



Local governments as key role-players in combating the HIV/Aids epidemic.

The developmental agenda of local government equips the sector to address a wide range of social issues, including HIV and AIDS. With South Africa having the highest HIV rate in the world, with approximately 7.8 million people living with HIV, municipalities are increasingly being called upon to support multi-sectoral partnerships to mitigate the negative impacts the epidemic has on people and communities.

Therefore, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) is calling for the greater integration of plans and resource allocation at the local level to address the inequalities that continue to create barriers against access to prevention, treatment and care.

To realise this, SALGA commits to supporting and advising municipalities in playing a meaningful role in the response against HIV, TB, and STIs, which is not only a threat to local government's objective of promoting healthy and safe environments but also threatens social and economic development.

SALGA interventions

SALGA is making considerable headway in developing a position paper on local government responses to HIV, TB, and STIs to ensure a common approach and understanding across all municipalities.

The local government association also collaborated with the South African National Aids Council (SANAC) this year in the roll-out of portfolio-based councilor induction programmes on the roles and responsibilities of Councilors on HIV, TB and STI responses across all 9 provinces of South Africa.

Discussions are also at an advanced stage to consider the funding requirements of municipalities for an AIDS response. Furthermore, SALGA will work with SANAC and its member municipalities to establish functional AIDS councils from the district to the ward level to create platforms for multisectoral coordination mechanisms and responses.

SALGA joins the nation and global community in commemorating World AIDS Day.

In commemoration of the 34th World Aids Day under the theme Equalize and Intergrate to end AIDS, SALGA joins the nation and the global community in committing to the redoubling of prevention and mitigation efforts.

Equalize is a call for the global community to reduce the inequalities driving the AIDS epidemic, using practical proven effective measures including the following:

- Increasing the availability, quality, and suitability of services, for HIV treatment, testing and prevention, so that everyone is well-served.
- Reforming laws, policies, and practices to tackle the stigma and exclusion faced by people living with HIV and by key and marginalised populations, so that everyone is shown respect and is welcomed.