

PRIMARY SCHOOL ACTION FOR BETTER HEALTH 12-18 MONTH EVALUATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communication and Pursuing Information

- Compared to wave 1 there were sizable and significant gains in pupil activity related to communication and pursuing information. This was greater in target than control schools and increased across waves of data collection.
- While at wave 1 pupils reported mass media as the **major source of information** about HIV and AIDS, by wave 2 and continuing in wave 3, teachers and school texts were ranked among the major sources of information.
- Pupils ranked teachers and school clubs as the **most useful sources of information**.
- For both boys and girls female relatives remained the preferred group for communication about sexual matters.
- Pupils in the Additional Teacher variation were more likely to report communicating with male relatives and community members than pupils in other variations.

Knowledge

- At wave 1 the average pupil knowledge scores were 50% (i.e. half of questions answered correctly) with no differences between control and target schools. There were no significant changes in these scores across waves of data collection.
- Analysis of focus group discussions however, suggested sizable and important gains in knowledge from wave 1 to wave 3.
- At wave 1 pupils evidenced considerable confusion and uncertainty about HIV transmission and protection. They were asking for teachers and other leaders to provide them with correct information. At wave 3, there was little misinformation. In addition, pupils were able to make logical deductions from and critical assessments of what they have heard, challenging the information they had received when it was inconsistent or illogical.
- Pupils appear unable to translate their knowledge into correct answers to true/false, yes/no questions.

Main Modes of Prevention: Abstinence

- At all waves of data collection teachers and community leaders presented abstinence as the only truly effective method of preventing transmission and acquisition of HIV.
- Over time teachers gradually incorporated specific teaching strategies to help pupils remain abstinent as well as increase their sense of personal control and efficacy when it came to sexual decision-making.
 - Sense of personal agency in making sexual decisions was higher among boys in Peer Supporter schools in Rift Valley than in the Rift Control schools.

- By wave 3 pupils and teachers alike were listing positive reasons for abstaining compared to wave 1 and still wave 2 when the main reason for abstinence was to avoid AIDS and death.
- Sexual Debut
 - In Nyanza:
 - The number of boys initiating sexual activity in the last year remained consistent across waves of data collection in target schools, however, in control schools there was an increase.
 - For girls, there was a decrease in the number initiating sexual activity in the last year in both target and control schools with fewer reporting initiating in target than control schools at wave 3.
 - The results for Rift Schools were less encouraging. There was a significant decrease in boys in control schools (compared to target schools) reporting sexual debut at the final wave of data collection.
 - Reports of recent sexual activity did not decrease in any schools.

Main Modes of Prevention: Condom Use

- Wave 1 and 2 analyses suggested discouraging news about condoms. The content of messages delivered to youth was largely negative and at times inaccurate. Teachers struggled with the issue of condoms, not knowing how or if they should talk about them to pupils. Pupils recognized the discomfort on the part of adults but still looked to them for the truth about condoms.
- By wave 3, although teachers still did not publicly support teaching pupils about condoms there appeared to be more open talk of condoms with youth. While discussions tended to focus on persuading youth against condom use there were more hints of attempts by teachers to acknowledge the preventive nature of condoms for pupils who were already sexually active.
 - When speaking to sexually active youth some teachers said that although condoms were not perfect (i.e. were porous and had tiny holes), the youth must use them because they were the only chance they had to potentially prevent infection.
 - Teachers did tell youth that condoms were for adults for the purpose of family planning.
- In focus groups:
 - Pupils repeatedly questioned what they had been taught and demonstrated sound skills of logical thinking – e.g. if condoms are porous or have holes why do adults use them?
 - Pupils questioned the difference in messages heard on the radio, from hospitals and clinics and those heard in school.
 - Pupils asked numerous questions about condoms. This was the single topic about which they were most likely to want more information.
- At wave 3, pupils who were sexually experienced had more accurate knowledge about condoms and held more accepting attitudes about condoms than those who had never engaged in sexually activity. The difference was stronger in target than control schools.

PSABH Impact and Receptivity in Schools

- Teachers are:
 - Responding well and are taking up the programme in their schools.
 - Using the skills they were taught such as infusion and integration, participatory teaching and learning through song, drama, and debate.
 - Identifying fewer barriers to teaching about HIV and AIDS in target than control schools.
- There are a few complaints:
 - Book boxes take too long to get to the schools and a small number of schools still say they have none.
 - The training was ‘dense,’ i.e., a great deal of information in a short time.
- A sign of success is that control schools have been clamoring for training and many have found ways to get their teachers trained.
- As a result of teacher transfers, PSABH is being spread to new schools.

HIV and AIDS Programming in Schools

- The amount of HIV and AIDS programming in schools is higher:
 - The longer the programme has been in place;
 - In target schools than controls;
 - In schools with more trained teachers, i.e., programming is significantly higher in the Additional Teacher than in other target variations;
 - In schools with peer supporters than those with only trained teachers.
- 18 months after Course A, school characteristics such as standing on KCPE exams, pupil/teacher ratio, etc. no longer influence the degree of programming present in the school, i.e., given enough time, PSABH programming gets “up and running” equally well in schools with diverse characteristics.
- At wave 1 there was evidence of a strong sexual script whereby playing sex occurred in a series of progressive steps starting with a boy initiating contact with a girl and proceeding from there and ending in the act of playing sex. Pupils at wave 1 expressed lack of ability to redirect this script. At wave 3 however, there was considerable evidence from both quantitative and qualitative data to indicate that teachers were teaching specific strategies for resisting pressures to play sex thereby facilitating redirection of the sexual script. Interviews and focus group discussions provided substantial testimonials from pupils about such teaching.

Programme Variations

- There were few significant differences in the outcomes of the different variations; however, when there were differences, it was most often the Additional Teacher variations that fared the best.
- Health workers and church leaders were reported as visiting schools in each variation, however, they visited significantly more schools when they were specifically directed to as part of PSABH (health workers visited over 90% of schools in the Health Worker variation and church leaders visited 71% in their variation).
 - The topics discussed and the messages brought by health workers and church leaders were not influenced by PSABH training.

- Both made abstinence the dominant prevention message.
- In the minority of cases where health workers spoke about condoms, they provided factual information and addressed individual questions (e.g., they told girls that even if a condom were to come off and stay in their vagina it was not a cause for great concern and that they could easily remove it with their fingers).
- Church leaders placed abstinence within a religious context, providing biblical and faith-based reasons for abstaining as compared to reasons focusing on ‘fear of AIDS.’
- Peer supporters were well received by pupils and teachers alike and had a positive impact on the level of programming in the school and on pupil KAB.
 - Pupils rated peer supporters highly on all characteristics and tasks.
 - Peer supporters more than teachers were able to speak directly to pupils about:
 - Personal concerns related to family, sex, boyfriends/girlfriends, and condoms;
 - Dealing with pressures to be sexually active.
 - Selection of peer supporters who can provide the best role models with respect to sexual activity is important. Pupils question when peer supporters say one thing and do another.

Overall

- PSABH is effective in getting HIV and AIDS programming into schools.
- Schools are receptive to PSABH training and programming.
- Teachers and schools readily accept and teach components of the PSABH programme with which they agree – e.g. abstinence and strategies for abstinence – but not those with which they do not agree – e.g. information about condoms.
- Considering both survey and focus group data there is evidence to support the conclusion that pupil knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to HIV transmission are positively affected by PSABH.