

Introduction

• The Intrafamilial training of Children and Young Children of mothers living with HIV and AIDS is an initiative promoted by the Portuguese Foundation "The Community Against AIDS" - FPCCSida, is contemplated in the goals of UNAIDS, and focuses mainly on the so-called room 90. This training, part of a broader biopsychosocial support programme, focuses on improving the quality of life of people living with HIV - PVVIH. In order to achieve this ambitious programme, in addition to strategies aimed at the adherence to therapy and to the link of health care, by monitoring the global health status and in particular the viral burdens of the participants, we bet on increasing health literacy by conducting information and awareness sessions, but also on combating stigma and discriminatory factors still experienced by many people living with HIV – PVVIH through support set up in support and self-help groups, beyond that which is provided on an individual basis.

Methods

• The Intrafamilial Formation, which took place from June to December 2019, was characterized by monthly sessions (N=6) of training/sensitization, in the form of a support group/self-help group, for two distinct groups. On the one hand, children and young people (N=31) whose average age is around 14 years and, on the other hand, mothers/fathers/guardians (N= 49), whose average age is 42 years. The participants are mostly from poor households with a low level of education (especially in adults) in the greater Porto region.

• In both groups, the sessions were promoted by the clinical psychologist of the Northern Delegation of the FPCCSida. They focused on active listening and sharing fears and concerns. This strategy facilitated, in the first session, of each of the groups, the identification of formative needs. In the group of adults, the privileged themes were: food and physical activity; the importance of adherence and compliance with therapy; quality of life and HIV and the importance of the family in emotional support. In the youth group: emotion management; interpersonal relationships; dating and prejudice and discrimination. In some sessions there was the presence of invited specialists in the chosen themes, others were co-energized by the trainers of the Center for Counseling and Guidance of Youth of Porto, of the Northern Delegation of FPCCSida. The last session, held in December, was affectionately referred to as "Snack of Affections"/ "Party for affections". This session aimed especially to provide an afternoon of conviviality where those who have musical or performing skills were challenged to perform to all the people present – not only participants in the Formation, but also family members and members and partners of the community. Given the characteristics and taking into account the proximity to the Christmas season, baskets were delivered to the most deprived families containing food.

• In the sessions, the methodology of the circle was used where everyone could see and hear, overcoming the barriers of the speaker to the listeners – all are speakers and all are listeners. In all there were moments of icebreaking, debates, brainstormings and didactic games (especially with the younger ones). The evaluation was carried out through informal conversations with all participants, through the psychologist's logbook and other trainers' records and through a questionnaire of satisfaction to the participants whose content was later reviewed.

Results

• In both groups the evaluation was very positive. In addition to the acquisition of new knowledge, the personal and social skills of the participants are strengthened. The adults emphasize how they were welcomed, the sharing of experiences, and the opportunity to listen to the experts and talk to them. They highlight the added value of participation with the positive consequences they feel in themselves - how to face the disease, the importance of therapeutic adherence and the need to combat isolation, but also in their interpersonal relationships namely in the management of family dynamics, in the way of dealing with their children and with other family members and friends.

• The younger ones highlight the occupational factor of training by reinforcing the added value of using games to understand what was being treated and to reflect together. They point out that the importance attributed to adherence to therapy allowed them to realize the implications on their health and the health of others (especially in older people where the issues of dating and early sexual life are already experienced) and view this aspect as fundamental for their self-care and well-being both in the present and in the future.

• Overall, this training also allowed the strengthening of affective and family bonds, the improvement of self-esteem, self-image and self-confidence. However, it was found that, in the vast majority of participants, of both groups, the stigma and prejudice related to being a person living with HIV still persisted, a factor that was something of intervention in the individual psychology consultation.

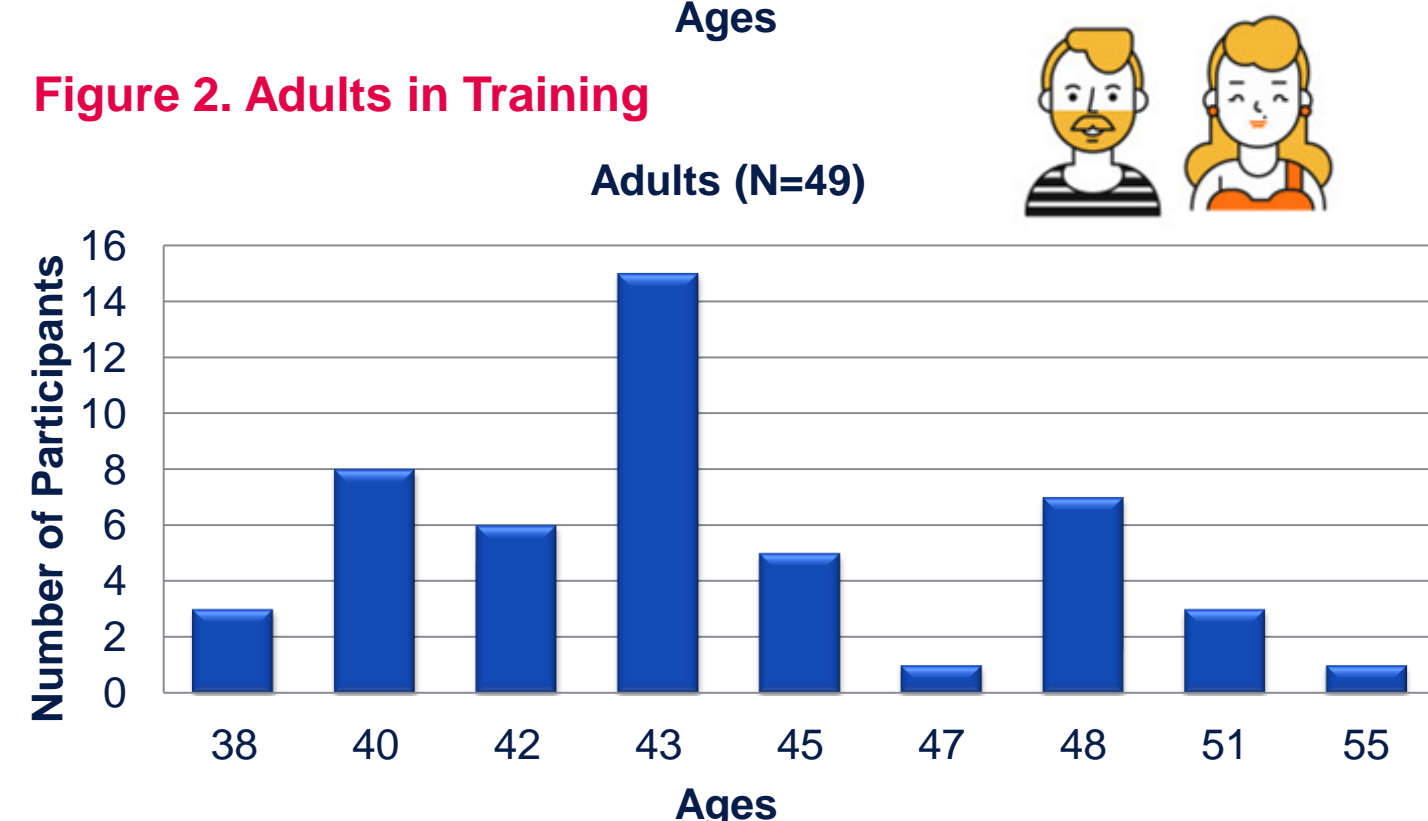
Figure 3. Some moments of Training



Figure 1. Young participants in Training



Figure 2. Adults in Training



Discussion

• We believe that the training was a prominent social support for the participants. Not only for its educational character, a guiding thread in all the initiatives offered, in the sessions, in the individual intervention and in the "Snack of Affections", but also for its functional character as a facilitator of the resolution of problems that arise in everyday life and decision-making based on credible and up-to-date information. In addition, the emotional support that was also the focus throughout this training contributed to the participants feeling esteemed, supported and cared for. Social support contributed to coping and acceptance of the condition of a person living with HIV, to the establishment of relationships of trust and to the effective adherence to antiretroviral therapy.

Conclusions

• We believe that the initiative presented here is a **good practice** in improving the quality of life of people living with HIV. Not only for the design of the action itself and the results that have been achieved, but also for the involvement of other social actors: family members, guests and other social partners. This articulation and joint effort facilitate the fight against discrimination that we know still exists in the community and which must be opposed to with actions close to that same community.

