Innovative strategies for promoting partners
HIV Counseling & testing in Kenya
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Outline

- Introduction

- Challenges in implementing couples HTC

- LVCT experience/Strategies with couples

- Results

- Case Scenario

- Conclusion
Distribution of new infections by mode of exposures

- Blood transfusions
- Medical injections
- No risk
- Steady Partner Heterosexual
- Fishing community Partners CHS
- Casual heterosexual sex
- Partners of prison population
- Prison population (male)
- Female partners of MSM
- MSM
- Partners of migrant farm workers
- Partners of truck drivers
- Partners of "Other" clients
- Migrant farm workers
- Long distance truck drivers
- "Other" clients
- Sex workers
- Partners IDU
- Injecting Drug Use (IDU)

Risk group

Percent
Out of the 76,300 new infections regular partnerships accounted for 44.1%, casual heterosexual sex – 20.3% Sex workers and their clients – 14.1%.
In 77% of all partnerships, respondents did not know their partner’s HIV status. Knowledge of partner HIV status – primary to engaging sexual discussions among couples.
Challenges in implementing Couples HTC

- Service providers lack both technical and structural capacity to provide partner HIV testing and counselling.
- Previous training equipped providers to offer individualized HTC services which does not fit the current recommendations from the recent studies done in Kenya.
- Strategies utilised and messaging (IEC, Media) do not necessarily target couples.
- Family Dynamics – Single parents, Separated couples and couples living apart.
LVCT Experiences/strategies Working with Couples

- Since 2007, LVCT has employed HIV partner testing strategies as an effective intervention in supporting the current study findings.
- Training of trainers, HTC providers and Supervisors done to bring them up to speed
- Three partner testing/family sites have been set up:
  - Two stand alone sites in Kisumu and Embu
  - One regular outreach in Nairobi
- Concordant and discordant support groups established
- Special events and places targeting Couples e.g. Valentine’s day and Uhuru park
Strategies

• Targeted mobilization for sexual partners in churches, workplaces, homes, moonlight, women groups, valentine day and couple outreaches

• Quality assurance and standard operating procedures for couple counseling and testing observed

• Work with sub grantees (FBO) who target couples e.g. Supkem and Hope community centre
Results

Couples HIV Testing and Counseling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Couples</th>
<th>% Couples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>12309</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>15226</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>32979</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Building Partnerships, Transforming lives
Results

Increased percentage in Number of Couples

Between 2007-2008: 24%
Between 2008-2009: 117%
Results

• Majority of HIV testing and counselling providers LVCT works with have the capacity to attend to partners

• Community strategy - Utilization of Community Health Workers in mobilizing communities for CHCT is critical

• Partner testing enhances safer sexual practices among partners
Case scenarios

**Scenario 1**

A client who was served as an individual was empowered to go for partner HTC. A month later, he came with his wife where they were tested together and got different test results.

A year later after testing together the couple reported consistent use of condoms, improved sexual discussions, disclosure to the family and hence better relationship.

They said ‘*We are grateful for testing as partners, since then we have maintained using condoms and this has helped us to remain discordant.*’
Way forward

• Couple counseling and testing should be a requirement in all settings through institutionalization in all settings

• Political good will and favorable policies for couples to be put in place

• Media campaign, radio and TV programs to advocate for partner testing

• Documentation with clear indicators

• Celebrity testing for couples
• A HIV response devoid of partner testing and Counseling is not effective.

• HTC providers require orientation, regular updates and supervision on partner testing

• Effective messaging for mobilization of couples enhances partner testing

• Partner testing enhances disclosure

• Promotes partner testing for reduction of new infections
Thank You!

• Contacts

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Transforming Lives