



More than just a game: evaluating the use of games to reduce HIV incidence through Yes!Tanzania's Community Sport and Sexual Health Project

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

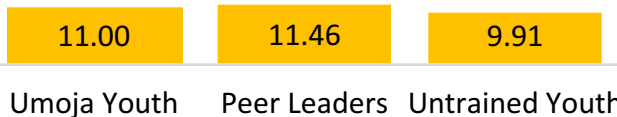
Yes!Tanzania's Community Sport for Sexual Health Project aims to significantly reduce the number of new HIV infections amongst 15-24 year olds in Arusha's most disadvantaged communities, by using games to increase comprehensive knowledge about HIV and AIDS, reduce gender inequality, reduce risky behaviour associated with the contraction of sexually transmitted infections and increase frequency and consistency of condom use.

Evaluation Findings

1 Games are an effective and well-received method for teaching youth about HIV.

Youth trained through the CSSHP did better in an assessment of HIV knowledge (Figure 1) and this was corroborated by participant comments in the focus group discussions. Games were a well received educational tool; youth found them engaging, enjoyable and memorable.

The curriculum does, however, focus unduly on myth-busting and this should be reviewed to maximise the benefit of learning through games.



Umoja Youth Peer Leaders Untrained Youth

Figure 1: HIV scores by training received

2 The CSSHP has the potential to tackle gender inequality, but this is not being fully realised.

There was no substantial difference in gender attitudes between those who were trained and were not trained through the CSSHP.

The CSSHP assumes that playing mixed sport will address gender inequitable norms. There is no evidence to suggest that this is true in the case of the CSSHP. This may be because it involves non-sport specific games that do not give adequate opportunity to subvert gender stereotypes.

However, female youth who had the opportunity to put leadership training into practice reported challenging gender stereotypes within the wider community, while youth who played a game directly addressing gender did enjoy and recall the game.

3 Games that develop youth agency are the most effective at affecting behaviour change.

Girls reported behaviour change as a result of the game Sugar Daddy, Sugar Mummy. This game gave youth the opportunity to practice life skills such as assertiveness, thereby developing youth agency. This then meant girls were able to exercise this agency when faced with a real-life scenario.

From the game Sugar Daddy Sugar Mummy, you may find you're coming from school heading home, the car is passing and then start calling you, he is saying "Come I give you life", for now I understand myself, "I don't take lift, even Pepsi and chips I don't want".

4 There is a missed opportunity to address HIV stigma and interpersonal relationships.

When prompted to discuss what was missing from the CSSHP, youth noted that they felt that the influence of peer groups and of "love" on decision making and behaviour was of particular importance. This was supported by the successes of Sugar Daddy, Sugar Mummy which not only developed agency but also allowed youth to practice decision making around interpersonal relationships.

There is a striking lack of discourses about HIV stigma and PLHIV in the CSSHP. Indeed, there are indications that a lack of clarity in some messages may be contributing to stigmatising attitudes. HIV stigma is a well-established barrier to behaviour change, and for the CSSHP to be effective future work must also include work to tackle HIV stigma.

Recommendations

Synthesising the findings from the CSSHP evaluation with recommendations from the wider Sport for Development and HIV behaviour change literature culminated in the production of a Logic Model for the CSSHP (Figure 2). Specific recommendations for how to operationalise these activities are presented below.

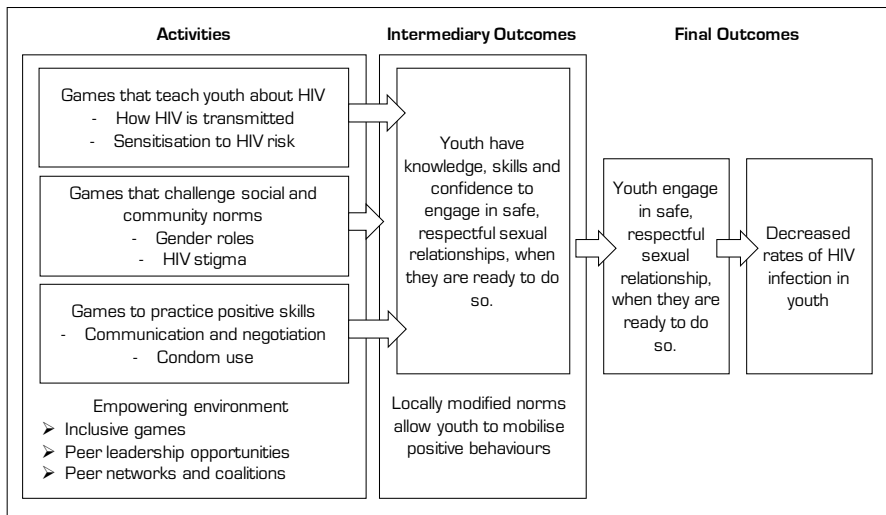


Figure 2: Operational Logic Model for CSSHP

Games as a message: gender, stigma and knowledge



1. Ensure games have clearly articulated objectives, and are tested for validity
2. Develop games that sensitise youth to their HIV risk
3. Tackle misconceptions about HIV positively, focusing on how HIV is transmitted
4. Tackle gender stereotypes, building on games that challenge gender roles
5. Support PLHIV by developing games that emphasise testing and treatment
6. Design games that reflect real life scenarios, as identified by youth participants

Games to develop life skills

1. Identify practical scenarios that youth face where they need to make decisions or exercise agency, and then develop games where they can practice this behaviour
2. Build on existing games that address interpersonal relationships by considering factors such as “love” and its role in decision making



Games as spaces for empowerment



1. Increase opportunities for youth to lead within games, beyond peer leader roles
2. Develop coaches and peer leaders to strengthen their competence and confidence in delivering inclusive coaching
3. Consider integrating the CSSHP into existing sport structures to capitalise on opportunities to build social networks and coalitions through teams

Summary: The evaluation supports the body of evidence that recognises that games are an effective and youth-friendly space for HIV education. The content of HIV curriculums must be critically examined, and tested for relevance and validity. Games must extend beyond an educational focus, and should be conceptualised as spaces for challenging structural factors that prevent behaviour change such as gender norms and HIV stigma, for practicing behaviours and life skills, and for developing confidence and agency.