

**Creating an Enabling Environment for
Youth Living with HIV to Access Health
and Well-being:**

A Case Study in Four Rwandan Cities

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AMSTERDAM

FAST-TRACK CITIES 2023

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OF PROVIDERS OF AIDS CARE

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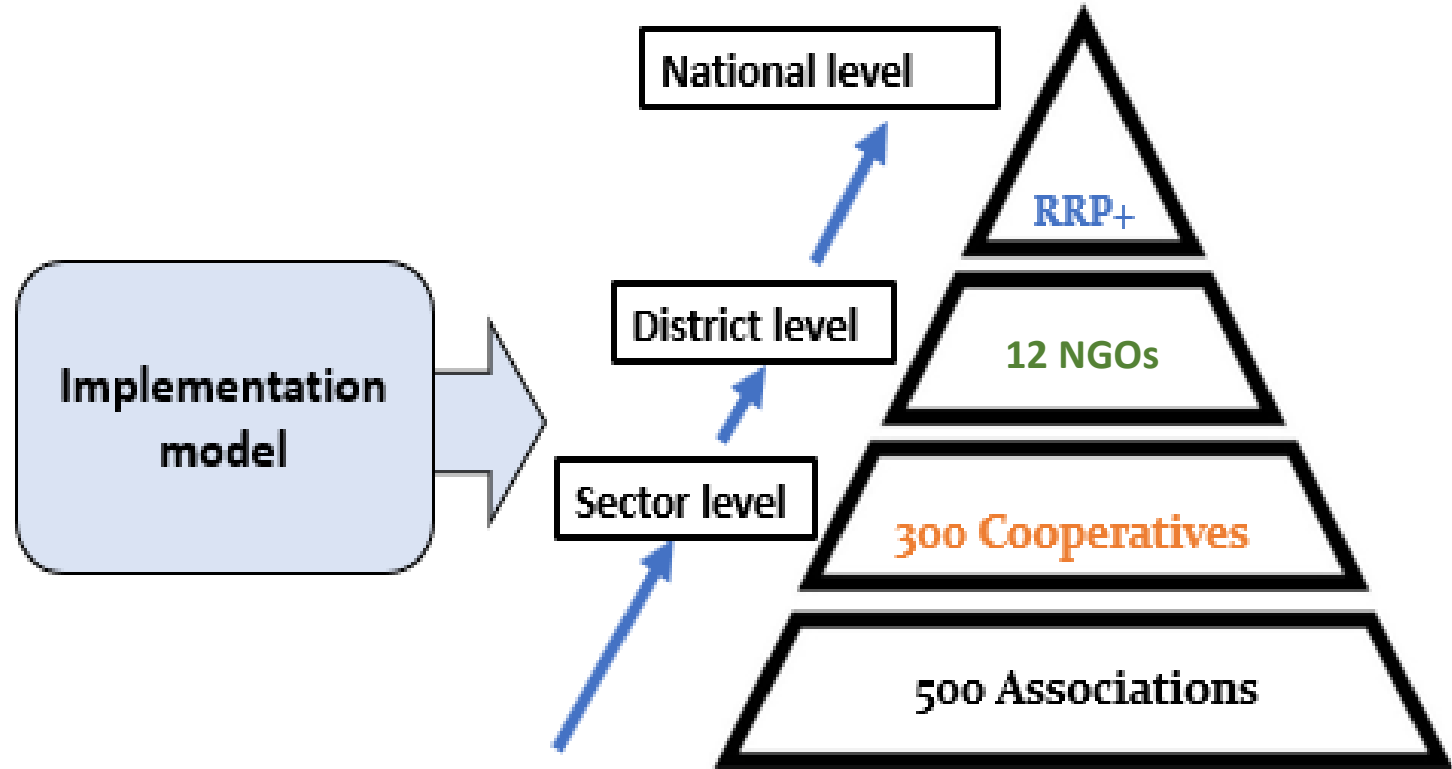
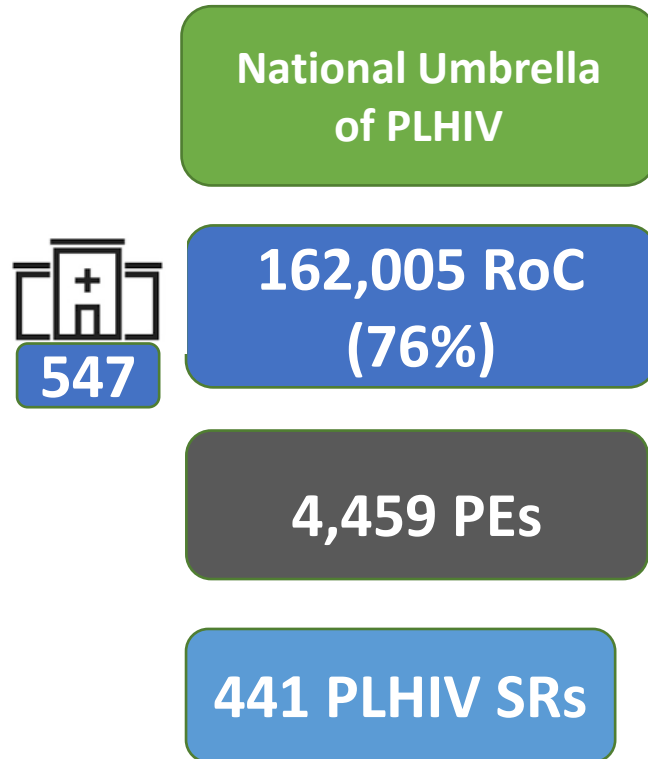
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Background

RRP+: Rwandese Network for People living with HIV

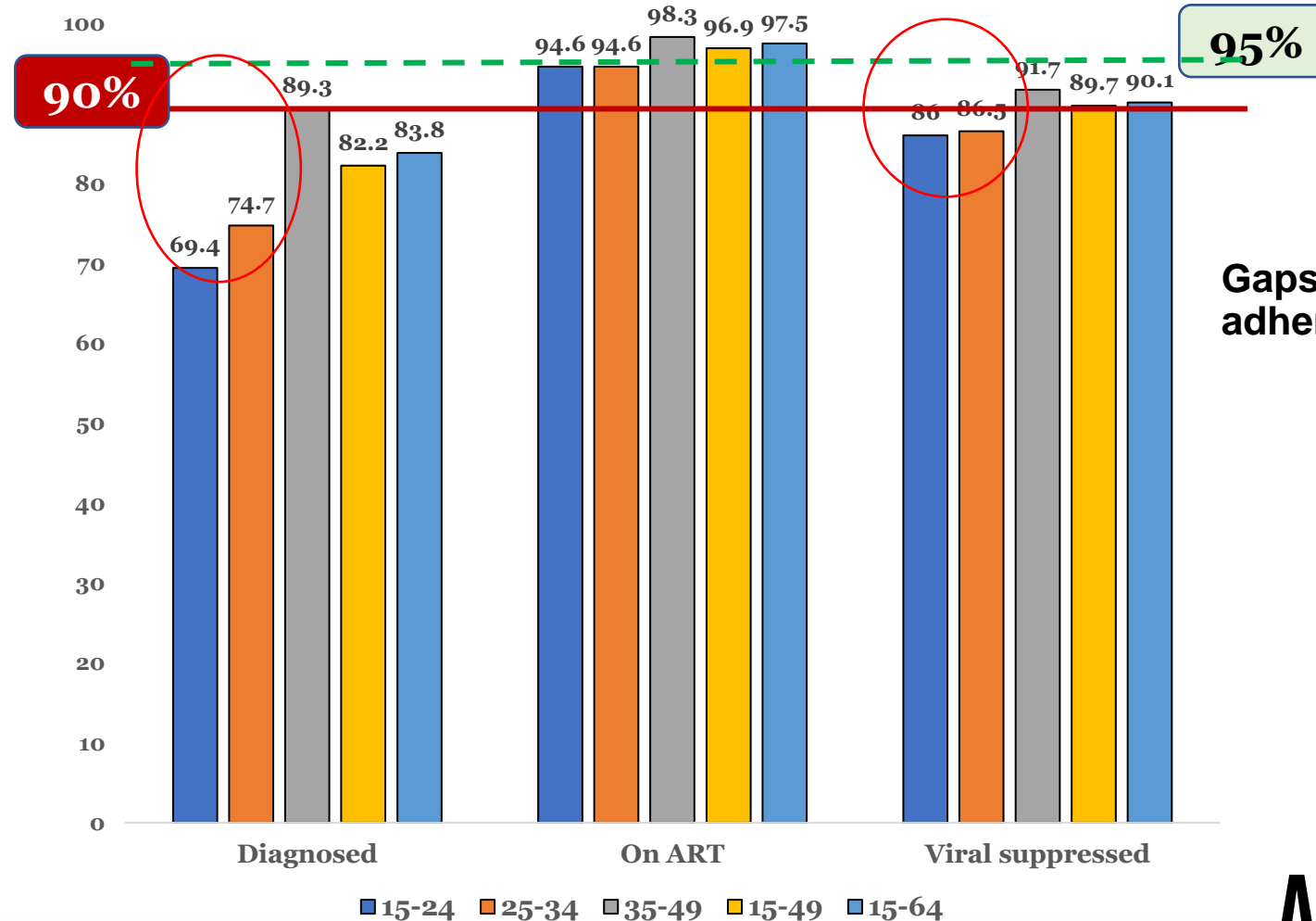




Background

Rwanda among top 5 countries to achieve 95-95-95

Source: UNAIDS, July 23, 2023



95%

90%

Gaps for testing and adherence among Youth.



A human-rights based approach

Contribution to SGD 3

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

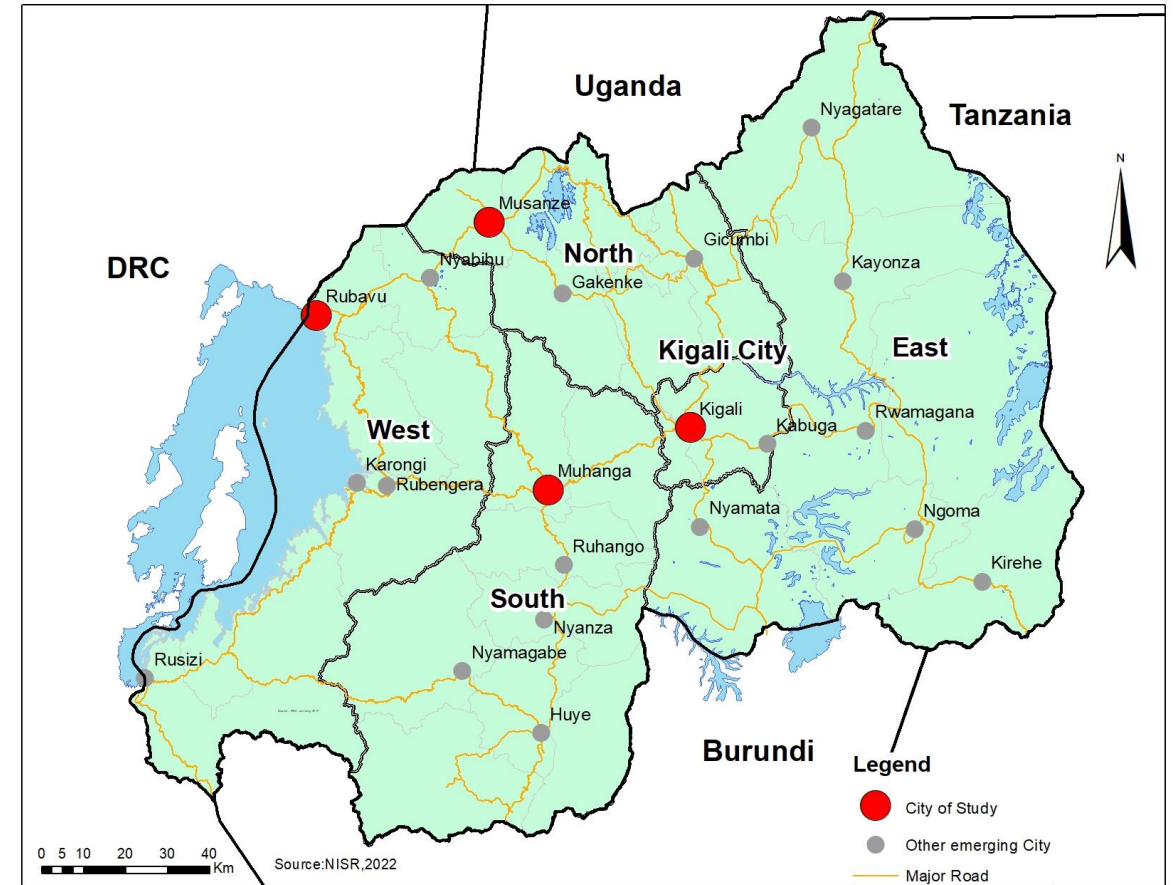
3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING





Scope of the intervention

- **Target area:** City of Kigali and 3 secondary cities with high levels of HIV prevalence (Rubavu, Musanze, Muhanga)
- **Objective:** Facilitate an inclusive access to health services and well-being of all YLHIV, including FSW, teen mothers (TM) and MSM
- **Time:** March – December 2022





Methodology

7 FGD 133 Youths
Youth challenges, barriers to achieve 3 UNAIDS targets
And Rapid assessment on mental health (WHO Well-Being Index)



ASSESSMENT
FIRST YOUTHS' PROPOSALS

4 Community Dialogues
68 duty bearers, 57 right holders
Discuss challenges



MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING
MORE PROPOSALS

National Dialogue
45 right holders and duty bearers
discussions of findings and proposals



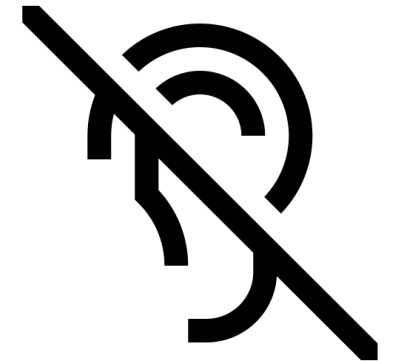
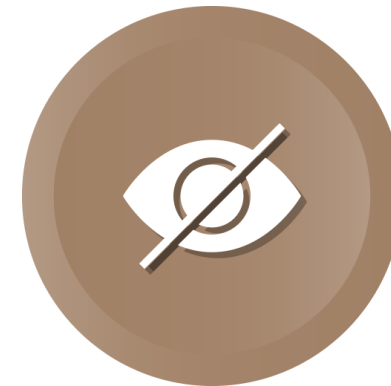
EVIDENCE-BASED ADVOCACY
AGREED RECOMMENDATIONS





Key Findings and recommendations

1. CONFIDENTIALITY, TO PREVENT (FEAR OF) STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION
2. COMMUNICATION
3. FOOD SECURITY
4. MENTAL HEALTH





Key Finding - Confidentiality

At school: Impact on adherence and school drop out

- Students keep their ART in dormitory, are seen and asked by others what this is, why they take drugs every day;
- Public checking point at school to expose drugs and increase stigma

✓ Appreciation:

- ✓ MINEDUC has drafted guidelines to fight stigma for People LHIV and other manage chronic diseases at school;
- ✓ RBC is training school authorities





Key Findings - Confidentiality

- Youth do not like waiting in ARV services mixed with adults
 - ✓ Organise specific time slots for youth
- Fear of disclosure of HIV status by peers and care providers and peers without consent
 - ✓ Feedback to peers, HCPs, RBC and MoH



Key Findings - Confidentiality

- ✓ Visibility of ARV services (location and labelling) to be reduced



ARV service next the HF entrance and main road



ARV service together with administration



Key Findings

1. CONFIDENTIALITY, STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION
2. COMMUNICATION
3. FOOD SECURITY
4. MENTAL HEALTH

Communication to YLHIV by HCP to be improved

- ✓ On positive & *negative* impacts of ARV
- ✓ *Respectful* care for *inclusive* care
- ✓ *Empower* youth to better manage themselves and protect others.

Communicate

- ✓ Exact Viral Load results: Add VL result on card;
- ✓ VL results meaning

MEDICAMENTS

- Prophylaxie:
 Date début:
 Molécules / Combinaison:
 - ARV:

Changement	Date	Nouvelle combinaison

2

"RENDEZ VOUS" YO GUFATA IMITI

Itariki	Rendez-vous	Yubahirijwe

3

"RENDEZ VOUS" YO MU BUJYANAMA

Itariki	Rendez-vous	Yubahirijwe

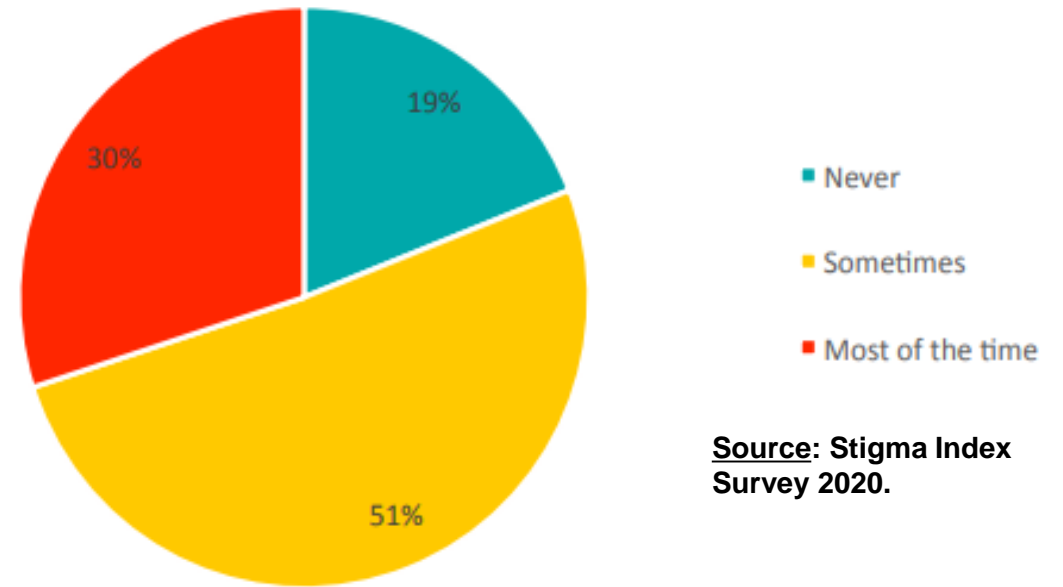
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Key Finding

Food insecurity negatively impacts adherence

- 1. CONFIDENTIALITY, STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION
- 2. COMMUNICATION
- 3. FOOD SECURITY
- 4. MENTAL HEALTH

Percentage of PLHIV who have been unable to meet their basic needs in the last 12 months



Source: Stigma Index Survey 2020.

Only 19% respondents never fail to meet their basic needs

✓ Need recognized



Key findings

1. CONFIDENTIALITY, STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION;
2. COMMUNICATION
3. FOOD SECURITY;
4. MENTAL HEALTH

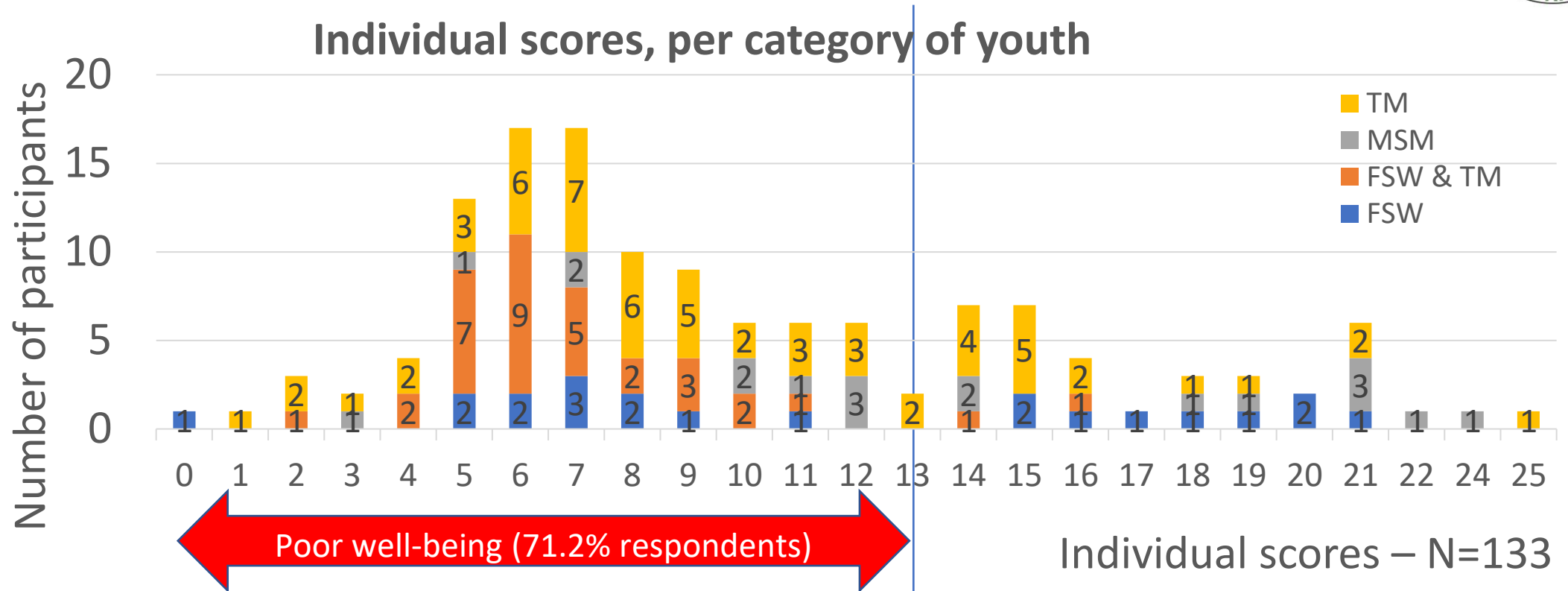
Importance of counselling currently insufficient



Credit picture: Lucxama Sylvain, Pexels



Key Finding: WHO (Five) Well-Being Index: an eye opener on poor mental health of YLHIV



A score <13 (a) indicates poor wellbeing; (b) is an indication for testing for depression under ICD-10.

Tool designed by Psychiatric Research Unit, WHO Collaborating Center for Mental Health, Frederiksborg General Hospital, DK-3400 Hillerød



Key Finding

Mental health negatively impacted by multiple vulnerabilities

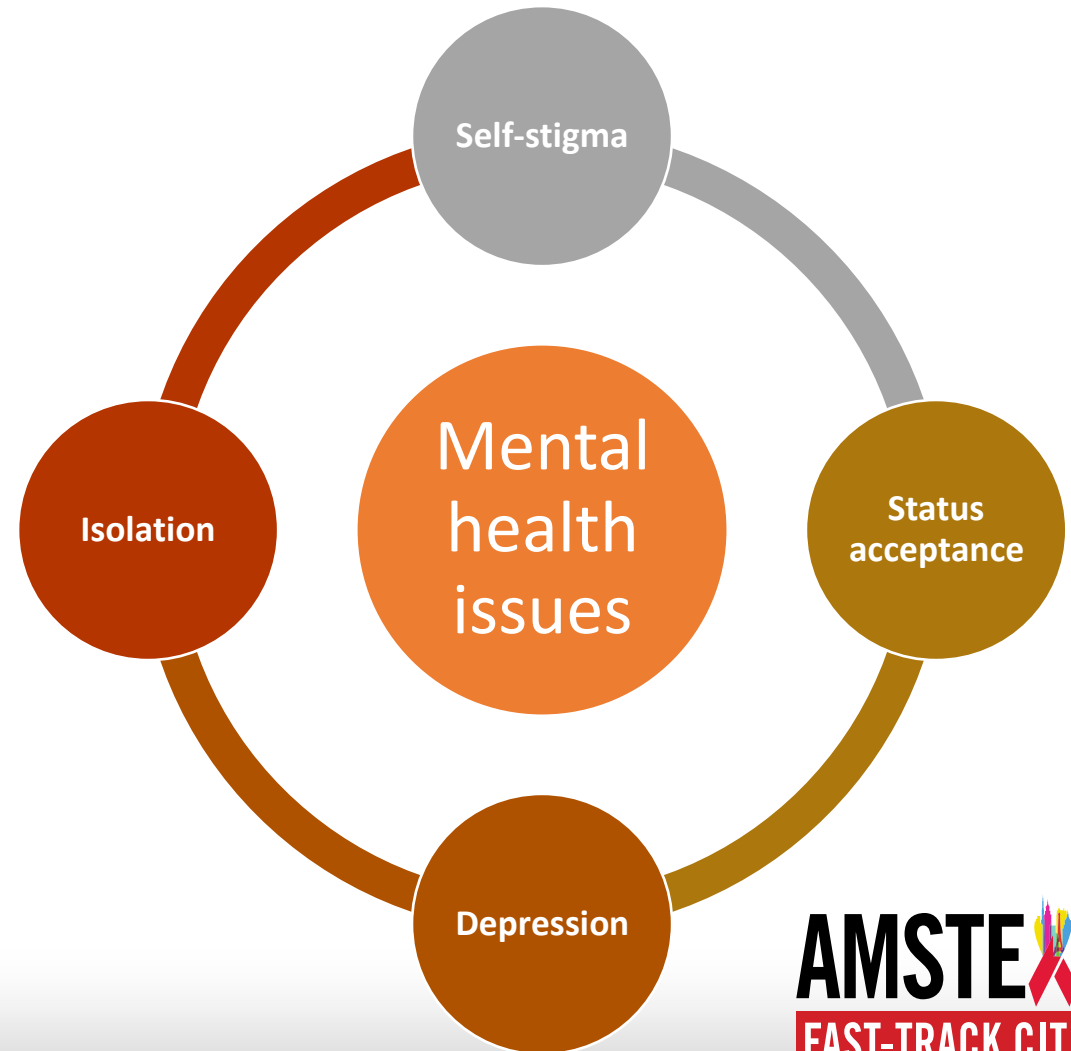
Average score per category of youth





Key Finding Need to address mental health issues

- ✓ Improve counselling by HCP
- ✓ Explore possible contribution of peer education to support mental health





Lessons learnt

Key factors for increasing testing, self-care, adherence to treatment, and reducing HIV transmission among Youth

Confidentiality

HIV at school

Communication

Food insecurity

Mental health

Youth
empowerment



Conclusions

Effective methodology used to create a more youth-friendly and inclusive environment, including peer-facilitated mechanisms





Next steps

Follow up changes and continue advocacy

for creation of a conducive environment for inclusive access to care and treatment

Design and implement a low cost pilot for youth-friendly peer education

to empower YLHIV to make informed decisions and support their mental health

Acknowledgment



THANK YOU
MERCI BEAUCOUP
MURAKOZE



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