Communication in HIV Prevention:
Empowering Communities to end the AIDS epidemic

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Outline

❖ Data on HIV epidemic

❖ From MDGs to **SDGs**

❖ Relevance of **context**ual analysis

❖ Reality and impact of **MCPs** in the **SSA** HIV epidemic

❖ Influence of **culture** on MCPs

❖ Key elements of **communication on MCPs** in SSA

❖ **Communication sensitive to culture**: why it matters

❖ **Empowering communities** to end the AIDS epidemic

Data on HIV epidemic

❖ 2015: 35m PLHIV (25m in SSA)

❖ 2013: 2.1m new infections (1.5m in SSA)

❖ 2013: 1.5m AIDS-related mortality (74% in SSA)

From MDGs to SDGs

❖ MDG 6: halt and begin to reverse the epidemic by 2015

❖ SDG target 3.3: End the AIDS epidemic by 2030

Relevance of contextual analysis

❖ Diverse epidemics

❖ Responses per epidemiological and socio-cultural context

❖ Understand behavior and culture

AIDS is primarily a behavioral issue

"…if the problem of global AIDS is seen primarily as an issue of transfer and adoption of technology…then the need to understand sexual and related behaviors in a context of family, peer group, society, and culture is limited. However, **if AIDS is seen primarily as a behavioral issue, then the need to understand behavior and culture becomes much more important**" (Edward C. Green).

Reality and impact of MCPs in the SSA HIV epidemic

❖ Overlapping sexual partnerships

❖ High rates as a particular risk

❖ Exposure during acute infection

Culture : a definition

❖ The way of life among members of a group; includes values, beliefs, norms, traditions… (Wilson & Miller)

Influence of culture on MCPs

❖ Challenge of discouraging risk behavior

❖ Myriad causes of MCPs and rootedness in culture

❖ Greater understanding of why people take risks

❖ Objective view of culture

Key elements of communication on MCPs

❖ Realistic communication

❖ Sensitive to local cultures

❖ Promote positive social norms

❖ Foster context-specific reflection

❖ Engage with social networks

Communication sensitive to culture: why it matters

❖ African culture and community networks as part of solution

❖ Tap into. Reinforce. Build on. Acknowledge. Discuss. Bring into AIDS prevention.

❖ Partner reduction: possible and effective

❖ *Self-efficacy*

Empowering communities to end the AIDS epidemic

❖ Seeds of successful HIV prevention are present in community responses.

❖ Engage with local, horizontal communication.

❖ Know community well.

Culture – HIV – Subsidiarity

❖ Free and responsible initiatives. Foster capacities.

❖ Decentralized. Home-grown.

❖ Enable and empower group to discern solutions.

❖ Cooperation. Reciprocity. Respect.

❖ Pro-active player in development.

❖ Positivity and hope. Agency.

❖ Subsidiarity and Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Unethical practices in health communication

❖ Failure to encourage changes in societal norms, contradicting truth of epidemiology and the behavioral sciences

❖ Unethical and undermines health development

Conclusion

❖ Realistic communication

❖ Engage culture

❖ Self-efficacy

❖ We can end the AIDS epidemic!

AIDS PICTURE CHANGE

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