

Linking Data to Decision Making: Advantages to Meaningful Community Involvement in M & E

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About This Talk

- Challenges to community participation in M&E
- Case illustration
- Implications for programs and policy
- Advantages to meaningful community participation



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Challenges to Community Involvement in M&E

- Community is often relegated only to peripheral advisory roles rather than as an active contributors to the intellectual development of research
- Outcome indicators are often no well matched to prevention strategies employed in the field, restricting the role community can play in M&E – effect lag is important to keep in mind
- Capacity development needs of both researchers and community may undermine strong M&E



Advantages to Community Involvement in M&E

Involving community results in :

- The formulation of more precise questions linked to implementation issues and better methods for gathering data from end users (both clients and providers)
- Strengthened reliability and validity of the interventions studied and measures used to study them
- A focus to program feasibility, acceptability and sustainability - reflexivity



Advantages to Community Involvement in M&E

Conducted correctly, community involvement:

- Creates bridges between researchers and communities
- Facilitates reciprocal learning, and
- Assists in the culturally appropriate measurement instruments, indicators and interventions (thus making programs more relevant, effective and efficient)



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Case Illustration: GMHR Survey

- GMHR survey designed to assess the barriers to and facilitators of HIV prevention services
- 30-minute global online survey of conveniently recruited MSM (n=2,197; to date) offered in 5 languages from all regions of the world:
 - PrEP knowledge and acceptability
 - HIV-testing , condom, lubricant and treatment access
 - Perceived stigma
 - Connection to community
 - Comfort with provider
 - Experiences of homophobia



GMHR Survey: Findings to Date

- HIV testing access was associated with connection to gay community and comfort with health provider
- Among HIV-negative respondents, PrEP acceptability was associated with knowledge about PrEP, perceived stigma related to PrEP; and being out and open about being gay
- Among HIV-positive respondents, homophobia was associated with decreased access HIV treatment
- Adjusting for facilitators and barriers, compared to high-income countries, respondents in low and middle-income countries were less likely to have access to prevention services



Program and Policy Implications

- Successful roll out of PrEP for MSM will be dependent on how well we reinforce facilitators and address barriers to service access (effectiveness of PrEP is dependent its acceptability and on access to testing and ARVs)
- Target communities need to be carefully segmented given within group differences in the predictors of access
- Context matters: must work to ensure enabling prevention environments



Summary

Community involvement for this project will result in:

- More nuanced understandings about factors that help and hinder HIV prevention access as well as acceptability of prevention interventions - these may vary within target communities
- Better tailoring of approaches and matching of intervention combinations to sub groups
- Increased likelihood of ownership if community members are engaged early and in a meaningful way



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