

## Abstract

### **Background:**

Liberia has come out of an extremely destructive 14 year civil war, from 1998-2002, which led to the collapse of not only the both public health care system but the overall economic growth.

Since 2002 The Government of Liberia (GoL) has worked hand in hand with the international community to ensure that all Liberians access free medical services, and all especially for PLWHA and has also made efforts to ensure a minimum standard of living by setting a minimum wage for both skilled and unskilled labor. Both policies are in line with the promotion of socio economic rights.

This paper therefore, highlights some of the main ways that existing government policies, NGOs and communities have impacted on the enjoyment of socio-economic rights of PLWHA in this post conflict country. The specific rights under focus are the right to health and the right to earn a living.

**Objective:** In this study we set out to assess the status of the fundamental socio-economic rights among the persons living with HIV/AIDS in Maryland County in Liberia

**Methodology:** The study approach used was a cross sectional survey with 347 respondents participating. Both qualitative (key informants and focus group discussions) and quantitative (face to face questionnaires) data collection methods were used during the research. All PLWHA of 18 years and above, attending the comprehensive units in four medial centers in Maryland County were included in the study.

**Results:** From the **Multivariate analysis featuring significant factors associated with the promotion/violation of the socio-economic rights of PLWHA showed that**, Persons who disclose their status are most likely to enjoy their socio economic rights (OR= 3.1, 95% CI ; 1.32-7.34), PLWHA are most likely to enjoy their health rights through support from the health care workers (OR=2.4, 95%CI; 1.09-8.97), PLWHA will most likely receive a positive attitude from the community (OR=1.8 95%CI; 1.12-10.33). PLWHA (OR = 3.1, 95% CI; are most likely to get support from the government leaders as regards the violation of their socio economic rights.

PLWHA are (OR =3.9) less likely to get better treatment at the work place. PLWHA are most likely to access health services. PLWHA are less likely to get support from their family and friends

**Conclusion:** The Government of Liberia has been able to provide access to health care and consequently rights for PLWHA, by ensuring free medical services more specifically ARVs and availability of community health works to support home based care.

Unfortunately, while the GOL does advocate for non discrimination in employment, PLWHA in Maryland have limited opportunities in the available job market as well as other income generating activities.

**Recommendation:** The GOL should intensify efforts to create awareness about HIV/AIDS and encourage voluntary counseling and testing. In addition, the GoL should solicit for more NGOs to support PLWHA in the interior counties like Maryland.