



Beyond Labels: Redefining HIV Narratives for Zero HIV Stigma Day 2024

IAPAC's Senior Advisor on Community Engagement reflects on Zero HIV Stigma Day's inaugural year and shares the 2024 theme.

January 29, 2024 By [Zero HIV Stigma](#)

Reflecting on the inaugural Zero HIV Stigma Day that took place July 21, 2023, we at IAPAC along with our global partners are motivated to build on 2023's powerful, and transformative theme, *Human First*. This powerful theme rallied the global community next year around a reminder that people living with HIV are much more than their diagnosis... they are "human first."

As we approach Zero HIV Stigma Day 2024, we remain steadfast in our commitment to move beyond stereotypes and preconceived notions about individuals and communities most affected by HIV. With a focus on the individual experiences and stories that make up the diverse tapestry of our HIV community, IAPAC and our partners are proud to announce the theme for Zero HIV Stigma Day 2024 will be *Beyond Labels: Redefining HIV Narratives*.

Zero HIV Stigma Day, now observed annually on July 21st, is a time for reflection, education, and action to combat HIV stigma. The day is a reminder to our communities of the harmful repercussions that HIV-related stigma poses to our society, including in creating barriers to equitable access to life-saving care. It is also a rallying call for our communities to re-commit efforts to protect the dignity and well-being of every individual affected by HIV irrespective of their HIV status.

The *Beyond Labels* theme encourages us to redefine the narratives around HIV by highlighting the stories of hope, courage, and empowerment within the community. Furthermore, the theme encourages a shift in perspective, urging us to see people living with and affected by HIV not as victims or statistics but as individuals with unique experiences, strengths, and contributions to society. And it is a call to action for governments, healthcare providers, advocacy groups, and individuals alike to challenge stereotypes, promote understanding, and ensure that HIV-affected communities are treated with dignity.

Around the world, events and initiatives will be organized to mark Zero HIV Stigma Day 2024 and promote the *Beyond Labels* theme, similar in nature to those held in South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States, and other countries in 2023. These events may include educational workshops, community outreach programs, art exhibitions, or social media campaigns aimed at raising awareness and challenging misconceptions about HIV. We also encourage widescale screenings of our 2023 short documentary, *Human First*.

As we prepare to observe Zero HIV Stigma Day 2024, let us reaffirm our commitment to creating a world free from HIV stigma. Let us celebrate the diversity and resilience of the HIV community and pledge to work towards a future where everyone, regardless of their HIV status, is treated with compassion, understanding, and respect. Together, we can rewrite the narrative surrounding HIV and build a more inclusive and compassionate future for all people affected by HIV.

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<http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/zero-hiv-stigma-day-2024>