

**Collective Action as a Coping Mechanism for  
Serious Illnesses in Western Kenya**

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## Presenter Disclosures

### **Andrew M. Muriuki**

- (1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

**No relationships to disclose**

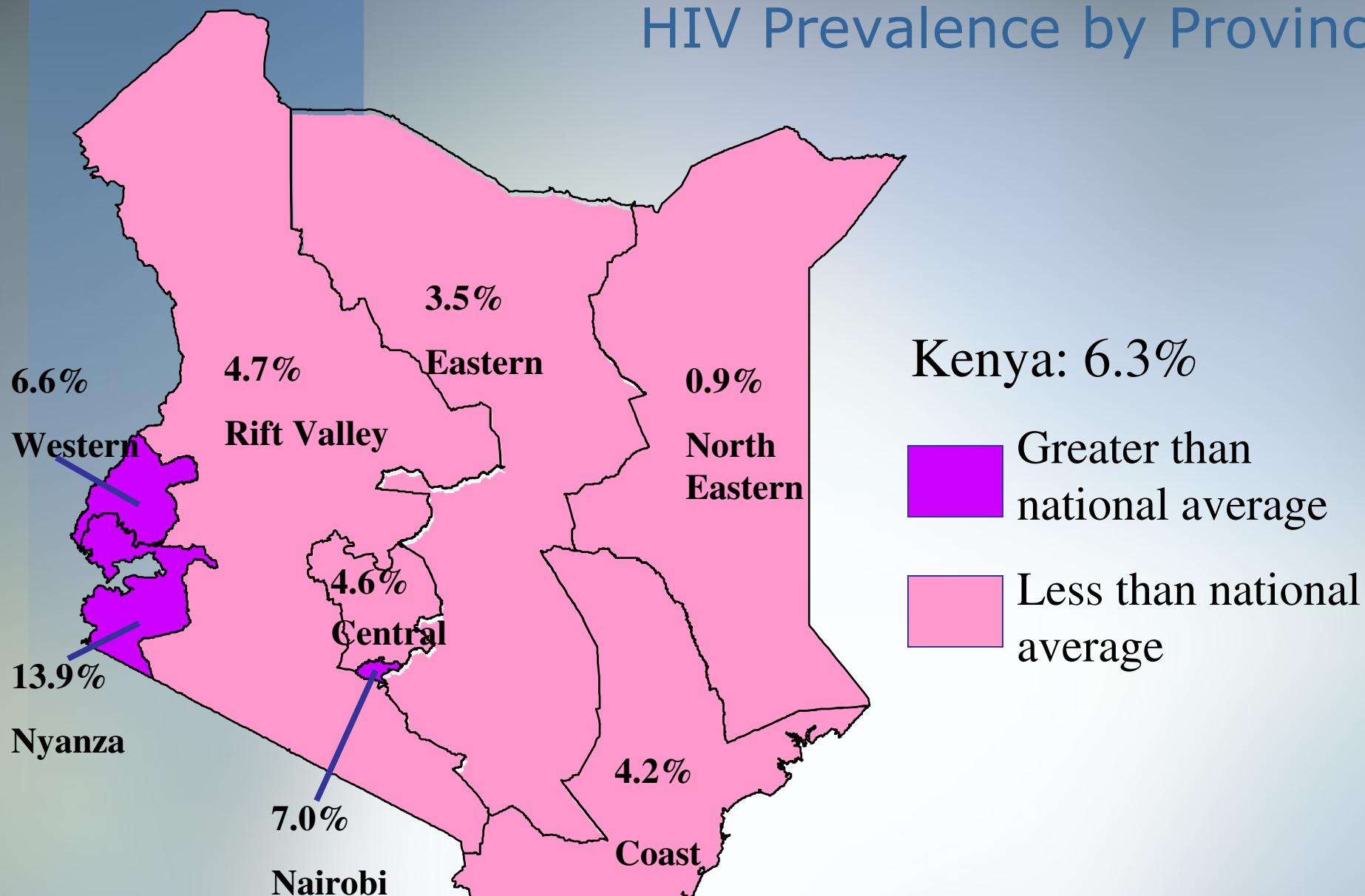
## Research Objectives

- Examine the relationship between serious illness and collective action in Western Kenya
  1. Expect greater CA to be influenced by economic and individual needs
  2. Expect gender differences in CA participation and level of activity

## Overview: HIV/AIDS

- Kenya has approx. 39 million people and a life expectancy of 58 years
- Est. 2009, 6.2% HIV prevalence rate:
  - ~1.4 million people are living with HIV
  - ~100,000 people infected in 2009 (15yrs+)
  - ~80% of those infected know their status
  - 44% of new infections among men & women who are in a union/in regular partnerships

# HIV Prevalence by Province



Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), & ICF Macro, (2010)

## Impact of HIV/AIDS

- HIV/AIDS exacts enormous:
  - Monetary, social and other costs on many households and communities
  - Households and communities health care costs have continued to increase
  - While capacity to pay for their health services has continued to decrease
  - (Jefferis, et al., 2008).

## Collective Action

- **Positive role of social capital in promoting positive social behaviors and health behavior** (Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995; Uslaner, 1998)
- **Collective action (CA) is one dimension of social capital** (Hyypa & Maki, 2003; Kawachi, Kennedy, & Glass, 1999; Staton-Tindall, et al., 2007)
  - participation in community activities
  - trust
  - friendship networks
- **Voluntary involvement of group of people, with shared interests, common action.** (Meinzen-Dick 2004, Sandler 1992, Ensminger 1992, Marshall 1998, Meinzen-Dick et al 2004)

- Nyanza Province
  - Highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate-14%
  - double the level of the next highest provinces (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) & ICF Macro, (2010))
- 2 rural villages in western Kenya
- 333 individuals in 120 households
  - Total 182 households in 2 of the villages



## Measures

- 2 types of Collective Action measures
  - 1) Type of civic group
    - Merry-go-Round
    - Microcredit and
    - Self-help group
  - 2) Activity level
    - # of civic group an individual had joined

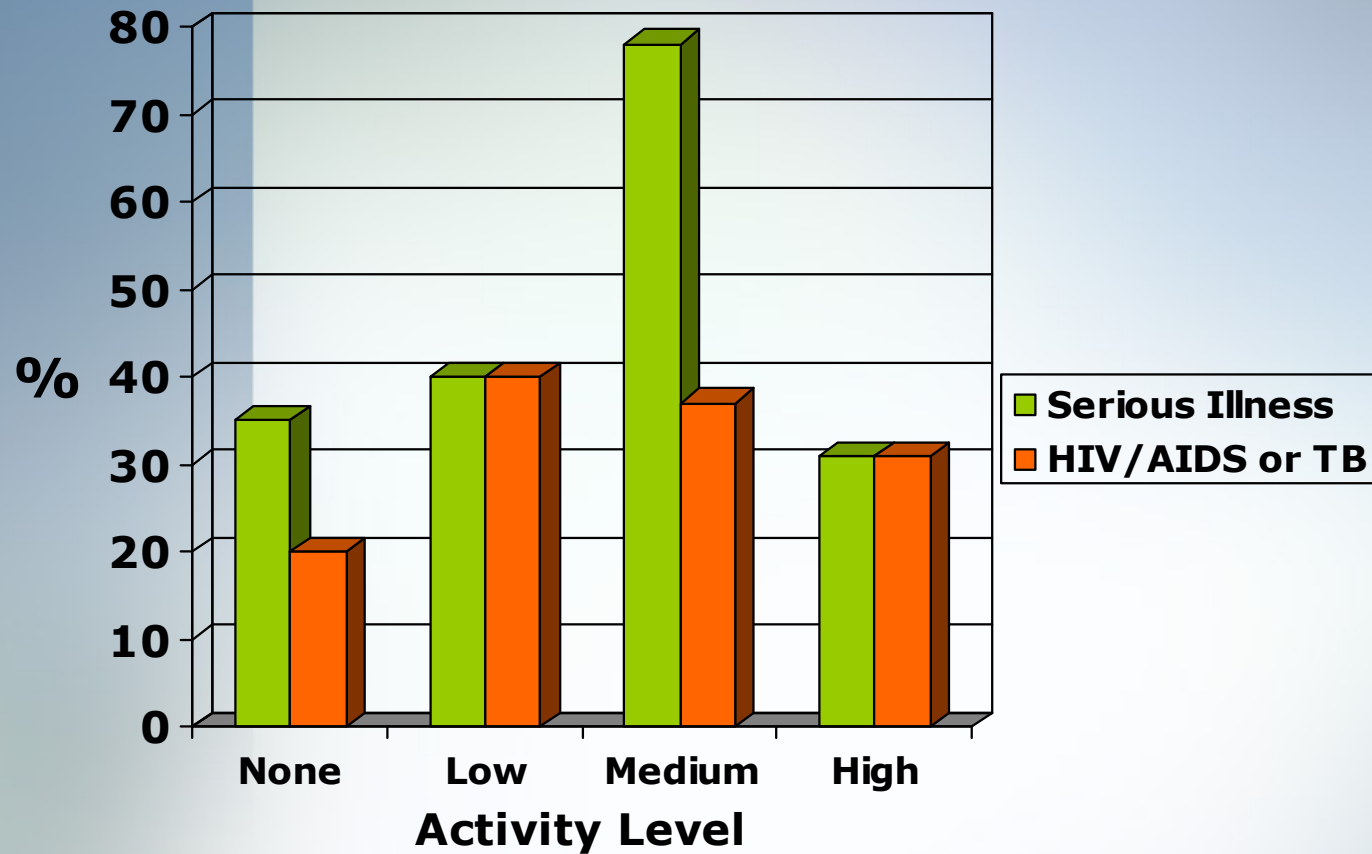
## Measures

- Household illness
  - Number of self reported illnesses
  - Number of HIV+/AIDS or TB cases
- Household characteristics
  - Average household age
  - Marital status
  - Household size (family size)

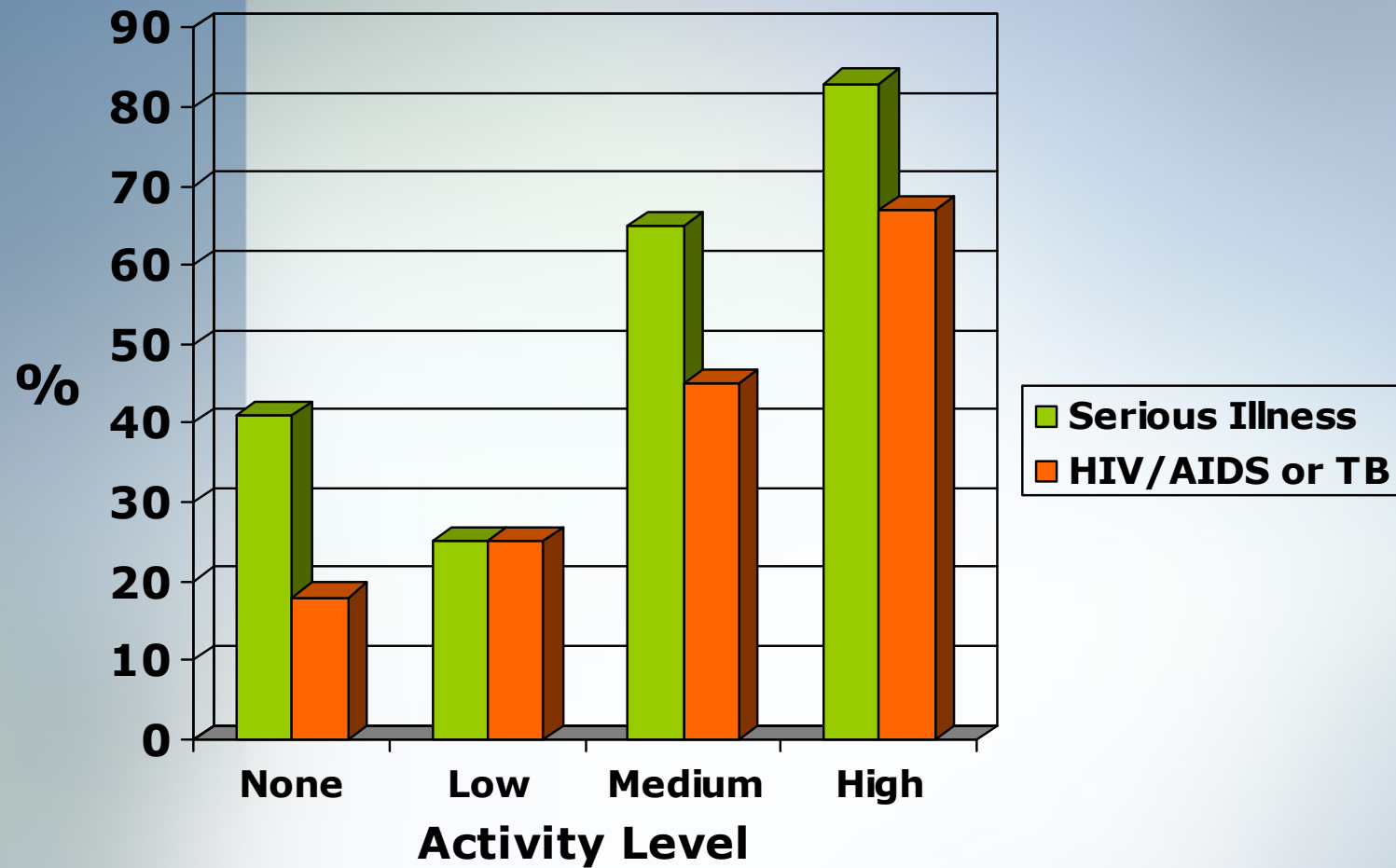
## Household with Serious Illness

- Households with
  - Serious Illnesses - 48%
  - HIV/AIDS or TB - 28%

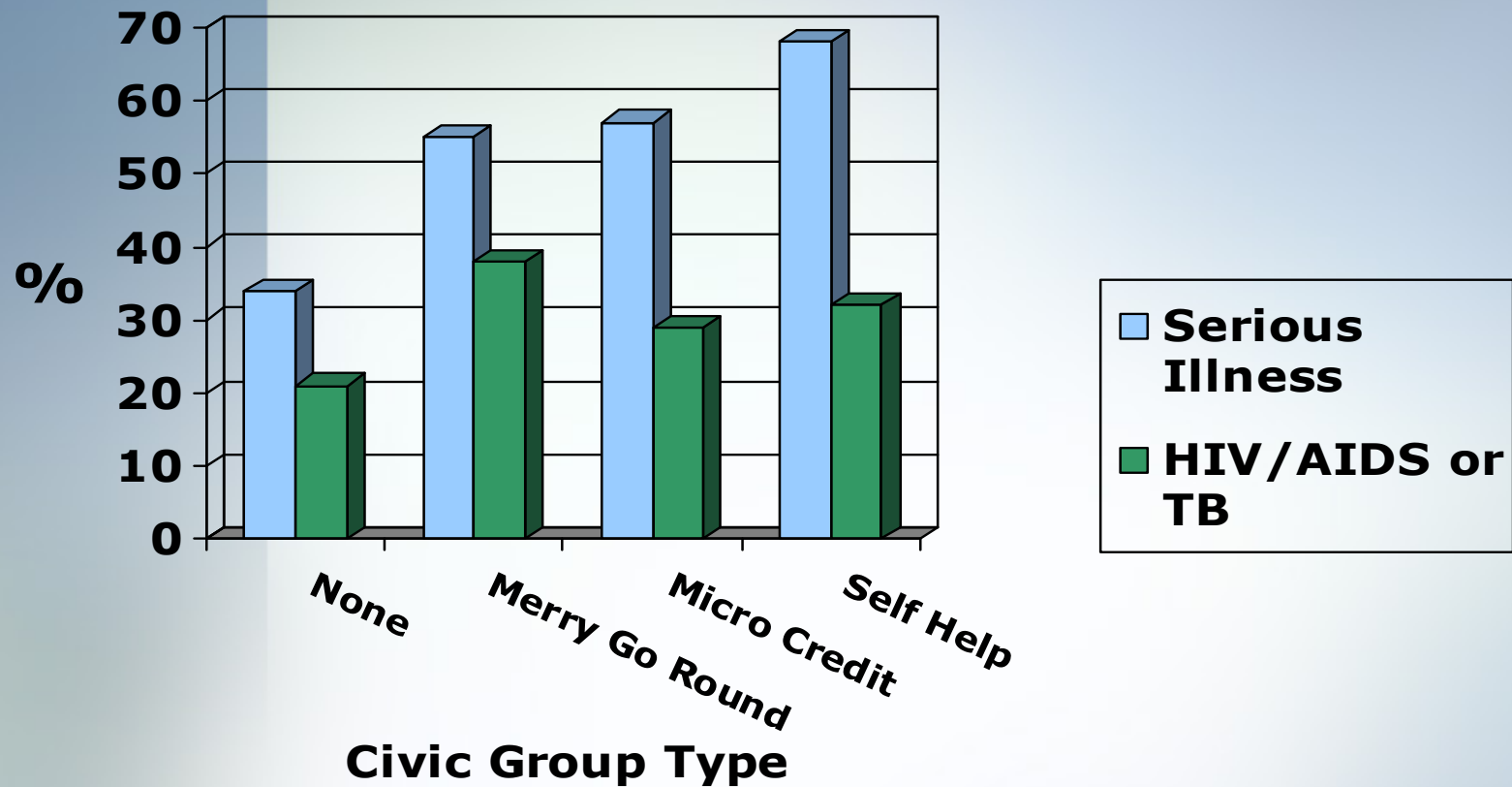
# Household illness by Women CA Activity Level



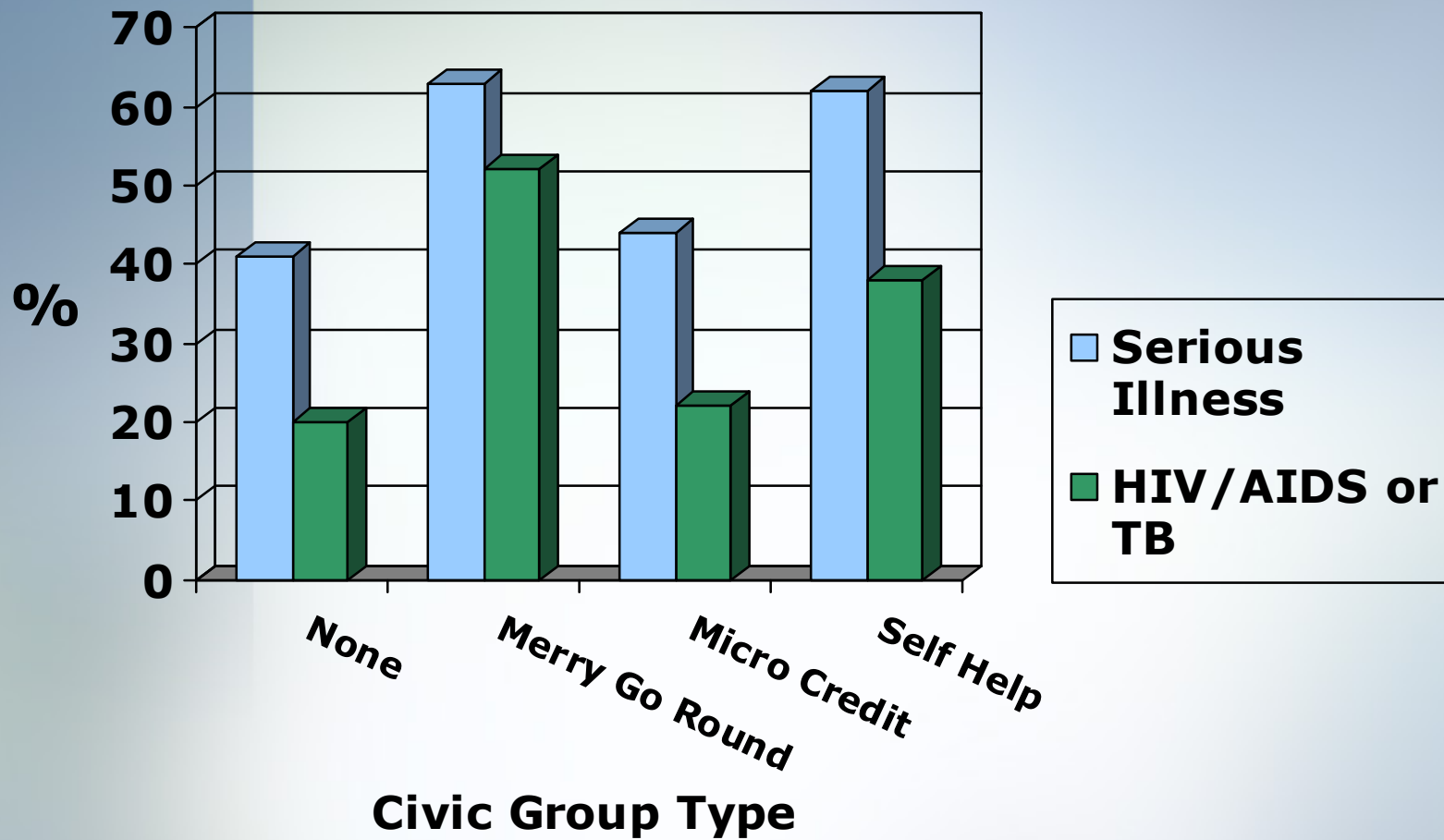
## Household illness by Men CA Activity Level



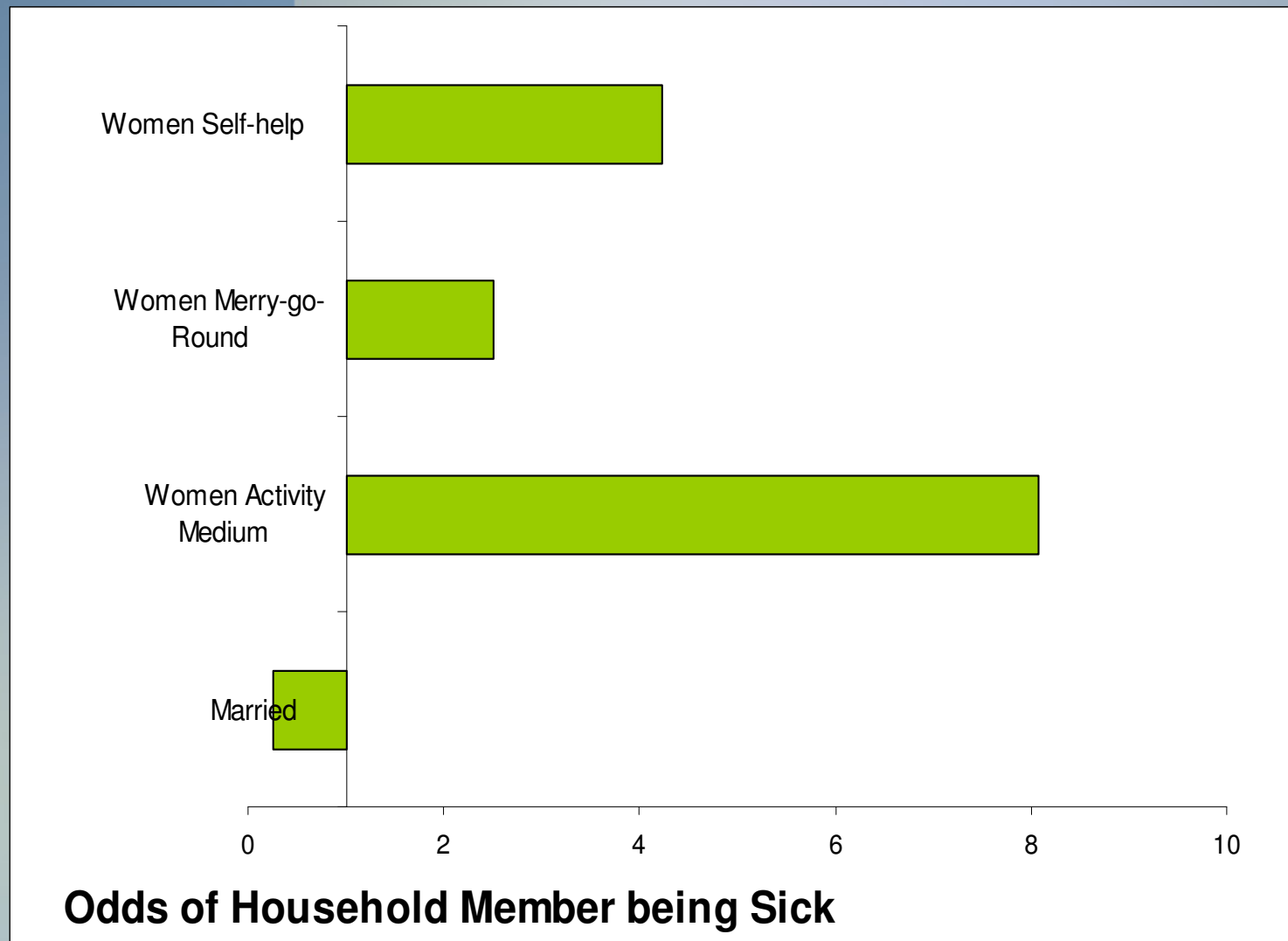
# Household illnesses by Women Civic Group



# Household illnesses by Men Civic Group

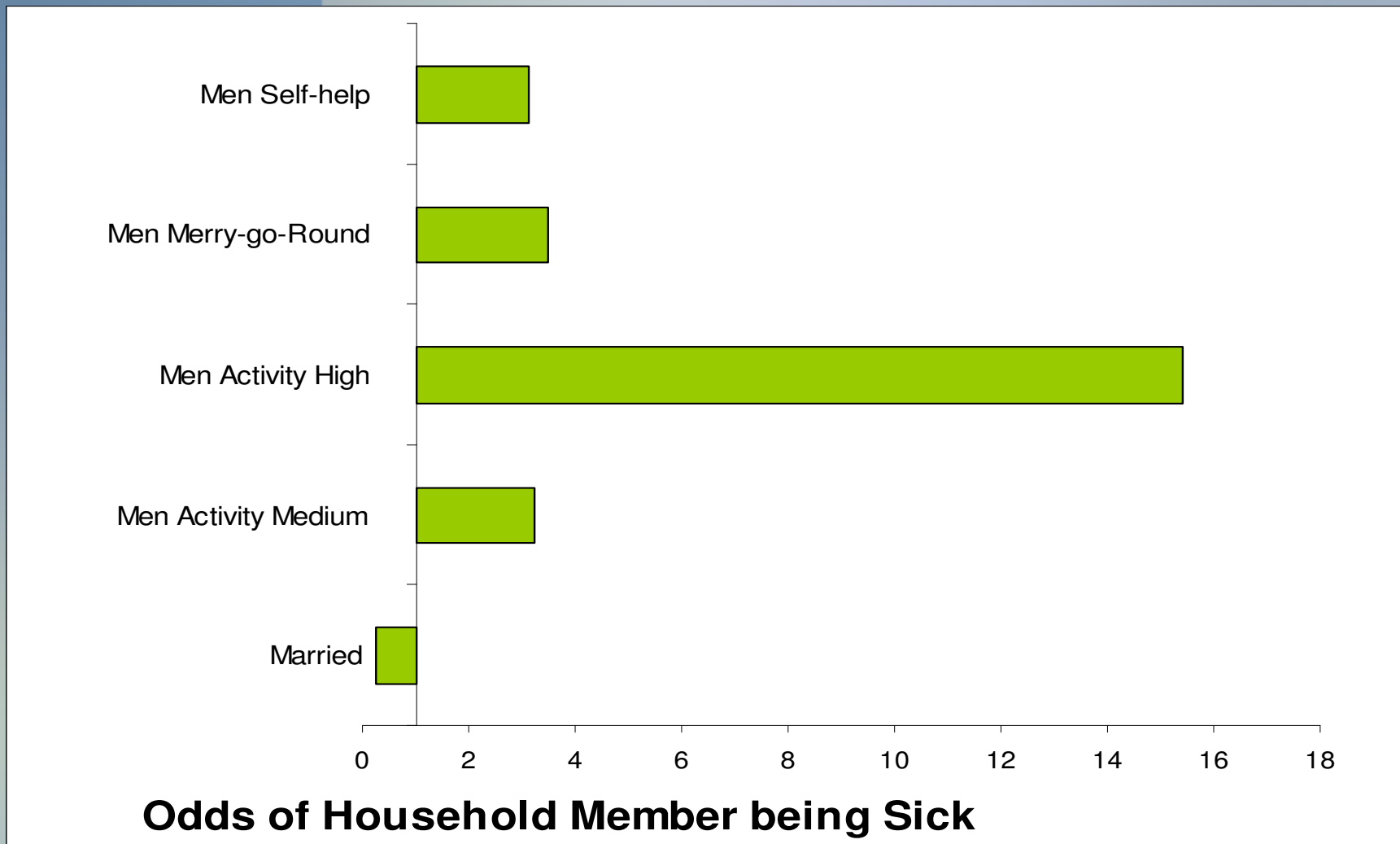


## Results: Women & Household illness

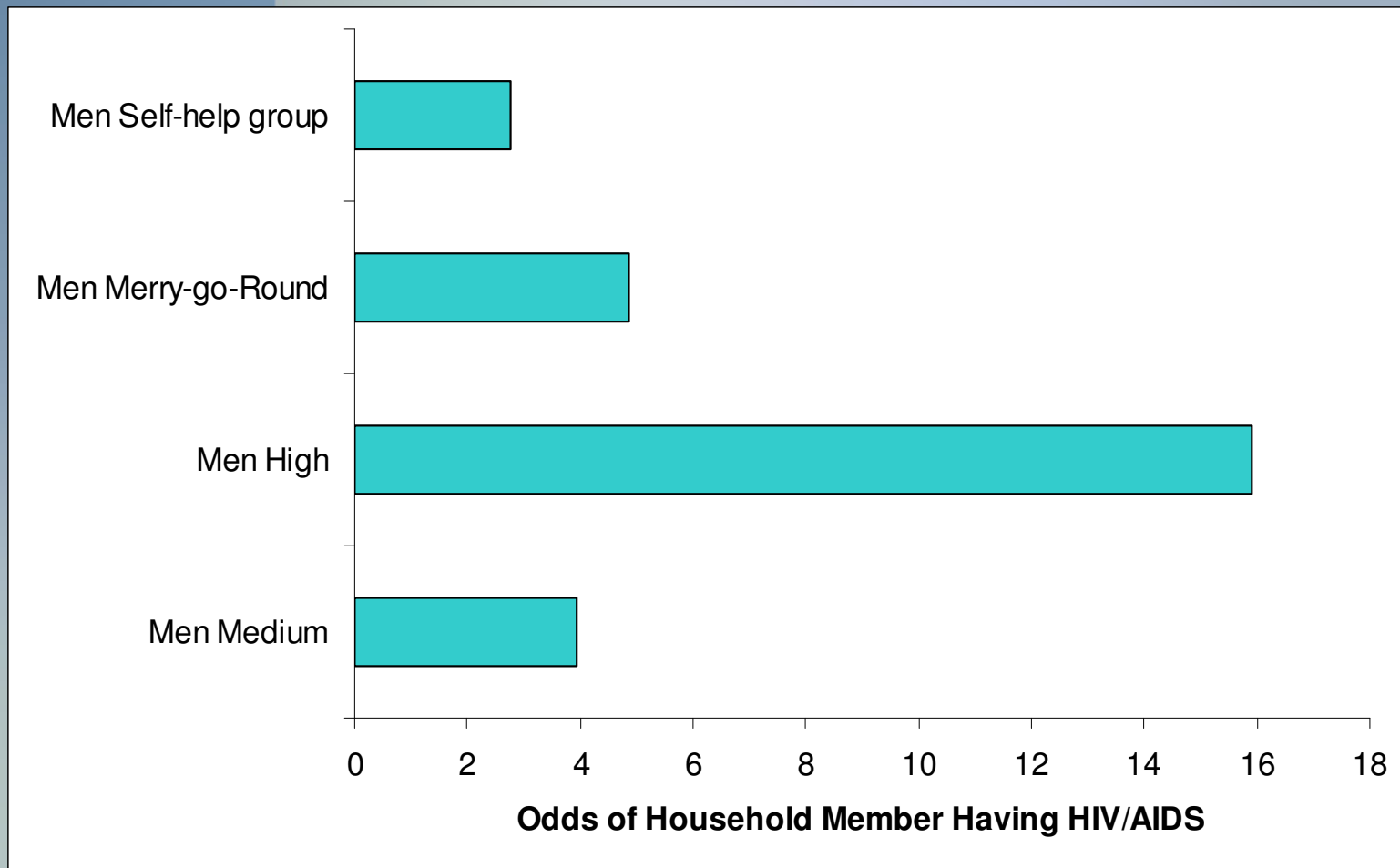




## Results: Men & Household illness



## Results: Men & HIV/AIDS or TB



## Conclusion

- The CA pattern were different for female and male in the study
- Civic groups in high stress communities may function more as emotional support groups
  - Allow the individual interaction with others not in their households
- Economic or Income only civic organizations
  - May not be beneficial in highly stressed area
  - Household illness may impact productivity

## Policy Implications

- There is need to assess the type of support that would effectively assist the most vulnerable
- Design programs that acknowledge and address both sickness and agricultural production
- Family and Household support - funeral and illness expenses

## Future Research

- Examine ways in which CA can address the risks faced by women, who are the most vulnerable in these communities
- Examine interventions that would allow the households to acquire basic assets which can generate income
- Agricultural programs that will allow these households to cultivate crops that would improve their nutrition levels

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