

Impact of Health Communication on Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision

Community Engagement		
South Africa	The B4L campaign, which features TV and radio ads, radio talk shows, billboards, posters and community mobilization and dialogues, found a noticeable change in requests for referral for MMC, even from older men. When controlling for potential confounders, the campaign had a direct impact on intention of uncircumcised men to undergo circumcision and on forming positive attitudes toward circumcision. ³	
Mass Media		
Multi-country	The 14 VMMC priority countries have a high proportion of adolescent men in the overall target population of uncircumcised men. In Tanzania, communication strategies were used to specifically target adolescents and promote VMMC services. In a 48-month period, 146,071 10- to 19-year-olds were circumcised—80% of all VMMC clients were adolescents. In Zimbabwe, in a 12-month period, 20,737 10- to 19-year-olds were circumcised, representing 48% of the total VMMC clients. One strategy in Zimbabwe included a popular Reggae artist developing songs and making appearances talking about VMMC as fashionable and positive. Campaigns were also targeted near schools, with 62% of all VMMC output attributable to school campaigns. ⁶	
Zimbabwe	A population-based survey was conducted to assess predictors of male circumcision. Seventy-one percent of men cited that the radio was a source of VMMC information, with TV being the second most common source. Eleven percent of men reported being circumcised and 49% reported being willing to be circumcised. ⁴	
Multi-country	Key informant interviews were conducted with individuals who provide technical assistance to government VMMC programs to explore the most effective program strategies for demand creation and the associated costs. Responses varied widely, but all informants suggested some or all mass media funding for VMMC should go to radio. Few suggested billboards. Most suggested other funding should go toward outreach, including print materials. SMS text messaging was mentioned by three informants. ²	
Uganda	The <i>Stand Proud, Get Circumcised</i> campaign used a mix of radio, billboards, posters, TV, newspaper ads and community mobilization to promote MMC as a way to reduce risk of HIV infection. When evaluated, exposure to any HIV communication was associated with higher intentions to circumcise among uncircumcised male respondents ($p < 0.001$). Uncircumcised males who were exposed to <i>Stand Proud, Get Circumcised</i> were 60% more likely than their unexposed counterparts to intend to get circumcised in the next 12 months and three times more likely than those who were not exposed to know that male circumcision reduces HIV, two times more likely to state that male circumcision is beneficial and two times more likely to discuss male circumcision with others. ¹	
Kenya	A case study describes the training of journalists in Kenya to report positively and knowledgeably about VMMC. The period from 2008-2012 is described, demonstrating capacity strengthening efforts aimed at journalists to report effectively on VMMC. A media content analysis revealed that 20 articles appeared in Kenya's print media during a nine-month period and there were no instances of inaccurate or negative coverage, as a result of the training. ⁵	
Other		
Multi-country	Creating sustained demand for VMMC is difficult, but essential to the success of scale-up. Formative research to guide the design of service delivery is critical. Demand creation messages and approaches need to be age-specific. Older men can be targeted by positioning VMMC as a lifestyle choice with health benefits beyond HIV. Barriers for older men include age-related stigma and the perception that they are at lower risk. ⁷	



Acronyms

AHR	Adjusted hazard ratio	MSG	Mother support groups
AOR	Adjusted odds ratio	MSM	Men who have sex with men
ANC	Antenatal care	MSPs	Multiple sex partners
ART	Antiretroviral therapy	OR	Odds ratio
ARV	Antiretroviral	PA	Patient advocate
B4L	Brothers 4 Life	PHW	Peer health worker
BCC	Behavior change communication	PLHIV	People living with HIV
CBART	Community-based antiretroviral therapy	PMTCT	Prevention of mother-to-child transmission
CHW	Community health worker	PSA	Public service announcement
DiC	Drop-in center	PWID	People who inject drugs
EE	Entertainment education	RCT	Randomized control trial
FSW	Female sex worker	SBCC	Social and behavior change communication
HTC	HIV testing and counseling	SMS	Short message service
IPC	Interpersonal communication	STI	Sexually transmitted infection
Mtf	Male-to-female	VCT	Voluntary counseling and testing
MMC	Medical male circumcision	VMMC	Voluntary medical male circumcision

Citations

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³Collinge, J (2013). Talking Man-to-Man: The Story of Brothers for Life. South Africa: JHHESA.

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⁵NASCOP. (2013). Engaging Local Media in VMMC Scale-Up: A Case Study from Kenya.

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⁷USAID. Creating Demand for Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision Services. *PLoS Collections*.

