

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DESIGN: WWW.JANESHEPHERD.COM



Introduction

During April 2015 Salamander Trust and NWHN held three participatory filmmaking workshops with members of the Namibia Women's Health Network and their staff. The following five participatory films (and one short documentary) are the result of this. They represent the personal experiences of workshop participants in relation to HIV, gender-based violence, coerced sterilization, sexual and reproductive health and rights and livelihoods.

This booklet can be used alongside the films as an interactive training resource.



HIV and Coerced Sterilization

In 2008 the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS and the Namibia Women's Health Network began to interview Namibian women who had experienced unwanted sterilization procedures at public hospitals. Many of these women were forced to sign papers authorizing the operation, during childbirth, without understanding what they were agreeing to. Whilst sterilization infringes on women's legal and human rights; it also puts women at increased risk of gender-based violence from partners, when they have to disclose that they are unable to have further children (see the participatory film 6: "Betrayed").

The research uncovered the widespread and systematic nature of coerced sterilizations for women living with HIV that were carried out by the Namibian government-run healthcare system. It revealed that healthcare workers had advised sterilization for women living with HIV and often failed to explain the full range of family planning options available.

In 2014, after a long trial, the Supreme Court finally found the Namibian government guilty of forcibly sterilizing women living with HIV. This historic victory was only made possible by the hard work and bravery of members of the Namibia Women's Health network.

Peer-Support Networks

Peer-support-led networks allow people with similar lived experiences to work together and to support and learn from one another. By working together through peer-support networks, individuals can bring about huge political and social changes: such as successfully altering the way that national healthcare services treat women living with HIV during pregnancy. People living with HIV have long been at the forefront of creating and sustaining peer-support-led networks around the globe. What's more, research¹ has shown that autonomous feminist support networks are the key factor in catalysing change around gender-based violence.

...after a long trial, the Supreme Court finally found the Namibian government guilty of forcibly sterilizing women living with HIV.

1. 'The civic origins of progressive policy change: combatting violence against women in a global perspective, 1975-2005' *American Political Science Review*, Volume 106 / Issue 03 / August 2012, pp 548-569.

How did the participatory film process work?

Salamander Trust and NWHN held three film training workshops, led by Dr. Dominique Chadwick with the participation of Aurelie Boas, over a period of three weeks: two with members of NWHN (one group of 8 older women and one group of 7 younger women) and one with NWHN staff.

Each group took part in a 5-day participatory film-making workshop. Participants were taught how to use basic video cameras and were trained in filming techniques. Many of the participants had never touched a computer or video camera before making these films.

The participants shared stories about the impact of HIV in their own lives. Through a collaborative process of discussion, one story was picked from each sub-group. The women were trained to storyboard their film and organize each shoot with the



help of other local people as actors. The participants were entirely responsible for the message, content and dialogue of the films they made and were encouraged to look at their own stories as powerful tools for raising awareness and advocating for change.

Finally they were also trained in how to edit their camera footage on laptops. Five short films were created as a result of this training process. The cameras were left with NWHN in Windhoek to ensure that the participants can continue to create films for activism and self-expression in the future.

A Namibia Women's Health Network member films a role play after having attended a film training workshop.



A word cloud of issues that came up during discussions

Disclosure
 Freedom Support-group
 Traditional Financial-Independence
 Anger Advocate Confidence Stigma
 Information Shattered-dreams Insecurity
 abuse Discrimination Empowerment
 Ignorance
Counseling
 Corruption Gender-based-violence
Adherence Child Accessible
 Male-involvement
 Workplace-bullying

Using the Participatory Films

The films are based upon true, personal testimonies. As such they represent the lived realities of women living with HIV. They highlight the specific and complex challenges that many women face in their lives. Yet they also showcase the leadership, resilience and innovation happening at the community level and led by women living with HIV.

The insights of these films are for everybody. We hope they can be used as a tool to help open up discussions about HIV, treatment, support, consent, motherhood and gender-based violence, where they are most needed.

‘In-laws come and try to grab our properties and you find yourself with nothing, after a lifetime of working together with your partner’

Taken from the film “Stop Abusing Widows.”





Films

DOCUMENTARY FILM 1

Together: The Namibia
Women's Health Network 6

PARTICIPATORY FILM 2

Sticking Together 7

PARTICIPATORY FILM 3

On My Own Two Feet 8

PARTICIPATORY FILM 4

Down With Corruption! 9

PARTICIPATORY FILM 5

Stop Abusing Widows 10

PARTICIPATORY FILM 6

Betrayed 11





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Together: The Namibia Women's Health Network

This short documentary, filmed and edited by Dominique Chadwick, explores the work of the NWHN around 14 regions of Namibia. The documentary features interviews with NWHN members and staff about the importance of support for women living with and affected by HIV.

It explores key themes experienced by women living with HIV in Namibia such as coerced sterilization, gender based violence and the practice of evicting widows by their family members after the death of a husband from AIDS-related illness.



Useful resources

Peer Support

Namibia Women's Health Network (NWHN), A support group for women living with HIV, from <https://nwhn.wordpress.com>

ICW, The International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS <http://www.iamicw.org>

"Rights, Camera, Action! The Pregnancy Journey when you are Living with HIV", A Salamander Trust and Positively UK film and training resource, from http://www.salamandertrust.net/index.php/Projects/Rights_Camera_Action

Guidelines, report and checklist

BHIVA (2013). Standards of care for people living with HIV in 2013. Available at: www.bhiva.org/standards-of-care-2012.aspx

Salamander Trust (2015). Key findings from a global stakeholder consultation for the World Health Organisation (WHO) regarding sexual Reproductive Health and human rights of women living with HIV. Available at: <http://salamandertrust.net/resources/BuildingASafeHouseOnFirmGroundFINALreport190115.pdf>

FIGO. Integrating human rights and health: A checklist for quality care. Available at:

<http://www.figo.org/sites/default/files/uploads/wg-publications/wsr/Introduction%20to%20HRWH%20Framework.pdf>

Meaningful Involvement of Women & Girls Living with HIV

NGO Code of Good Practice. A self-assessment checklist, Meaningful involvement of women living with HIV (MIWA), ICW. Available at: <http://www.icw.org/node/456>

The Participation Tree. Available at: http://salamandertrust.net/resources/13ICWWE CARE_Policy%20briefing_ENGDakarSep2013.pdf

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Coerced Sterilization

Legal Assistance Network, Namibia, Coerced Sterilisation: <http://www.lac.org.na/projects/alu/sterilisation.html>

"At the hospital there are no human rights": Reproductive and sexual rights violations of women living with HIV in Namibia: http://hrp.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/namibia_final.pdf

"The Forced and Coerced Sterilization of HIV Positive Women in Namibia", The International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW): <http://www.icw.org/files/The%20forced%20and%20coerced%20sterilization%20of%20HIV%20positive%20women%20in%20Namibia%2009.pdf>

Southern Africa Litigation Centre. African Commission On Human And Peoples' Rights Condemns Involuntary Sterilisation Of Women Living With HIV In Africa | Southern Africa Litigation Centre [Internet]. 2013 [cited 7 May 2015]. Available from: <http://www.southernafricalitigationcentre.org/2013/11/12/african-commission-on-human-and-peoples-rights-condemns-involuntary-sterilisation-of-women-living-with-hiv-in-africa>

Sterilisation: the fight for bodily integrity. Aziza Ahmed and Jennifer Gatsi Mallet, 26 October 2010: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/aziza-ahmed-jennifer-gatsi-mallet/sterilisation-fight-for-bodily-integrity>

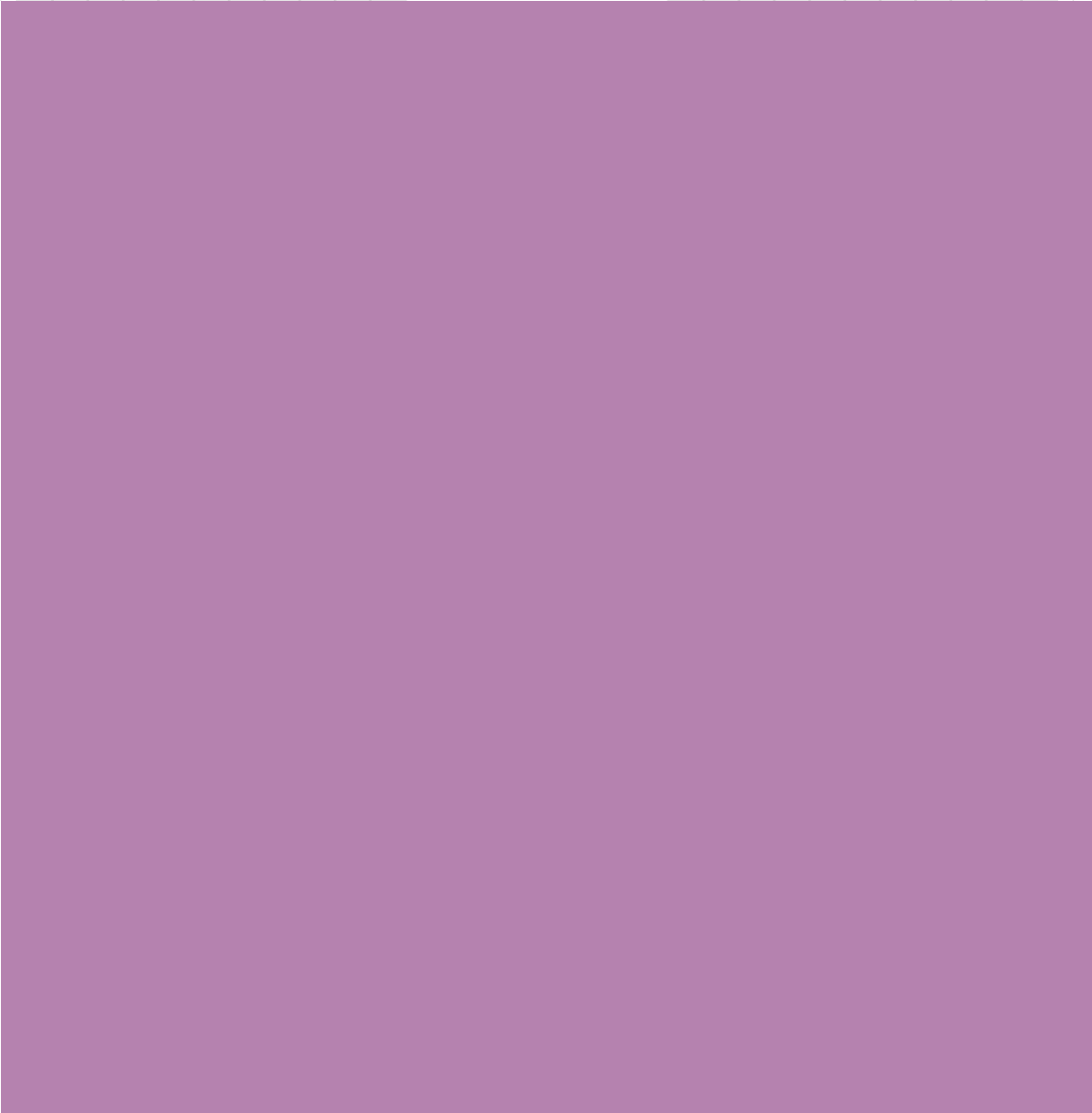
Eliminating forced, coercive and otherwise involuntary sterilization, UNAIDS: http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/201405_sterilization_en.pdf

Other

NAM Personalised information on pregnancy and HIV. <http://www.aidsmap.com/resources/apps/HIVpregnancy/page/2648615/-intro>

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Useful resources continued

Monitoring & Evaluation

AWID. Resource list on using effective M&E to achieve women's rights: <http://www.awid.org/resources/awids-wiki-monitoring-and-evaluation>

SPICED Indicators - page 10 of www.dmeformpeace.org/sites/default/files/3.9%20Indicators.pdf

Combatting corruption

Anti-Corruption Commission of Namibia <http://www.accnamibia.org/index.php>

The gendered impact of corruption: Who suffers more – men or women?, Anti-corruption resource center. <http://www.u4.no/publications/the-gendered-impact-of-corruption-who-suffers-more-men-or-women/#sthash.y97KinRI.dpuf>

Anti-corruption act, 2003. Namibian Constitution. http://www.saflii.org/na/legis/num_act/aa2003200.pdf

Namibian National Policy on HIV/AIDS, it has a chapter dedicated to HIV and the workplace (p.30): http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_140589.pdf

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