

TITLE: "IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF AN HIV AND AIDS INTERVENTION (JOIN IN CIRCUIT ON AIDS, LOVE AND SEXUALITY) - A CASE STUDY OF ZAMBIA"

Introduction: Prevention of HIV is considerably cost-effective than treatment and therefore assessment of the impact of an intervention remains crucial in monitoring of the progress of indicators that can be attributed to the intervention, an activity, a project, or the whole programme. To assist nations to achieve Goal 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, organizations in the HIV and AIDS industry must ensure that the resources are used effectively and efficiently. This study is a descriptive analysis of the impact of an HIV intervention called Join In Circuit (J-IC) on AIDS, Love and Sexuality; a portable tool comprising of 7 stations reflecting on interactive learning methods, at which facilitators help participants to learn critical information about HIV and AIDS and Reproductive Health. Through interactive problem-solving games and discussions, key prevention messages are communicated to groups at risk of HIV.

General Objective: The general objective of the study was to assess the impact of the HIV intervention on participants.

Specific Objectives: To achieve the general objective, 3 specific objectives were set which were:

1. To assess the HIV related knowledge of secondary school pupils aged 14 – 24
2. To assess HIV related attitudes among secondary school pupils
3. To determine HIV related cultural beliefs among secondary school pupils

Method: The study was conducted by comparing HIV-related knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs among High school pupils aged 14 - 24 years between a school that was

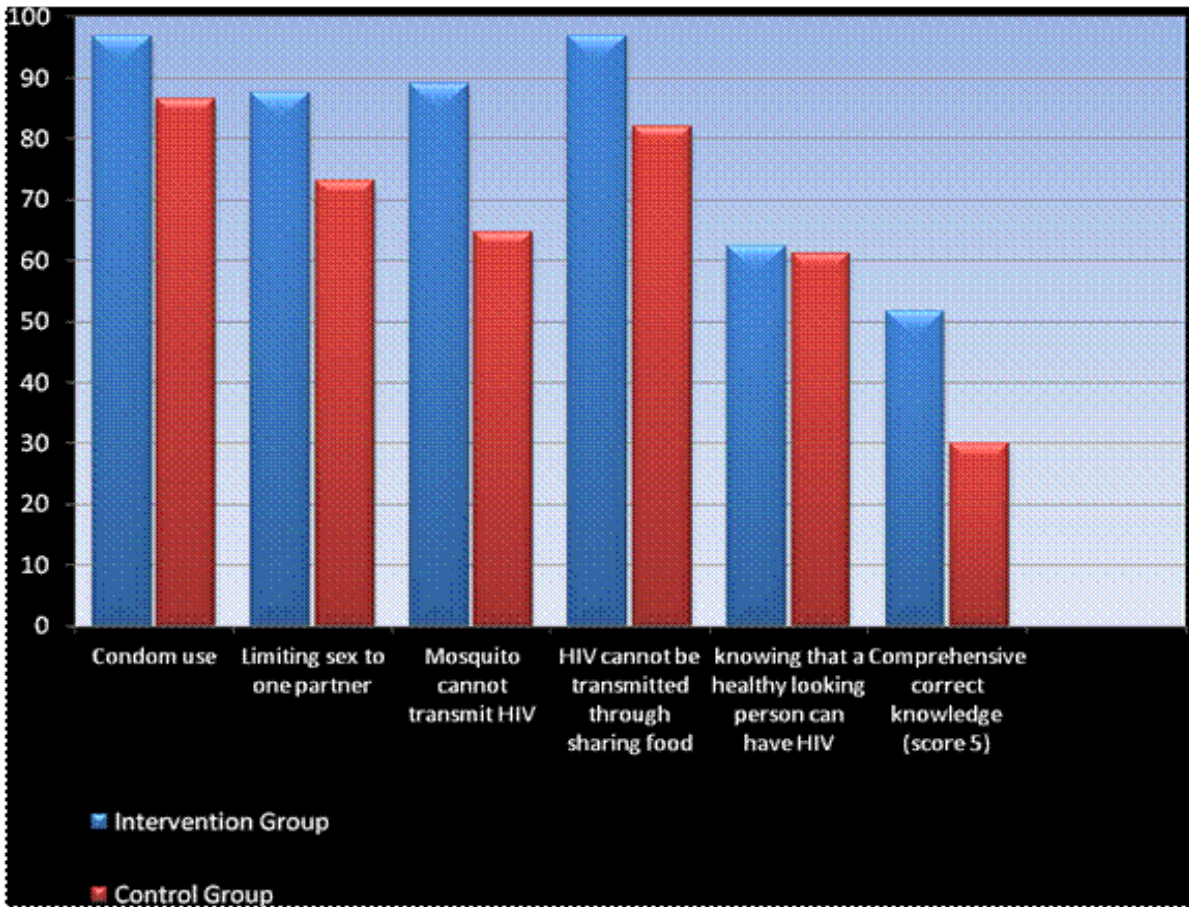
exposed to an intervention (intervention group), and another that was not exposed (control group); Both schools from Livingstone in Zambia. The joint United Nations programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) (2006) indicators of comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV and AIDS were used in the assessment by the researcher. The indicators are:

1. Being able to identify that using condoms and limiting sex to one faithful, uninfected partner are the ONLY two ways to prevent sexual transmission of HIV;
2. Being able to reject at least two common local misconceptions that mosquitos transmit HIV and that sharing food with an infected person transmits HIV, and;
3. Knowing that a healthy –looking person can have HIV.

Results: Results from descriptive analysis found a significant association between exposure to the intervention and having comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV and AIDS. Pupils in the intervention group had a better comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV and AIDS compared to those in the control group. The percentage of respondents in the intervention group who correctly identified the two major ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV (using condoms and limiting sex to one faithful, uninfected partner), who rejected the two common local misconceptions about HIV transmission (mosquito bites and sharing food), and who knew that a healthy-looking person can have HIV was higher than that of the respondents in the control group (51.6% and 20.9% respectively). The difference between schools was statistically significant. Compared to pupils in the control group, pupils in the intervention group were about 3 times more likely to have better comprehensive correct knowledge, 1.1 times more likely

to have better knowledge of HIV transmission, 1.3 times more likely to have better knowledge of HIV prevention, 1.2 times more likely to have positive HIV related attitude and about 2 times more likely to reject common local misconceptions and beliefs about HIV.

The bar chart below shows the comparison in percentage of respondents in the intervention group and those in the control group who had comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV



Conclusion: As sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the continent move from an emergency response to a long term sustainable response to HIV, it is important that players in the HIV and AIDS response identify and use interventions that have strong

evidence of impact on knowledge and behaviours of people. This will assist nations to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Continued HIV interventions and researches is warranted as there are clear patterns of HIV related knowledge increase associated with exposure to HIV interventions that highlight opportunities for more tailored prevention efforts surrounding HIV knowledge, attitudes, and sexual risk-taking behavior.