

## **Implications of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights Violations on Care, Support and Prevention of HIV:**

### **Experiences of WLHIV on Forced and Coerced Sterilization in Kenya**

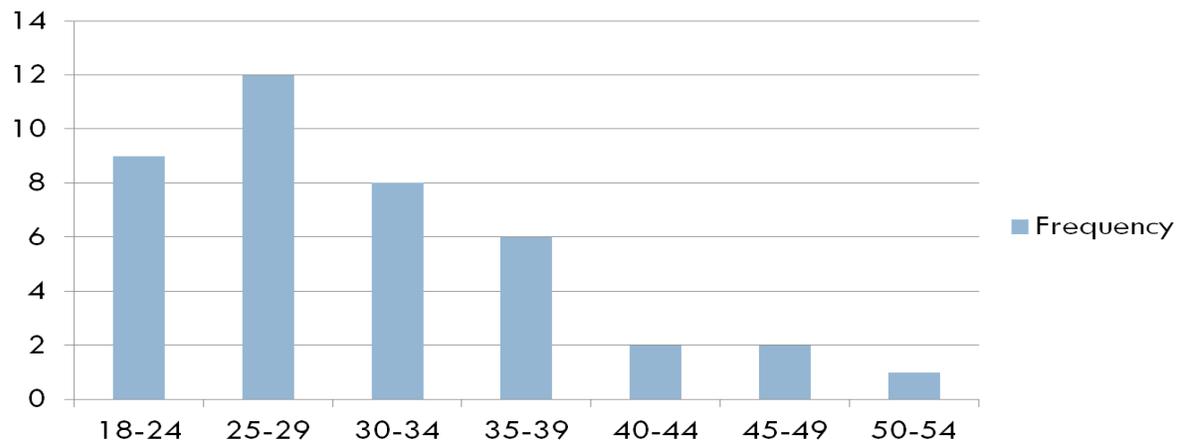
#### **Background**

When sexual reproductive health rights are respected and upheld those who need to access reproductive health care feel safe and dignified and are likely to seek these services whenever they need them. The contrary would lead to apathy and seeking alternative ways of addressing reproductive health needs which may expose those seeking care to unprofessional care leading to mortality among other health challenges. Cases of forced and coerced sterilization of WLHIV came to the fore in 2011 during support group meetings in Nairobi, Kakamega and Kisumu. A study conducted in the same year set to document evidence of such cases and initiate psychosocial support and advocacy to stop the practice

#### **Method**

This study was conducted between September and December 2011 in Nairobi and Kakamega. Respondents were identified through snowball within support groups of WLHIV. Data was collected through in-depth face to face interviews, the respondents identified places they felt comfortable to hold the interviews; this was done to protect confidentiality. Quantitative data was analyzed through graphical displays and tabulations while qualitative data was analyzed according to emerging themes which provided in-depth information to generate close to verbatim accounts of the respondent's experience.

**Age distribution at the time of non- consensual sterilization**



## **Results**

The study found out that; non- consensual sterilization was happening in both public and private hospitals, health care workers and family members were the main perpetrators, the affected women suffered psychological stress and were disinherited of their matrimonial property ,stigma and discrimination was the main driver of forced sterilization which led to many women shying away from disclosing their HIV status, finally the study highlighted how the intersection of low socio-economic status, HIV and gender increases vulnerability of WLHIV to nonconsensual sterilization.

## **Conclusion**

There is need to accelerate reproductive health rights awareness among women living with HIV, health workers and community members to sustain the gains made in HIV response.