

SUMMARY HANDOUT

The poetics and politics of Care within HIV and sexuality in social development: some personal, empirical and intersectional reflections

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The overall seminar, *The politics of care, welfare and social cohesion: intersectional perspectives on redistributive and liberal welfare regimes in a global context* promises much discussion and debate about the politics of care, well-being, care-work arrangements, welfare, unpaid care work and other issues in its intersectional, multifaceted dimensions. The focus in this presentation is to zoom in on thinking about care, its meanings, complexities, politics and aesthetics in relation to HIV & AIDS, its relationship to the personal, the political, sexuality, and social cohesion. While the former implies a broad terms of reference for the scope, the focus, however, will fall on homosexuality and its relation to 'care work' and 'caring' (whether it concerns service delivery, programming or their absence). In this presentation 'care' as a concept is used as a broad conceptual lens to understand the complexities of 'needs', 'agency' and 'inclusion' in thinking about and making sense of HIV & AIDS 'care work' in conjunction with policy frameworks that impact on LGBT people. The argument put forward is that caring is not just a subjective and material experience; it is a historically and politically created construction. In other words, 'care' may be facilitated, or it may be deliberately withdrawn, depending on sexuality. Particular circumstances and events, ideologies, and power relations facilitate, enable or minimize the conditions under which care and caring can occur, the forms it will take, and the consequences it might have for those who do it. Central to the conceptualisation is that a tension exists between universal equality and the recognition of differences that underpins intersectional thinking in relation to *care*. One position motivated concerns the possibility that care in relation to social identities (marginal sexual identities at that) functions as representations of a socially structured and/or materially lived existence. As such, materiality relates to conditions of equality, which in turn is shaped by specific differences within social patterns of division and hierarchy. While the context of "liberal welfare regimes" will be the focus in the overall seminar, this presentation will offer some perspective on regimes that are far from liberal (Southern and Eastern Africa particularly) and will feature, highlight and interrogate some empirical aspects to frame ideas and meanings about care in relation to 'needs', 'programming' and social inclusion or social exclusion in relation to HIV & AIDS and its relation to sexuality.

The presentation is structured in *four* interconnected parts. Commencing *first* with a brief personal vignette, the presentation will illustrate how death and dying in the context of AIDS can provide a reflective lens to think about care and caring beyond its psychological dimension. This narrative opens up a *second* component to articulate the link between the personal and the political in relation thinking about care in relation to some theoretical and policy specificities. The *third* aspect will provide some empirical insights from a current qualitative study I am engaged in on needs and programming of Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM) in Eastern and Southern Africa and will provide, in part, a review of some countries featured in this study in relation to the policy and social framework, from a care-perspective. This will be followed by a *fourth* and final section that will offer some tentative conclusions in thinking about care in relation to sexuality and social cohesion.