

MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA STATEMENT: COMMUNITY MEDIA CAPACITATED ON REDUCING HIV/TB STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION

Johannesburg, South Africa, 9 March 2018. The Media Development & Diversity Agency (MDDA), in partnership with the Soul City Institute for Social Justice, today (9 March 2018) concluded a Stigma and Discrimination Reduction Training Programme for Community Media, with 31 print and broadcast projects having attended the workshops held in three provinces of South Africa.

Community media attending hailed from KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and the Free State and were selected from areas where HIV and tuberculosis (TB) are heavily concentrated. The training course encouraged community media entities to contribute to decreasing the rate of HIV and TB prevalence in South Africa, by stimulating dialogue and promoting awareness around HIV and TB stigma related issues, as well as by alerting the community to its responsibility to reduce the occurrence of such stigma.

Reducing the rate of self-reported HIV and TB stigma by 50% is one of five priority goals of the South African National Strategic Plan on HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and TB, while reducing stigma and discrimination to ensure access to services is a related goal. This objective is best served when the rights of those living with HIV, STIs and/or TB are respected, protected and promoted.

Attending the two day workshop in Bloemfontein, Free State was Michael Menyatso of Phetoho News, who commented: “The training has made me realize that it has to start with us, and not by pretending but by loving and living what we are writing in our newspapers. It is possible that this mountainous problem can be eliminated and we congratulate Soul City, together with the MDDA, for responding to these widespread problems facing our communities.”

“Community media is one of the most important social platforms in promoting awareness through the sharing of information around the stigma associated with HIV and TB,” says Acting Board Chairperson of the MDDA, Musa Sishange. “The MDDA, in collaboration with its partners, is committed to capacitating our community media sector to report and raise awareness on such issues, and in this way to contribute to fostering communities in which the human rights of all are respected and preserved, as enshrined in our Constitution.”



The workshops were led by Soul City Training Facilitators, Hannah Mabika and Richard Buhali.

The MDDA is a statutory development agency, deriving its mandate, from Section 16 and 32 of the Constitution Act No. 108 of 1996, thereby providing for freedom of expression and access to information. As a partnership between the South African Government and major print and broadcasting companies, it promotes and assists in the development of community media and small commercial media in South Africa and the transformation of the media, by providing support (financial, capacity building, etc.) in terms of the MDDA Act No 14 of 2002. It also aims to raise public awareness with regard to media development and diversity issues, and to encourage media literacy and a culture of reading. For further information: www.mdda.org.za

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