

## **BUSINESS UNUSUAL: MAINSTREAMING HIV IN AFRICAN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND CHURCH LIFE**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

- Tinyiko S. Maluleke, “How can it be business as usual in unusual times?”
- Desmond Tutu, “African intellectuals give brilliant answers to questions nobody has asked.
- Hydrology specialist who could not swim.

### **DESCRIPTION OF LESSON LEARNED**

- Mainstreaming HIV in Theological Education and Church Life
- Challenging Theological Institutions and Religious Leaders to make HIV their core business
- TOTs to address sexual and gender-based violence and HIV.

### **SITUATION OR ISSUE**

Prior to the intervention, HIV was regarded as “their issue.”

- HIV belonged to “the world”
- HIV belonged to “those not covered by the blood of Jesus”
- HIV belonged to “sinners, homosexuals, perverts”
- Students at theological institutions spent time on “how many angels could dance at the tip of a pin”

A theology of death dominated: funeral songs, burials, memorial services.

### **STRATEGY OR APPROACH TO ADDRESS THE SITUATION/ISSUE**

- Workshops to bring together religious leaders/lecturers to “reason together”
- Musa W. Dube ran up and down the continent
- Publication of relevant literature, especially, *AfricaPraying* (2003); *HIV/AIDS and the Curriculum* (2003); *Mainstreaming HIV and AIDS* (2009)

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY/APPROACH**

- Mobilise religious leaders and theological educators to take SGBV and HIV as “their issue”
- Meetings to focus on key themes

- Networking with groups of people living with HIV (INERELA+)
- Promoting cross-regional exchanges
- Re-reading the Bible to promote theologies of life

## **SUCSESSES**

- Curriculum transformation
- Graduates equipped to address SGBV and HIV
- Religious leaders preaching theologies of life

## **CHALLENGES**

- Constant movement of trained staff
- Slow movement in some places
- Research and publication takes time
- New issues emerging: “divine healing”, same-sex relationships

## **RESULTS/IMPACTS**

- Clear evidence of mainstreaming in curricula
- Doctoral, Masters and undergraduate theses, dissertations and essays addressing HIV
- Church leaders articulating life giving messages

## **POTENTIAL REPLICATION**

- Yes, massive!
- Consistent accompaniment, respect and openness.

## **CONCLUSION**

- HIV is not “your” business alone
- HIV is not “my business alone
- HIV is “our business together.