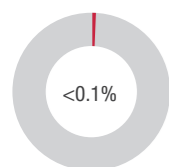




**LESS DISCRIMINATION,
BETTER SERVICES,
MORE SUPPORT!**

for PLHIV using drugs

KNOW YOUR REGION: HIV AND DRUG USE IN MENA



Low HIV prevalence, estimated at less than 0.1% in most of the MENA countries



Estimated 240,000 PLHIV



Estimated 887,000 PWID



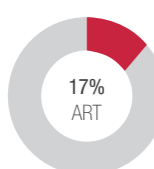
Unprotected sex and unsafe injecting drug use: primary drivers of HIV epidemic

HOWEVER, **Legal, religious, and sociocultural** restrictions and taboos against sex, sex work, same-sex relations, drug use and possession are threatening the region's low HIV prevalence

CURRENTLY, MENA HAS:



One of the highest growing HIV epidemics in the world: **35% annual increase** in newly detected HIV infections since 2001.



One of the lowest rates of ART coverage, with only 17% of PLHIV accessing treatment



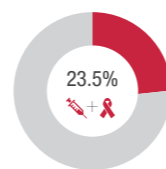
Low levels of HIV testing among key populations



Concentrated HIV epidemics recorded among PWIDs in 8 countries of the region



Estimated 208,000 PWID living with HIV/AIDS



HIV prevalence of 23.5% among PWID

AN OPERATIONAL RESEARCH IN 6 COUNTRIES OF THE REGION REVEALED THAT OUT OF 149 (102 MEN AND 47 WOMEN) PARTICIPATING PLHIV WHO USE OR INJECT DRUGS:



Only 32% of participants' children ever tested for HIV (with 10% testing positive)



Drugs used by 45.6% of partners (39.6% injecting)



56.1% of PLHIV injecting drugs share needles



44.8% of PLHIV using drugs never use condoms



25.5% of men have same-sex relations



17% of women are engaged in sex work

MOREOVER, OST IS NOT AVAILABLE IN 3 OUT OF THE 6 COUNTRIES!!!

PLHIV USING DRUGS HAVE INCREASED VULNERABILITY AND RISKS OF:



Delayed HIV diagnosis



Low level of HIV treatment retention



Poor use of harm reduction and healthcare services

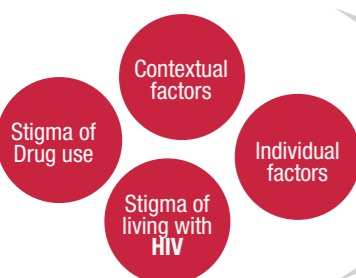


Onward transmission of HIV



AIDS-related deaths

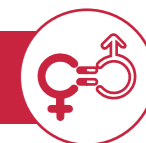
WHY? BECAUSE VARIOUS CONTEXTUAL AND INDIVIDUAL FACTORS LIMIT THE USE OF HARM REDUCTION AND HIV SERVICES AMONG PLHIV WHO USE DRUGS



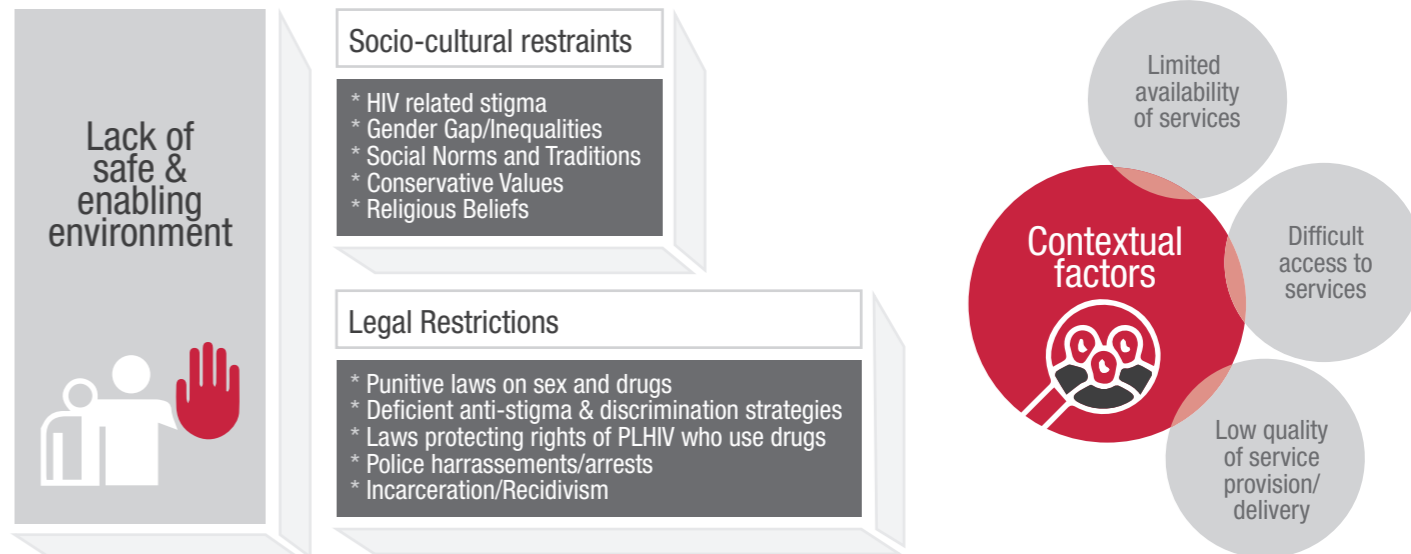
POOR HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIORS

UNFAVORABLE HEALTH OUTCOMES

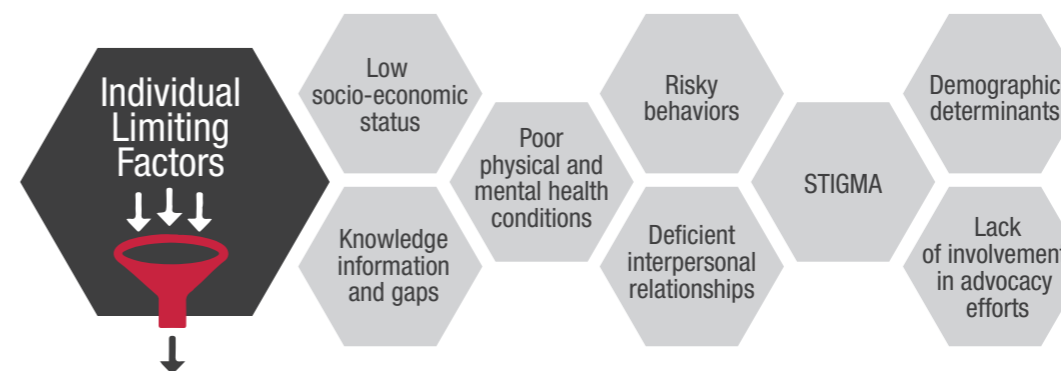
GENDER INEQUALITIES FURTHER EXACERBATE POOR HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIORS AND OUTCOMES AMONG WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV AND USING DRUGS (INCLUDING PARTNERS) IN HIGHLY CONSERVATIVE MENA SOCIETIES



CONTEXTUAL LIMITING FACTORS



INDIVIDUAL LIMITING FACTORS



ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS AND ACCESSIBLE QUALITY SERVICES ARE CRUCIAL IN IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES AND IMPROVED HEALTH OUTCOMES

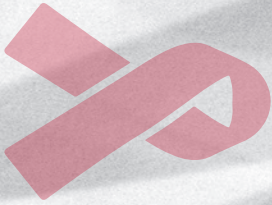
WHAT CAN BE DONE?

- ✓ Regular HIV treatment intake is linked to improved injection practices and sexual behaviors that decrease probability of co-infection with other diseases
- ✓ The integration of OST into HIV services has been shown to facilitate engagement of PWID living with HIV, and improve the HIV treatment and care continuum

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE ADHERENCE TO TREATMENT AND ACCESS TO SERVICES?

- Awareness raising and training on:** positive health impacts of early detection and routine screening among family members; harms related to drug use; importance of support for PLHIV; availability of harm reduction and HIV services; rights of PLHIV and PWUD; stigma and discrimination for health care providers
- Promotion of:** availability of services among health care providers and PLHIV; harm reduction strategies for behavior change; routine testing of other infectious diseases included within package of harm reduction and healthcare services; anti-discrimination strategies and laws;
- Service development through:** integration of harm reduction services within healthcare package of services; increasing OST availability and coverage; providing HIV testing for all partners and children of newly diagnosed people; increasing availability of condoms and needles/syringes in harm reduction and other health programs; involving PLHIV who use drugs in programming and decision making;
- Accountability and support through establishing:** complaint mechanism for rights violations and mistreatment; support system for regular follow-up of beneficiaries in healthcare settings
- Evaluation and research through:** service quality assessments; population size estimates to inform program development

What to know more? Check out the references!



Middle East and North Africa
Harm Reduction Association
"MENAHA"

Hayek Roundabout, BBAC Building
2nd Floor, Sin el Fil, Lebanon

Telephone: +961 1 49 32 11
E-mail: info@menahra.org
Website: www.menahra.org

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http://menahra.org/images/OPERATIONAL_RESEARCH_ON_DRUG_USE__HARM_REDUCTION_AMONG_PEOPLE_LIVING_WITH_HIVAIDS_IN_MENA_-_web.pdf

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