**Barriers to Access**

The 2017 research paper identified several barriers to access of social protection and support service based on their independent research. There was focus on the experiences of members of the LGBT and PLHIV communities with the exception of data collected on PATH as this was based on members of the general population. Some of the Barriers identified are:

1. Members of the LGBT and PLHIV communities often prefer to receive services from a very small pool of providers. These include; J-FLAG, JASL, JN+ and the Ministry of Health. This preference is bred from apprehension to engage with providers outside their regular circle for fear of discrimination often in the form of being outed.
2. Discrimination and stigma continue to be a concern, however the prevalence of such cases are decreasing with increasing with increased training of health care workers and service providers by organizations like JFLAG. The main concern for LGBT and PLHIV persons is discrimination coming from security guards at public health facilities. Otherwise, the experiences using public health services were overall pleasant. There is also a fear among community members that another member also accessing the service may reveal their status.
3. There is little information available social protection services being shared and providers of those services do limited marketing and advertising. As a result there is spread of misinformation and large gaps in information received by members trying access services. For example many PATH beneficiaries are unaware that PATH offers more services outside lunch money and bus fare. PATH also provides tuition fees, free training for parents and funeral assistance. Sometimes there is insufficient information shared even at the point of contact between applicants/beneficiaries and social protection service provider. This leads to a reliance on word of mouth information regarding eligibility, types of benefits available and the application process. Figure 2 below shows service offered under PATH, Food for the Poor and JASL.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PATH** | **Food for the Poor**  | **JASL** |
| * Bus Fare
* Lunch Money
* Tuition fees for Primary to Tertiary Level Students
* Free Training for Parents
* Funeral Assistance
 | * Care Packages
* Clothes and Shoes
* Free Textbooks
* Free Counselling
* Free Testing
* Furniture
* Housing
* Medical Exams
* Pharmaceuticals (free/discounted)
 | * Advocacy
* Care Packages
* Financial Assistance
* Free Counselling
* Free HIV testing
* Free HIV treatment
* Free medical exams
* Free
* pharmaceuticals
* Redress System
* Referrals (usually to other SPS agencies)
 |

1. For some services the eligibility criteria is unclear. This leads to people avoiding the service under the incorrect assumption that they do not qualify to benefit.