

Are you *actually* involving community?

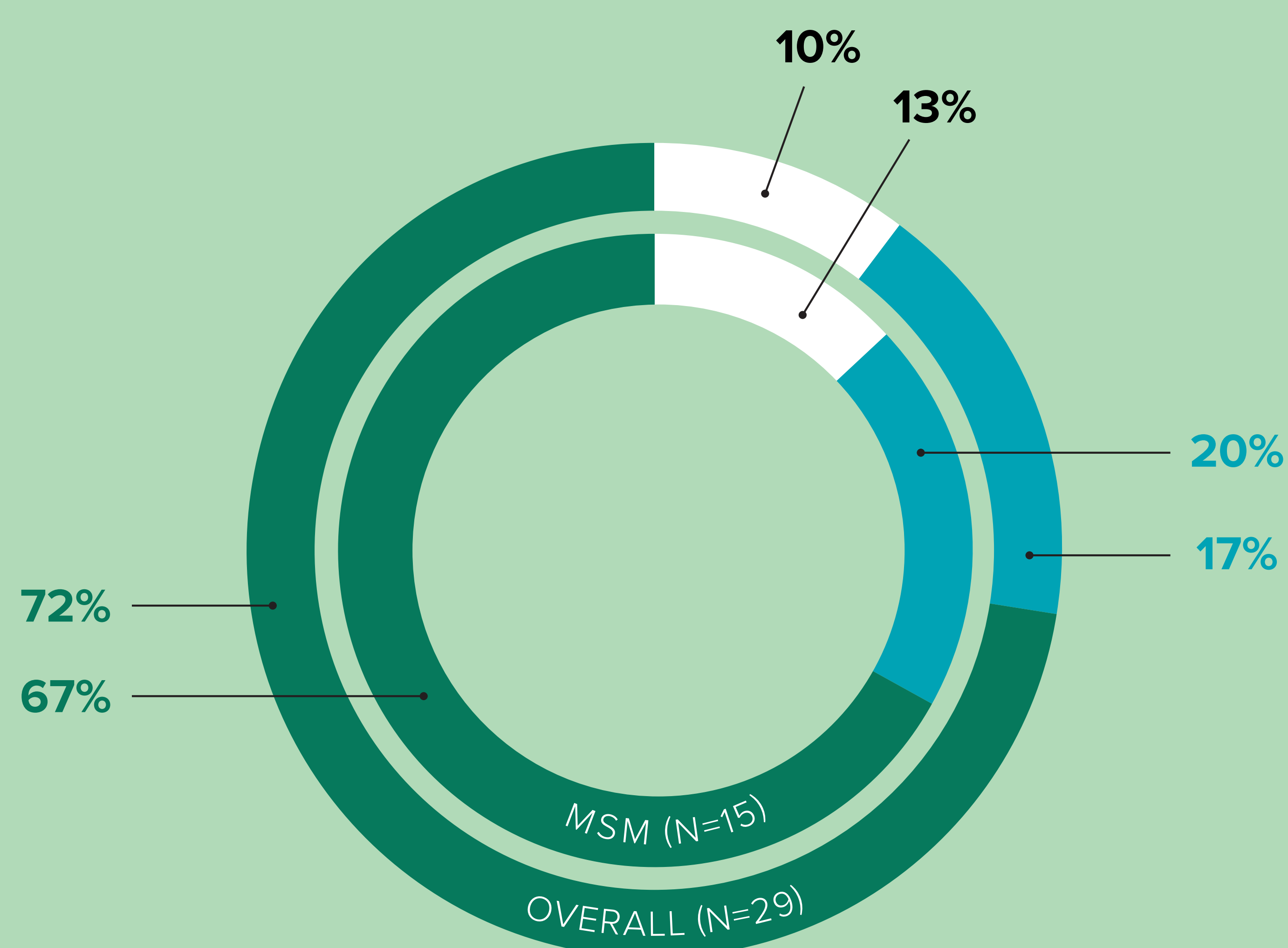
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Agency engagement of PLHIV in Australia

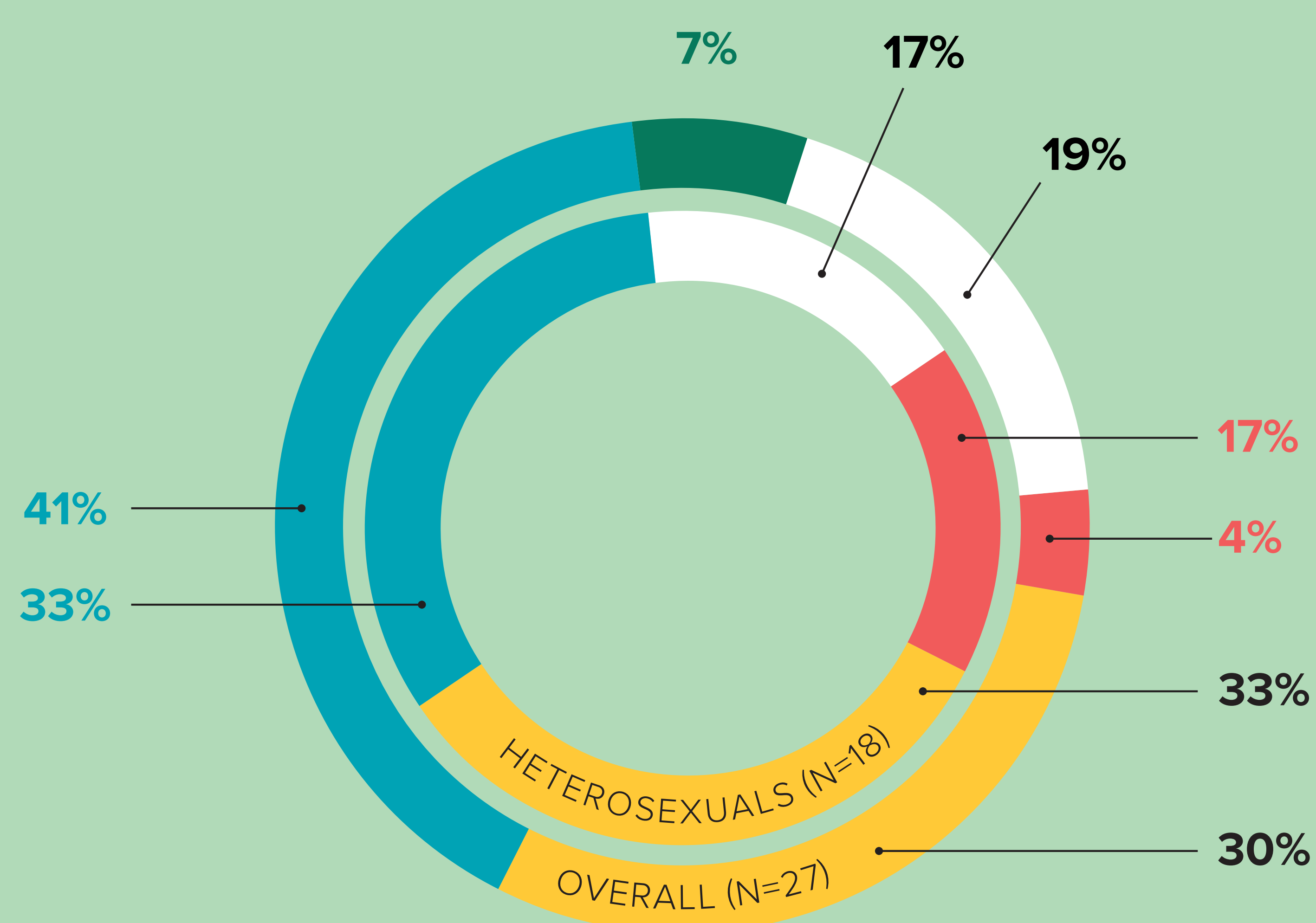
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Engagement with MSM



Engagement with heterosexuals



● Very Good ● Good ● Poor ● Very poor ● Unsure

Why an engagement project?

The National Association of People with HIV Australia (NAPWHA) is Australia's peak non-government organisation representing community-based groups of people living with HIV (PLHIV).

This raises some questions. Does the organisation actually represent HIV-positive communities? If so, which ones? And how well?

How did we do it?

To answer these questions, NAPWHA invited 53 experts to complete a survey.

Thirty-four people responded to the survey and researchers conducted six 1-1 interviews.

The project looked at agency engagement with PLHIV, including 17 priority sub-populations.

What did we find?

- People respect NAPWHA and appreciate its work and advocacy
- People raised concerns around accountability, autonomy, resources, representation and transparency
- NAPWHA engages well with some groups, e.g. men who have sex with men (MSM) and people who use drugs
- Heterosexuals and women were less favourable about engagement with their groups
- Overall perceptions of engagement did not always align with in-group perceptions
- Board perceptions of engagement were more positive than overall perceptions
- Interviewees were unsure whether NAPWHA represents member organisations or the body positive

What did we do?

QThink tabled six top-level recommendations to NAPWHA. NAPWHA has since redoubled its support for networking bodies, enhancing the autonomy and representation of PLHIV.

NAPWHA is also reviewing its governance and policy procedures to improve its accountability and transparency.

What is the takeaway?

Agencies should not assume that their engagement with PLHIV is perfect.

This project shows that experts trust NAPWHA but that it can nevertheless refine its approach to community engagement.

By engaging in this critical analysis, NAPWHA has strengthened its position as one of the few continuously operating national PLHIV organisations globally.

This poster, and the work that has gone into it, is based upon the lives of people living with HIV. Our fight against HIV and AIDS must continue to include people living with HIV and the authors honour their ongoing contributions to the epidemic response.

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