

# ACTIONS TO END ABORTION STIGMA

## MODULE 7

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### INTRODUCTION

The goal of deepening our understanding of abortion stigma is to prepare ourselves to act together to end it. This module is designed to help participants explore different ways of advocating and acting to stop abortion stigma. We can take powerful actions to eliminate abortion stigma. These actions include deciding to challenge stigma in our relationships and in our communities, increasing community knowledge about abortion, helping our communities and countries imagine a stigma-free world, advocating for policy change, and changing messages and attitudes about abortion in the media.

#### Your Module 7 goals as a facilitator

- To introduce participants to various advocacy options and support them in choosing which ones to pursue;
- To inspire participants to take action to end abortion stigma in their communities and countries.

## ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

ACTIVITY NUMBER	NAME	PURPOSE FOR PARTICIPANTS	TYPE OF ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY LEVEL
7A CORE	Speaking out and taking action	Identify how, when and where we can break the silence around abortion  Practice speaking out and interrupting abortion stigma	Sharing in pairs  Roleplays  Pledges to speak out	Advanced
7B	A world without abortion stigma	Imagine and define what the result of successful interventions would look like  Identify specific actions they can take to challenge stigma	Draw visions of a world without abortion stigma  Share visions  Map visions onto each other	Advanced
7C	Lessons from other movements	Recognize the successes and pitfalls of other stigma-reduction campaigns and interventions  Identify opportunities, risks and processes in pursuing strategies to reduce abortion stigma	Reflect on major social change during our lifetime  Group work to explore the Four Stigma Reduction Strategies: reframing, contact, education and activism	Advanced
7D	Ideas for action: Reframing abortion, thinking big!	See the value of shifting common images and language around abortion  Identify ways to reframe abortion	Small groups representing different community members develop messages  Community walk to hear messages	Advanced
7E	How to respond to stigma in the media	Identify overt and subtle forms of stigma in the media  Explore ways stigma in the media has personally affected them  Develop messaging and strategies to counter stigma narratives in the media	See/hear media examples of stigmatizing messages  Take turns being pro and anti-choice respondents to media	Advanced

## 7A CORE: SPEAKING OUT AND TAKING ACTION

[Adapted from *Understanding and challenging HIV stigma: Toolkit for action*, by R. Kidd and S. Clay, 2003.]

### FACILITATOR NOTES

In most societies, people assume abortion is not something we can discuss openly; we often discuss abortion in whispers. It is rare that people who have abortions feel safe enough to openly share their experiences. Even feminists and advocates in countries where abortion is legally protected feel pressure to stay silent.

Organizations and advocates who speak publicly in favor of safe abortion access also learn that there are situations where it is better—or at least easier—to keep quiet. Sometimes we silence ourselves as advocates because we are not sure what others will say or do. While this can be necessary and strategic at times, sometimes we operate in secrecy because of stigma, not strategy.

The pressures to keep quiet about abortion are a result of stigma. Silence fuels abortion stigma because it gives people opposed to abortion the power to define abortion-related debates. We must break the silence around talking about abortion. We must have the conversation on our own terms.

This activity is about helping participants practice speaking out. Make sure each participant makes a pledge as a way of starting to take action.

### TIME:

1 hour

### GOALS:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Identify how, when and where we can help break the silence around abortion;
- Practice speaking out against abortion stigma.

### MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

- Prepare your own pledge to present during Step 7 and share it as an example.

### FACILITATION STEPS:

- 1. Introduce the activity (2 minutes):** *As advocates for safe abortion, sometimes we keep quiet. We work in an atmosphere of secrecy—often for our own protection, but also to avoid stigma and conflict. However, there are times when we can break this silence. We can help steer the dialogue around abortion. By taking control of the debate, we are challenging abortion stigma. This activity helps us practice speaking out.*

2. **Reflection (3 minutes):** *By yourself, spend a few minutes thinking about a time when you kept silent about your views on abortion. If you can't remember, imagine a scenario in which you might be afraid to talk about abortion. Give the participants time to think. Make sure the room is quiet during this time.*
3. **Share in pairs (5 minutes):** *Now find a partner. Share how it felt to do the reflection. Give the pairs several minutes to discuss.*
4. **Brainstorm (10 minutes):** *Have everyone come back to the large group, and ask:*
  - *What are some of the risks of speaking out about abortion?*
  - *What are some of the benefits?*
  - *Where and when might the benefits outweigh the risks?*
5. **Roleplay with a partner (20 minutes):** *As we've seen, it can be difficult to speak out. Because of that, we are now going to practice speaking out so that when we're faced with these situations in our everyday lives, we feel prepared to handle them. Stand in two lines facing each other. Pair up with the person opposite you. Think about a situation where it is important to speak out about your support for safe abortion. It could be an opportunity you missed when you kept quiet in the past. Or it might be a time in the future when you can imagine speaking out to challenge abortion stigma. Take a minute to decide:*
  - *Who you are talking to*
  - *Why you want to speak out*
  - *What you are going to say*

*Take turns with your partner. Each person gets two times to practice speaking out. As the speaker, tell your partner what your scenario is, then try speaking out. As the listener, give feedback to your partner:*

  - *How did it sound?*
  - *Were their points clear?*
  - *Is the message getting across?*
  - *How could it be stronger?*

*After a few minutes: Now change roles.*
6. **Stand in a circle (8 minutes):** *How did you find the practice? Is there any pair that would like to demonstrate in front of the group? Watch one or two pairs if they are willing, and then ask:*
  - *What worked well?*
  - *Was this a good time to speak out?*
  - *Were there any risks involved in speaking out?*
  - *Would you do anything differently?*

**7. Pledges to speak out (10 minutes):** *Now think of a pledge, or a promise, you are willing to make today to speak out against abortion stigma. Think of a situation and a specific way you are willing to act. After a couple of minutes: Stand up, one by one, and make your pledge to the group.*

**8. Summarize (2 minutes):**

### KEY SUMMARY MESSAGES

- We all have a role to play in breaking the silence around abortion. As family members and friends, advocates and activists, we can decide to talk more openly, in spaces where we are safe and where we're not putting anyone at risk.
- When we share our stories, we open the door for others to share. With more sharing, we can break down the feelings of shame around abortion that exist in so many places.

## 7B: A WORLD WITHOUT ABORTION STIGMA

### FACILITATOR NOTES

A vital part of advocating for change is being able to imagine—and help others to imagine—what a world without abortion stigma might look like, at all levels of society. Having a vision for the future is necessary to inspire us and our advocacy networks to work to achieve change.

This activity is useful at the beginning of an action-planning session. Helping participants picture a world without abortion stigma is a great way to motivate them to take concrete action.

The activity involves participants creating their vision of a world free of abortion stigma. They will be writing, drawing or making a collage to represent their dream of a stigma-free world. Some participants might feel nervous to do artwork—reassure them that this is not an art competition. It's just a different way to express their ideas. Exploring how participants can start combining their ideas and turning them into plans is the first step toward collective action for change.

### TIME:

45 minutes to 1 hour

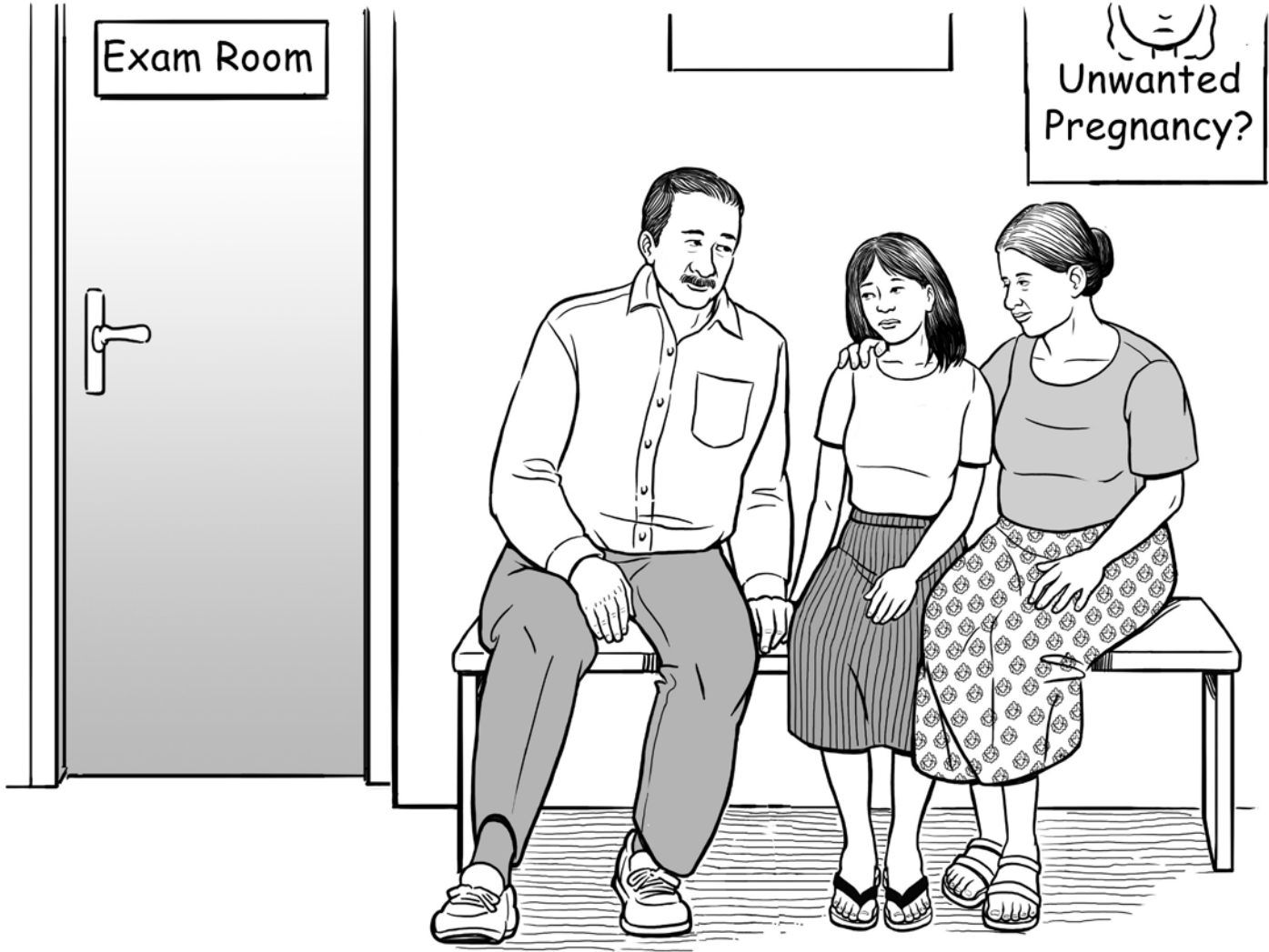
### GOALS:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Begin to define what the result of successful interventions would look like;
- Identify specific actions they can take to challenge stigma.

### MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

- Put one sheet of flipchart paper per participant on the table, wall or floor;
- Have markers, pencils, crayons, old newspapers, magazines, pictures, scissors, and glue or tape available;
- Print several copies of these four illustrations and leave them at each table.











## FACILITATION STEPS:

- 1. Introduce the activity (2 minutes):** *To act for change, we must boldly imagine what a new world will be like. In this activity, we are imagining a world without abortion stigma.*
- 2. Drawing our vision (15-30 minutes):** *Take some time now to create your vision of a world without abortion stigma. The pictures on your table can be used as inspiration. You can draw pictures, cut out images or write something to show the world you imagine—or you could do all three! Be creative and bold in your vision. Remember: This is not an art competition. It's just a different way to express your ideas. It will take some participants longer than others to get started, so give them enough time. Encourage them throughout the activity.*
- 3. Sharing our vision (15 minutes):** *Let's return to the full circle. Show your pictures one by one to the group and explain your vision: What kind of world do you want to see? Allow each participant to share their vision.*
- 4. Mapping our visions (10 minutes):** *Now pair up with someone you don't know well. This activity is about putting your vision into action. Take turns sharing what your vision inspires you to do; think of your picture as a map that walks you through the path of change. After a few minutes, once everyone has shared: With your partner, come up with two or three bold actions you plan to take that **combine** elements of your two visions. How can your visions come together to create something new or strengthened? The goal is to think big and be creative, so don't limit yourselves. After a few minutes, ask each pair to share their combined ideas for action with the group. After each idea, ask for a show of hands from others who would consider helping turn the idea into a plan for action.*
- 5. Summarize (3 minutes):**

### KEY SUMMARY MESSAGES

- Imagining a positive vision of the future can inspire us to act and help us to define our goals.
- Working together to combine our bold visions can help us come up with new plans to advocate for change.
- Having concrete ideas as guidelines for action and change can help bring others on board so that we are working toward a common goal.

## 7C: LESSONS FROM OTHER MOVEMENTS

### FACILITATOR NOTES

The most effective stigma-reduction strategies operate on many levels. Stigma reduction involves working with individuals, communities and health providers; influencing policy; and raising greater awareness in society overall. Creating social and cultural change can be a long process that requires ongoing commitment from advocates. But it does happen!

The most effective strategies employ different methods at different times. There is no magic formula and it can be hard to predict what will work. There might be a lot of debate about which strategies to pursue. It's common in social movements for different groups to pursue strategies that seem contradictory or repetitive. The important thing is to invite positive debate. Evaluate whether you think a strategy is working, recognizing that it might take a long time to see change.

Lessons from other campaigns and social movements can show us the way as we plan and act against abortion stigma. The next few activities explore other movements' strategies in greater depth. The main aim of this activity is to focus on strategies for addressing social stigma. It draws from movements that aim to reduce stigma around other issues, particularly HIV and mental health.

Before you facilitate this activity, think of local examples of how campaigns have used the four stigma-reduction strategies; this will help start the group discussions.

### TIME:

1 hour 30 minutes

### GOALS:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Recognize the successes and pitfalls of other stigma-reduction campaigns and interventions;
- Identify opportunities, risks and processes in pursuing strategies to reduce abortion stigma.

### MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

- Gather flipchart and markers.
- Make a sign for each of the four stigma-reduction strategies (reframing, contact, education, activism) and post them in the corners of the room.
- Write a list of local examples of how people have used these strategies to advocate for stigma reduction. Areas where stigma may have been reduced in your community include: HIV, LGBTIQ issues, women working outside of the house,

women running for public office, divorce, menstruation, masturbation, mental health, contraception and disability.

- Write the group questions (from Step 6) on a flipchart and post them on the wall.

## FACILITATION STEPS:

- 1. Introduce the activity (2 minutes):** *In this activity, we will focus on strategies for addressing social or public stigma. Over the years, many movements have succeeded in changing people's attitudes and beliefs. Those changes led to a reduction in stigma and discrimination. In this activity, we will draw on lessons from some of those movements. Their success will help guide us in our action plans to reduce abortion stigma.*
- 2. Brainstorm (8 minutes):** *Name some issues in our community and in our country that have become less stigmatized over time. To get the brainstorm started, give the group a couple of local examples from the list you prepared. Write the issues that the group names on a flipchart.*
- 3. Explore in small groups (10 minutes):** *Break into groups of two to four people. Each group will choose one of the issues from the list of local examples. Give them a minute to form groups and choose an issue. Read the list out loud if necessary. Now take a few minutes to discuss the following questions: What do you think led to the decrease in stigma on this issue? Has the stigma really decreased, or just changed? If it has changed, how is it different now?*
- 4. Report back (10 minutes):** *Ask groups to briefly share some highlights from their small group discussion.*
- 5. Introduce the four strategies (10 minutes):** *Now I'm going to tell you about four stigma-reduction strategies that have been used in other social movements in the past. Listen to the definitions of each strategy—we will use them in the next part of this activity. Read the definition of each strategy.*

**Reframe** is about changing the way people talk, think and feel about an issue. Reframing can help to challenge assumptions, inaccuracies and negative understandings, and ultimately to reshape our attitudes and beliefs. It involves taking control of the language, images and messages that appear in the public domain. For example, people used to say "AIDS victim," which sounds negative and makes the person appear helpless. But after a campaign to change that phrase, people now say "person living with HIV." This sort of change can be especially effective when coupled with efforts to address power dynamics in movement work. In this example, activists paired the language change push with a shift to include people living with HIV as leaders in the fight against HIV stigma and as advocates for anti-retroviral treatment. Changing our associations is a key part of reframing. For example, we can start associating abortion with women's, girls' and trans people's hopes and dreams, rather than with fetuses. Words and associations hold meaning, which can change depending on who is framing the issue. The most affected groups should determine which words are stigmatizing and which words are positive and empowering.

**Contact** is when we spark interpersonal connections between members of a stigmatized group and people who are not members of that group. Contact can take the form of personal sharing, community storytelling, one-on-one connec-

tions or group dialogue, among other forms. As a strategy, contact has successfully reduced stigma around mental illness, HIV and gender and sexuality. To use contact effectively, make sure groups meet on equal footing. For example, don't ask a patient advocacy group to contact providers about abortion stigma in a clinic, where providers typically have more power than patients. Have them meet on neutral ground instead. Integrate people's personal experiences of stigma into the approach. Personal stories can help people who are not members of the stigmatized group deepen their understanding and develop empathy by seeing the human face behind the stigmatized group. **Note:** it is important to remember that this can sometimes feel like a heavy burden for the stigmatized group. We should always respect their limits about how much they're willing to share or educate others. It can be exhausting for stigmatized people to have to step into this role, and we should be ready to offer strong support, should it be requested.

**Education** means providing accurate information to help reduce stigma. Many people who stigmatize do not realize they are doing so. Stigmatizing behavior often comes from the judgments and values people hold. Education programs to reduce stigma address the fears and myths behind the stigma. They also help people understand the impact of stigma. People living with HIV, men who have sex with men, people with mental health issues and transgender women have all led successful education programs. Such programs have educated the community that you can't get HIV from a toilet seat, for example, and that people with mental health issues are not more dangerous than people without mental health issues. Education can provide a forum for people to talk about why and how stigma shows up. It can help motivate us to reduce stigmatizing behavior.

**Activism**, or protest, is about highlighting injustice and calling for reform. Sometimes activists achieve reform by shaming a person or institution that is spreading stigma. Activism can be individual or collective, loud or quiet, and it can make use of education and reframing. Rallies, boycotts, public statements and letter-writing campaigns are all forms of activism. We can often see when a protest is successful in achieving specific outcomes, like getting a company to stop running a stigmatizing ad. But we can't always tell whether that outcome has an impact on stigma overall. In the example of the ad, you may get rid of that *expression* of the stigma, but you might not be able to address the underlying *causes* of stigma. However, activism can build awareness and solidarity, and it can have outcomes we can see and measure.

Take questions to deepen understanding.

6. **Choose your strategy (30 minutes):** *Choose one of the four stigma-reduction strategies you would like to talk more about. Move to the corner of the room where that strategy is posted on the wall. Point out which strategy is in which corner. Participants may identify another strategy not already mentioned and form an additional group, but challenge them first to consider if their proposed strategy fits within one of the four strategies. Read out the following questions from the flipchart:*
  - What are some examples of how people have used this strategy to reduce stigma?
  - Were they successful? Why or why not?

- What are the potential benefits of pursuing this strategy when it comes to abortion stigma?
- What are the potential risks?
- Who should be involved in deciding whether we should pursue this strategy, and how we should implement it?
- What else do we need? What knowledge? What resources?

As the groups start discussing, circle around to each group and remind them of the definition of their strategy as needed. Also remind them to consider all levels and areas of society, including individual, community, health providers and policy.

**7. Report back (15 minutes):** *Come back to the full circle and report the highlights from your group's discussion. After all groups have reported back: What are the key lessons and approaches from these strategies that we can apply to our work to reduce abortion stigma?*

**8. Summarize (5 minutes):**

## KEY SUMMARY MESSAGES

- The most effective stigma-reduction strategies operate on many levels at once—working with individuals, communities, and health providers; trying to influence policy; and raising awareness in society overall.
- Know your audience. Recognize that the same messages and strategies might not work for everyone. Consider using different messages or strategies at different times and combining strategies.
- There is no magic formula. It can be hard to predict what will work. There might be debate about which strategies to pursue—the important thing is to invite positive debate. It's common in social movements for different groups to pursue strategies that seem contradictory or repetitive. Evaluate whether you think a strategy is working, recognizing that change takes time and we must use our passion and commitment to keep pushing for it.

## 7D: IDEAS FOR ACTION: REFRAMING ABORTION, THINKING BIG!

### FACILITATOR NOTES

Many social movements for change have successfully used a strategy called “reframing.” Reframing is about changing the way people talk, think and feel about an issue. Reframing can help challenge assumptions, inaccuracies and negative understandings, and ultimately reshape our attitudes and beliefs. It involves taking control of the language, images and messages that appear in the public domain. For example, people used to say “AIDS victim,” which sounds negative and makes the person appear helpless. But after a campaign to change that phrase, people now say “person living with HIV.” This sort of change can be especially effective when coupled with efforts to address power dynamics in movement work. In this example, activists paired the language change push with a shift to include people living with HIV as leaders in the fight against HIV stigma and as advocates for anti-retroviral treatment.

Changing our associations is a key part of reframing. For example, we can start associating abortion with women’s, girls’ and trans people’s hopes and dreams, rather than with fetuses. Words and associations hold meaning, which can change depending on who is framing the issue. Keep in mind: The groups most affected by stigma should determine which words are stigmatizing and which are positive and empowering.

In this activity, we will consider how to reframe the way communities commonly view abortion.

### TIME:

50 minutes

### GOALS:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- See the value of shifting common images and language around abortion;
- Identify ways to reframe abortion.

### MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

- Have the reframing definition and examples of successful reframing ready and think of a few local or national examples of successful reframing, too.

### FACILITATION STEPS:

- 1. Introduce the activity (1 minute):** *In this activity, we will explore the concept of reframing an issue. We’ll look at how we can use this strategy to create new messages about abortion and help challenge abortion stigma.*



- 2. Buzz and brainstorm (10 minutes):** Find a partner and take a few minutes to discuss this question: *What do we mean by reframing?* After five minutes, take a response from each pair, then present the definition of reframing below. Also provide examples of successful reframing, including your local/national examples, to supplement what comes from the pairs.

**Examples of words that activists have reframed to give a positive effect:**

- Venereal disease → Sexually transmitted disease → Sexually transmitted infection
- AIDS victim → Person living with HIV
- Sexual assault victim → Sexual assault survivor
- Retarded → Person with a developmental disability

**Related to abortion...**

- Committing abortion → Providing abortion services
- Abortions → Abortion provider

- 3. Reflect (5 minutes):** Spend a few minutes imagining what it would be like if we treated abortion as a common life experience. How would things be different?

- 4. Community groups (15 minutes):** Split into these five small groups:

- Teachers
- Religious leaders
- Community leaders
- Health workers
- Parents

*If you're a member of one of these groups in real life, please join that group. If you aren't a member of any of these groups, join a group that needs you. Move with your group to a corner or other area of the room. After participants have split into the groups: With your group, talk about the messages you would give the community about abortion if we treated it like any other medical procedure or life experience. Be creative. Think of who you are designing your messages for in your particular role.*

- 5. Community walk (12 minutes):** Now we'll take a walk through the community and visit each group. The groups will share the messages they would give to us about abortion if we treated it like any other medical procedure or life experience. Deliver your messages in character. For example, the "teachers" will relate to the rest of us as though they are our teachers and we are their students.

- 6. Process (5 minutes):** Who would like to share any thoughts or feelings about anything you've learned from this activity?

## 7. Summarize (2 minutes):

### KEY SUMMARY MESSAGE

- Reframing abortion is one strategy we can use to help change people's negative images and associations with abortion. Shifting public opinion toward the idea that abortion is *just another medical procedure or life experience* can help to reduce abortion stigma.

## 7E: HOW TO RESPOND TO STIGMA IN THE MEDIA

### FACILITATOR NOTES

The media is a major source of abortion stigma. Media includes newspapers, TV, radio and other sources of news and entertainment. Because it is everywhere in our lives, media is impossible to avoid. Much of the abortion stigma in the media is overt, appearing as name calling and shaming. Other times it is subtle, and we may not even be aware of it. Either way, it has a big impact, because it works its way into our thoughts and feelings. It affects the ways we talk about people who have abortions, and it can also affect how we talk about people who provide abortion services.

This activity is designed to help participants identify both overt and subtle stigma in the media. They will see how they themselves absorb, borrow and use stigmatizing messages from the media. They will reflect on ways to personally counter the media's effect on their perceptions of abortion. The goal is for participants to develop appropriate response strategies to stigmatizing messaging. This includes responses that participants can use in their communities, at home and even in the media itself.

### TIME:

1 hour 20 minutes

### GOALS:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Identify overt and subtle stigma in the media;
- Describe ways that stigma in the media has personally affected them;
- Develop response strategies and messaging to counter stigma narratives in the media.

### MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

- Download these articles and videos as examples of media bias and stigma:
  - [“Three Republicans blocking final effort to defund Planned Parenthood, repeal Obamacare”](#)
  - [“Eyes on Malawi”](#)
  - [“Obianuju Ekeocha on BBC World News”](#)
  - [“Obianuju Ekeocha: ‘Abortion is a Direct Attack On Human Life’”](#)

You can also find other videos or articles—including local or national examples—that highlight the ways that the media stigmatizes abortion.

Depending on your technology options at the workshop site and the literacy level of the participants, adjust the mix of videos and articles.

- Consider printing a copy of [How to talk about abortion: A guide to rights-based messaging](#) for participants, especially the language guide on pages 15-16 and the list of common myths about abortion on page 22.
- Write the following media statements on a flipchart, keeping them covered:
  - Abortion is not African. It's not Christian. Anyone who supports abortion is against our culture. (Adapt as needed for your country context.)
  - Abortion not only kills a baby, it makes the mother sick. It is said that there are people who cannot conceive after having an abortion. Some people are known to get breast cancer after having an abortion.
  - Priests say abortion is murder.
  - Abortion is never necessary to save a woman's, girl's or trans person's life.
  - Restricting access to abortion is the best way to prevent abortion.
  - Pregnancy is safer than abortion.
  - Medical abortion is dangerous and can kill people.

## FACILITATION STEPS

- 1. Introduce activity (2 minutes):** *This activity will help us get better at seeing both overt and subtle stigma in the media. We will learn ways to counter the media's effect on our views of abortion and we will develop response strategies to the stigmatizing messages we see.*
- 2. Go-round (5 minutes):** *Without giving any examples: Let's go around and each offer an example of messages we have heard in the media that stigmatize abortion. After everyone has shared: How do you feel these messages have affected your own views on abortion?*
- 3. Media examples (30 minutes):** *I'm going to show you some examples of how abortion is stigmatized in the media. Listen for the ways you hear stigma in the following videos and articles. Show one or two short videos and/or share one or two examples of articles that include stigmatizing messaging.*
  - Example: Read this quote out loud: *"Planned Parenthood commits more than 300,000 abortions annually, more than 30 percent of all abortions in the U.S."* Identify the stigmatizing message or word in this quote. The subtle word is "commits." Ask the group: *What does the word "commits" suggest to you?*
    - Link: ["Three Republicans blocking final effort to defund Planned Parenthood, repeal Obamacare"](#)
  - Example: Hand out copies of the article and give the group time to read it. When they are done: *Identify the subtle and overt stigma in the article.*
    - Link: ["Eyes on Malawi"](#)

- Example: Play the first four to five minutes of the video. *Identify the stigmatizing language Obianuju Ekeocha uses.* For example:  
At minute 1:37: "Abortion is a form of ideological colonialization."  
At minute 2:33: "Contraceptives are a western solution."  
Embedded throughout interview: "Normal" African women want food and water. They don't want abortion or contraceptives.
  - o Link: ["Obianuju Ekeocha on BBC World News"](#)
- Example: Play just a few minutes of Ekeocha's UN presentation. Ask the group: *What do you think about her body language, tone of voice and arguments? What stigmatizing language or messaging do you notice? Do you consider it to be overt or subtle?*
  - o Link: ["Obianuju Ekeocha: 'Abortion is a Direct Attack On Human Life'"](#)

**4. Interview your partner (20 minutes):** Reveal the media statements on the flipcharts. *Find a partner. One person should play the role of a journalist while the other person plays the role of an interviewee. Perhaps you are a health clinic worker, an activist or simply a person shopping in the market. The journalist should read one of the statements from the flipchart and ask the community member what he or she thinks about that statement. The person being interviewed should practice a stigma-reduction response. After you have completed one statement, switch roles so that you can take turns making and responding to the statements in an interview format. You should also trade off being a pro-choice or an anti-choice respondent.*

**5. Report back (20 minutes):** *Join the full circle and report back on your answers. How did you feel responding? Measure levels of comfort and discomfort. After everyone has reported back: What were the best responses that came out of the interviews?*

**6. Summarize (3 minutes):**

## KEY SUMMARY MESSAGES

- Abortion stigma in the media can be both subtle and overt, and it works its way into our thoughts and feelings. It affects the ways we talk about people who have abortions and people who provide abortions.
- We all absorb, borrow and use stigmatizing messages from the media. It is our job to develop strategies to respond to stigmatizing messages that we can use in our communities, at home and even in the media itself.

## KEY RESOURCES

[The International Network for the Reduction of Abortion Discrimination and Stigma](#)

[Representations of abortion in film and television](#)

[How to talk about abortion: A guide to rights-based messaging](#)

["Speak my language": Abortion storytelling in eastern Europe from a youth perspective](#)

[Supporting independent use of abortion medicines: Fighting stigma one email at a time](#)

[Understanding and challenging HIV stigma](#)

[Moving to action module](#)

## REFERENCES

Kidd, R., & Clay, S. (2003). Understanding and challenging HIV stigma: Toolkit for action. CHANGE Project. International Center for Research on Women. Retrieved from <https://www.icrw.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Understanding-and-Challenging-HIV-Stigma-Toolkit-for-Action.pdf>