

RADIO AS A TOOL IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

Note to file: The author of this article (Joel Odondi) has been in charge of community education, recruitment of study participants and retention of enrolled participants in Kisumu site. This included HSV2, PrEP Study conducted by Partners PrEP, PrEP Demonstration Project, and currently has the same role in POWER study and Partners Scale up Project.

USING RADIO AS A TOOL IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION.

INTRODUCTION

- Radio has been embraced as a major communication media in the country, and with the aspect of devolution it has gained momentum in different regions with the aim of reaching the rural communities in vernacular dialect.
- Most rural communities experience many challenges due to lack of information including those that could be reduced with awareness, therefore radio comes in handy to create an education and awareness to a larger population on HIV/AIDS.
- Kisumu has been very pivotal in HIV prevention research. It was one of the sites in Kenya for the Partners Study and was FDA audited
- Kisumu was one of the high enrolling sites during the Phase 3 Partners Study as well as during the Partners Demonstration Project.

BENEFITS OF RADIO AS AN INTERVENTION.

- **Coverage-** Radio covers a large population, up to that which cannot be reached physically.
- **Audience** – Radio is a visible medium to invisible public, this makes listeners to be more open on their discussions and therefore it represents a one to many communication model.
- **Ownership of the radio programs-** The ability of radio programs to be addressed in vernacular languages makes the audience identify with the program; they own it and identify with it therefore becomes a very good platform for them to air their views.
- **Efficiency and effectiveness-** this includes the ability to use minimal resources to reach a larger population, and its ability to achieve desired results in sensitization.

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- ***Enhanced focus group discussions with instant feedback.***-radio creates an enhanced interactive segment for discussion with instant feedback. The anonymity of the respondents makes the session more open to larger views.
- ***Good will***-radio creates the community goodwill which enhances relationship with other stakeholders.
- ***Creation of research awareness*** –
 - This basically points out on the importance of taking part in research and how it is important to the community at large this address misconception about research activities among the community at large.
- ***Addressing HIV/AIDS Prevention Options***
 - Introduce and provide information on PrEP new HIV prevention options for young women and the general population – PrEP and TASP
 - To ensure there is an increase in HIV and sexual health knowledge
 - Increase access to HIV services
 - Encourage correct and consistent use of condoms
 - VMMC
 - Early Sexual debut
 - Reduction of sexual partners to reduce risk
 - Older partners (sponsor)
 - To encourage HIV testing and counselling (HTC) for young people
- ***Address Community myths and misconceptions*** –
 - This involves the myths about HIV prevention, cultural factors associated with the spread of HIV and its prevention. This also addresses community ignorance.
 - HIV/AIDS is prevalent in the country and it is the countries' aim to achieve Zero new infections.

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THE TARGET AUDIENCE

- General public
- Young people who are at high risk of acquiring HIV
- Young sex workers
- Young people who inject drugs
- Discordant couples
- Other Most at risk populations (Transactional sex)

RADIO STATIONS CURRENTLY ENGAGED

- Radio Ramogi – National Coverage Royal Media Services – Luo language (Nairobi)
- Radio Mayienga Kenya Broadcasting Corporation – Luo language (National Coverage)
- KBC English Service – National coverage (English)
- Radio Nam Lolwe – National Coverage – based in Kisumu
- Dala FM – Regional Coverage (Luo language and based in Kisumu)
- Sky FM (Luo language, regional coverage based in Kisumu)
- Sahara FM – Kiswahili language regional coverage based in Kisumu.
- Lolwe Television

STANDARD INFORMATION PROVIDED DURING RADIO TALK SHOWS ON PREP AND QUESTIONS FROM THE RADIO LISTENERS

The following issues were addressed during both talk shows.

- Overview of Recommendations for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis to Prevent HIV Infection

Combination HIV Prevention

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Indications for Pre-exposure Prophylaxis

- Initiating Pre-exposure Prophylaxis

Eligibility for PrEP

Prescribing Pre-exposure Prophylaxis

Counselling Messages for PrEP

HIV Testing and Managing Suspected HIV Infection during PrEP

Improving adherence to PrEP

Discontinuing PrEP

Restarting PrEP

- PrEP in Special Circumstances
- Facilities where PrEP will be delivered and target populations
- Should a couple still use condoms when taking Prep? What causes discordance?
- Can one have sex with HIV infected person and still remain negative?

THE QUESTIONS RAISED ABOUT PREP - KENYA BROADCASTING CORPORATION NAIROBI

- Who can take PrEP?
- What are the side effects of PrEP?
- Will PrEP be abused as some have abused PEP?
- Will PrEP be put in private facilities and the chemists?
- Why put PrEP within the CCC (Can this cause stigma for the negative individuals to be mistaken as positive?)
- Will those who are taking PrEP be resistant to the medication?
- Is PrEP injected or is it oral?

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- What is the difference between PrEP and PEP?
- How long should one take PrEP?
- Can one take alcohol when on PrEP?
- Does PrEP affects ones libido?
- Can PrEP encourage one having many sexual partners?
- Can PrEP prevent STI?
- Can one take PrEP alone, not necessarily within a discordant relationship?
- Is PrEP for the sex workers who are at ongoing risk?
- Which facilities will give PrEP?
- How much does PrEP cost?

These questions were adequately address and the Phone Contact was provided for any additional information and follow-up.

The shows ended at 8:57 am.

QUESTIONS ASKED DURING OTHER RADIO TALKSHOWS

(RADIO NAM LOLWE (LUO) THURSDAY 10 PM – 11.30 PM, RADIO SAHARA - KISWAHILI) – MONDAY 8 AM – 9 AM

- SKY FM (LUO) 11.30 AM – 1.00 PM
- Is PrEP a new drug?
- Is PrEP still under research or is it a drug now?
- What are the side effects of PrEP?
- Were people involved in coming up with PrEP?
- Now that most hospitals have no drugs, will PrEP drug be available?

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- I usually stop taking drugs when I feel better without completing the dosage, will there be a problem if I do not complete my PrEP dose?
- PrEP will make more people get HIV because most people will not change their sexual behaviour and not use condom?
- Can PrEP be administered as an injection given monthly like family planning methods?
- Should I fail to take my drug one day, can I take two or double the following day?
- I may want PrEP but my husband cannot agree, how can I handle this?
- How can I know if I am still in the window period when we test discordant with my partner?
- When will the HIV drug be found? Is there any hope
- Can I take PrEP without having an HIV test?
- Is PrEP a vaccine?
- What is the difference between PEP and PrEP?
- Can I get PrEP in private hospitals?
- Can one take PrEP with alcohol?
- PrEP will be abused by young people
- Where can I get PrEP in Western Province or Rift Valley?
- Can one take PrEP on an empty stomach?
- Is PrEP taken for life?
- When can one stop and restart PrEP?
- How much is PrEP if I do not want to take it in public facilities?
- Can I use PrEP and still use condoms?
- Other than the Scale Up facilities, what plans do we have for other health facilities?
- Will PrEP affect sexual libido?

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- If I have side effects from PrEP, can I take other medications or should I just ignore them to go away?