



 **IAS 2021**



# **Changing the narrative around men and HIV in South Africa: MINA, Coach Mpilo, and the B-OK bottles**

Men and HIV in sub-Saharan Africa:

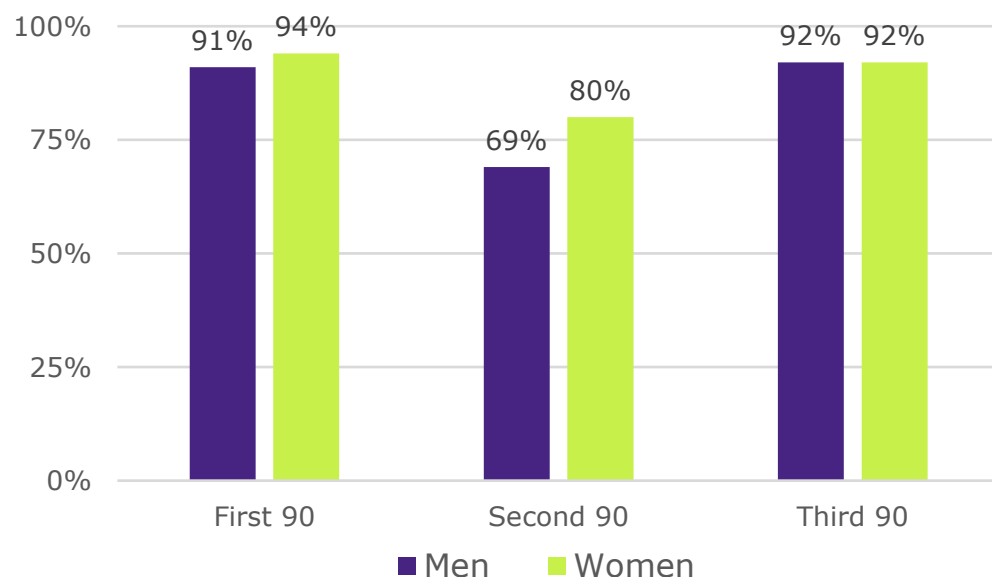
Men as patients, peers, and providers of healthcare

Rodney Knotts

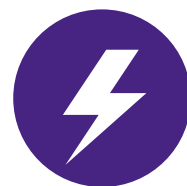
USAID, South Africa

# We are missing and misreading men

Progress towards 90-90-90 targets  
among those 15 + years of age, 2019



Source: [aidsinfo.org](http://aidsinfo.org), data from 2019



Men may appear stubborn and indifferent, but many are anxious and afraid to the point of paralysis



Men want and need support but often have no one they trust or feel safe talking to



Many men associate treatment with loss —a reminder of failure and a marker of stigma



Men often find nurses intimidating and anticipate a negative experience in the clinic

# Men need a 360-degree, integrated approach



# We're responding with multi-layered support



MINA is a brand and a movement to support, motivate and encourage men living with HIV to start and stay on treatment



Coach Mpilo is a re-imagined peer navigator/case manager model for men living with HIV



B-OK bottles are a simple visual tool for explaining the power of treatment and U=U

# Coach Mpilo is the embodiment of MINA



Coach Mpilo is a different kind of case manager. He's a man living well with HIV who mentors newly diagnosed men and men who have stopped taking treatment, based on his own life experience.

## Why men like Coach

- He breaks through their isolation and paralysis
- He's a safe and relatable source of support
- He's living proof that a man can have HIV and live a normal life

## Why implementers and providers like Coach

- Rapid-response
- Low-cost
- Relieves pressure on clinic staff
- Effective at keeping men healthy

# Men have responded well to a coach's support

3,848 men (94%)  
accepted the  
support of a coach

3,811 men (99%) linked,  
returned or maintained  
on HIV treatment

3,653 men (96%)  
retained at the end  
of the pilot

*"When I first saw the Coach Mpilo poster in my community I didn't believe it. I called the number on the poster and two days later I met coach. I couldn't believe that a guy could live so openly with HIV and look so good."  
– Client in Ugu*

*"I am enlightened as I did not know how disclosure would lighten my load of keeping my status a secret." – Client in Ugu*

*"Yesterday I was a hero and that is because I managed to find a young man who was lost." – Coach in Gert Sibande*

*" When I see a coach talking to a man, I know he is saying things to him that it is impossible for us to say. They listen to the coach and respond. – Nurse in Ugu*



## The B-OK bottles are a new MINA tool



The bottles are a simple visual tool for explaining:

- The power of treatment to beat HIV
- The importance of starting treatment early
- The importance of treatment adherence
- Viral suppression
- The concept of U=U
- The ability to get completely back to normal while living with HIV

They can also be used to talk about community viral load and community viral suppression.



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# Thank you

For more information, please visit:

[www.menstarcoalition.org](http://www.menstarcoalition.org)

[www.facebook.com/MINAFORMenForHealth](https://www.facebook.com/MINAFORMenForHealth)

[www.coachmpilo.co.za](http://www.coachmpilo.co.za)

