# PROMOTING VOLUNTARY COUNSELING AND TESTING AT THE WORKPLACE: **OPERATIONS RESEARCH AMONG HOSPITAL WORKERS AND TEACHERS**

# ISSUES

- Two large and influential groups of workers—teachers and health workers—are often overlooked by HIV/AIDS workplace programs.
- It is assumed, often incorrectly, that these populations are knowledgeable about HIV-related issues and do not need targeted programming.
- Because of their status in the community, teachers, and health workers may also defer seeking HIV testing due to fears of the public's reaction.
- We describe two operations research projects promoting risk reduction among these groups.





# DESCRIPTION

- The Zambia "Caring for Caregivers" intervention was started in 2004 by the Horizons Program, in collaboration with its local partners, among 2,700 hospital employees.
- The Horizons Program started the Kenya "Teachers" Matter" intervention in 2006 with its partners among 2,000 primary and secondary school teachers.
- Both interventions used a quasi-experimental research design with baseline and follow-up data collection and were based on behavioral theory.
- Both activities used an employee-centered peer education strategy that emphasized HIV status awareness and demystifying the testing process.



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# **LESSONS LEARNT**

### Zambia

pated in the intervention. Compared to those who did not participate, hospital workers who participated in Caring for Caregivers were:

- 5.5 times more likely to be aware of postexposure prophylaxis (PEP).
- 2.5 times more likely to know what to do in case of accidental HIV exposure at work.
- 2.8 times more likely to have high HIV knowledge.
- 1.7 times less likely to have stigmatizing attitudes.
- 2.5 times more likely to have positive condom knowledge and attitudes.
- 3.9 times more likely to know where to get female condoms.
- 1.7 times more likely to have been tested for HIV (see Figure 1).
- More likely to have fewer partners and to have used condoms at last sex (samples too small for regression analysis).

### Kenya

Nearly 90 percent of targeted teachers participated in Teachers Matter intervention. Compared to those who did not participate, teachers who participated were:

- 15.5 times more likely to be aware of PEP (see Figure 2).
- 13.7 times more likely to have read the Education Sector Policy on HIV and AIDS.
- 5.2 times to have seen a female condom.
- 2.7 times to feel that management was better able to cope with HIV at the workplace than before.
- 2.3 times less likely to feel at risk for HIV.
- 1.5 times as likely to have been tested for HIV, and 3.2 times as likely to have been tested if they had multiple partners.





# RECOMMENDATIONS

- tions

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Teachers study

Debbie Gachuhi, training consultant Cornelius Mutangili, study monitor George Odingo, data administrator Data collection team Peer educators and participating teachers Partners: MoE, TSC, KIE, UNICEF USAID/PEPFAR for funding

### Health workers study Peer educators and health workers Hospital management Field teams ZHECT



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HIV workplace programs in health care facilities and in schools are feasible. The interventions can increase access to HIV information and utilization of services. • Demystifying HIV testing by demonstrating the process is an important component of the interven-

In the hospitals, only 23% attended compared to nearly 90% in the school setting. Therefore hospital-based interventions need to be more targeted to accommodate work schedules and emergency nature of a hospital environment.

Because hospital workers and teachers are particularly crucial to a country's development, these groups should be focused beneficiaries of HIV/AIDS workplace programs.

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### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the results of these studies, visit the Population Council booth (1046), visit the Population Council website at www.popcouncil.org/horizons, or for the teachers study, contact Karusa Kiragu (kkiragu@pcnairobi.org), and for the health workers study, contact Mutinta Nyumbu (Mutinta.Nyumbu@share.org.zm).

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