

Empowering young experts: Training adolescent girls and young women to be agents of change can increase oral PrEP uptake

poster

PED1203

Definate Nhamo¹, Takudzwa Mamvuto¹, Naledi Katsande¹, Bridget Chiururwi¹, Michele Lanham², Giuliana Morales², Morgan Garcia²

AIDS2020

BACKGROUND

Zimbabwe started scaling up PrEP in 2018.

HIV prevalence among 15 – 19 and 20-25 year olds is 3.1% and 8.1% respectively.

Inadequate information, coupled with barriers to accessing HIV prevention services makes it difficult for adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) to protect themselves against HIV.

Building knowledge and skills to engage in advocacy and peer support around HIV prevention has potential to change this dynamic and increase uptake of prevention services, including oral PrEP.

METHODS

In August 2019, 17 ambassadors were trained in the OPTIONS HIV prevention Ambassador Training in Mazowe district, Zimbabwe.

The ambassadors were already training AGYW about PrEP in the district but wanted additional training.

Knowledge and attitudes on sexual and reproductive health were assessed before and after training through a pre/post survey specifically adapted for the training.

To understand the impact of the training, post-training follow up assessments were conducted at 6 weeks and four months.

RESULTS



At four months, ambassadors reported using the toolkit to prepare for monthly literacy sessions



Most useful topics included; myths and misconceptions about PrEP and HIV



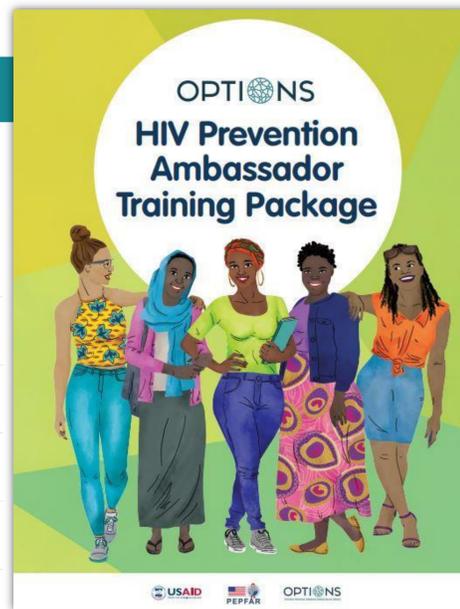
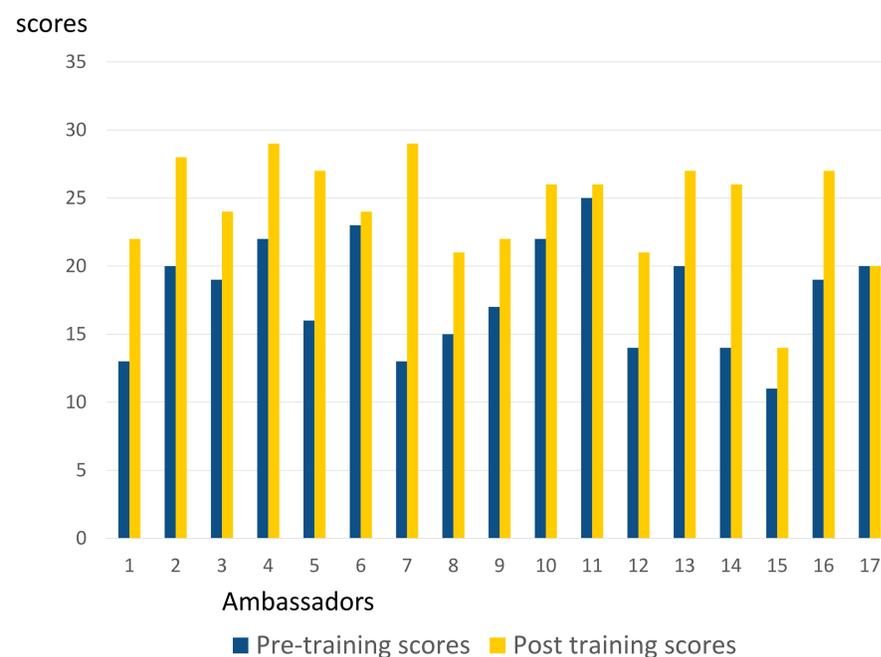
Ambassadors reported training materials provided tips for using PrEP



Ambassadors reported that the training and toolkits they received, promoted their status in the community, making them feel like professionals equipped with HIV and prevention skills and tools

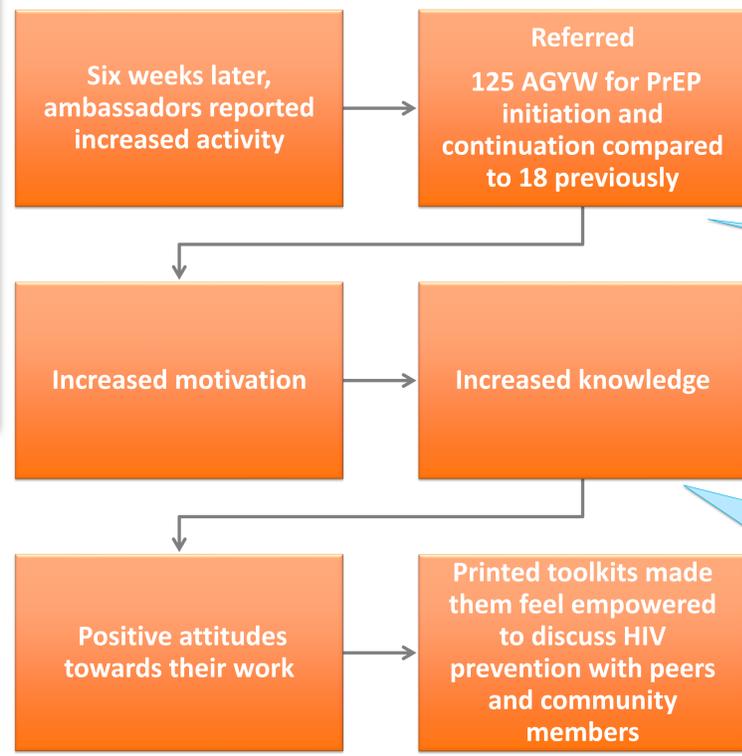
RESULTS

Figure 1: Average scores measuring PrEP knowledge & attitudes improved by 39% post-training



“Yes, more people know me as musikana anoita nezve AIDS,” meaning the girl that deals with HIV and AIDS issues.

Follow up assessment findings



CONCLUSIONS



Training empowered AGYW to better support their peers in provision of HIV prevention including PrEP information and increase PrEP initiations in Mazowe district.



The OPTIONS ambassador training filled an important need in PrEP delivery among AGYW and this could be applied to similar districts.

“When I give them the book and fliers to read, they actually come back to me and get PrEP”

“I use my toolkit all the time. I browse through it before every session”

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS
1 Pangaea Zimbabwe AIDS Trust (PZAT).
2 FHI 360.

CONTACT DETAILS
Definate Nhamo
Senior Programs Manager
Pangaea Zimbabwe AIDS Trust (PZAT)
dnhamo@pzat.org

<https://www.fhi360.org/projects/optimizing-prevention-technology-introduction-schedule-options-consortium>



This poster was made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The contents are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, PEPFAR, or the United States Government

