

SHIFTS IN RELATIONSHIP POWER AND REDUCTION IN EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE: EXPLORING PROGRAM EFFECTS OF DREAMS HIV PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS IN KENYA

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SVRI, 22 October 2019

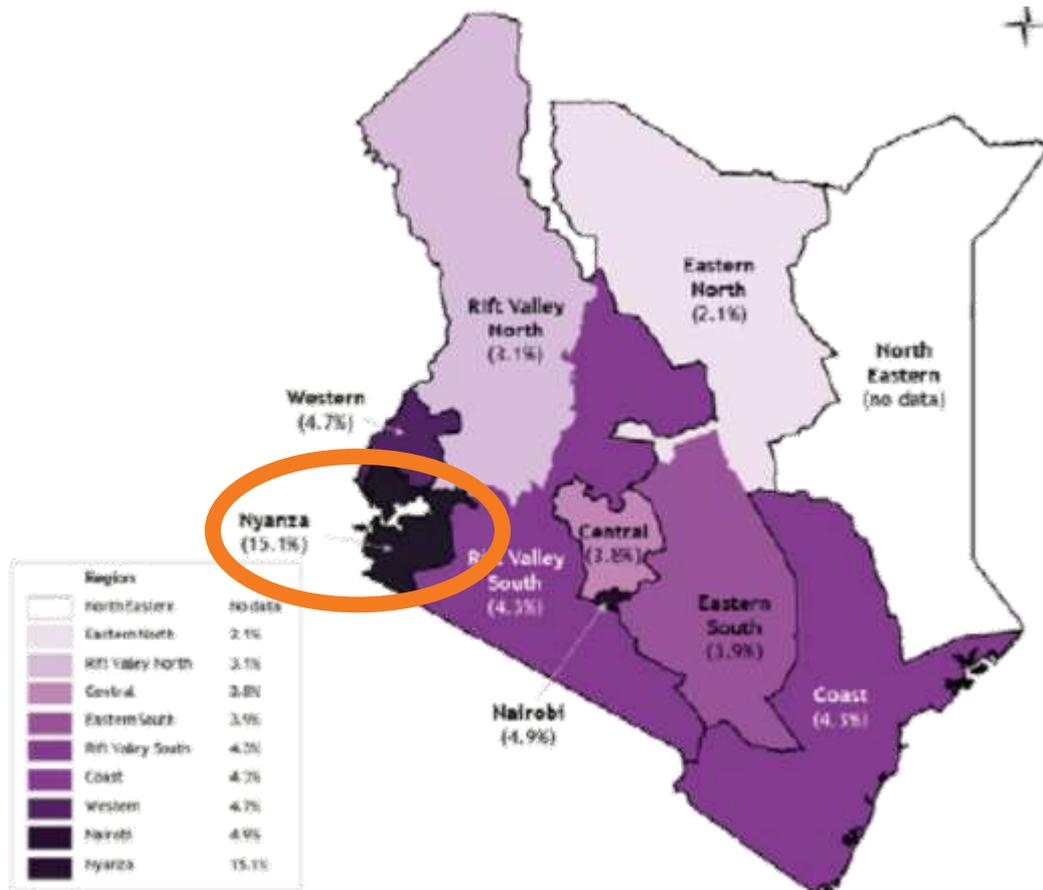
14:30–16:00 Prevention programmes

Background

- Gender-based power dynamics underpin many relationships.
 - These dynamics place both women and men at risk of negative health outcomes such as HIV/STI and violence.
- Adolescence presents a window of opportunity for interventions that examine power in sexual relationships and discuss related health behaviors, sometimes before these behaviors begin to manifest.
- We examined changes over time in relationship power & experiences of violence among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) enrolled in DREAMS.

Study sites: urban & peri-urban site, Kisumu county, Nyanza province

HIV prevalence among adults and adolescents aged 15–64 years by region, *Kenya HIV Estimates report, 2018*



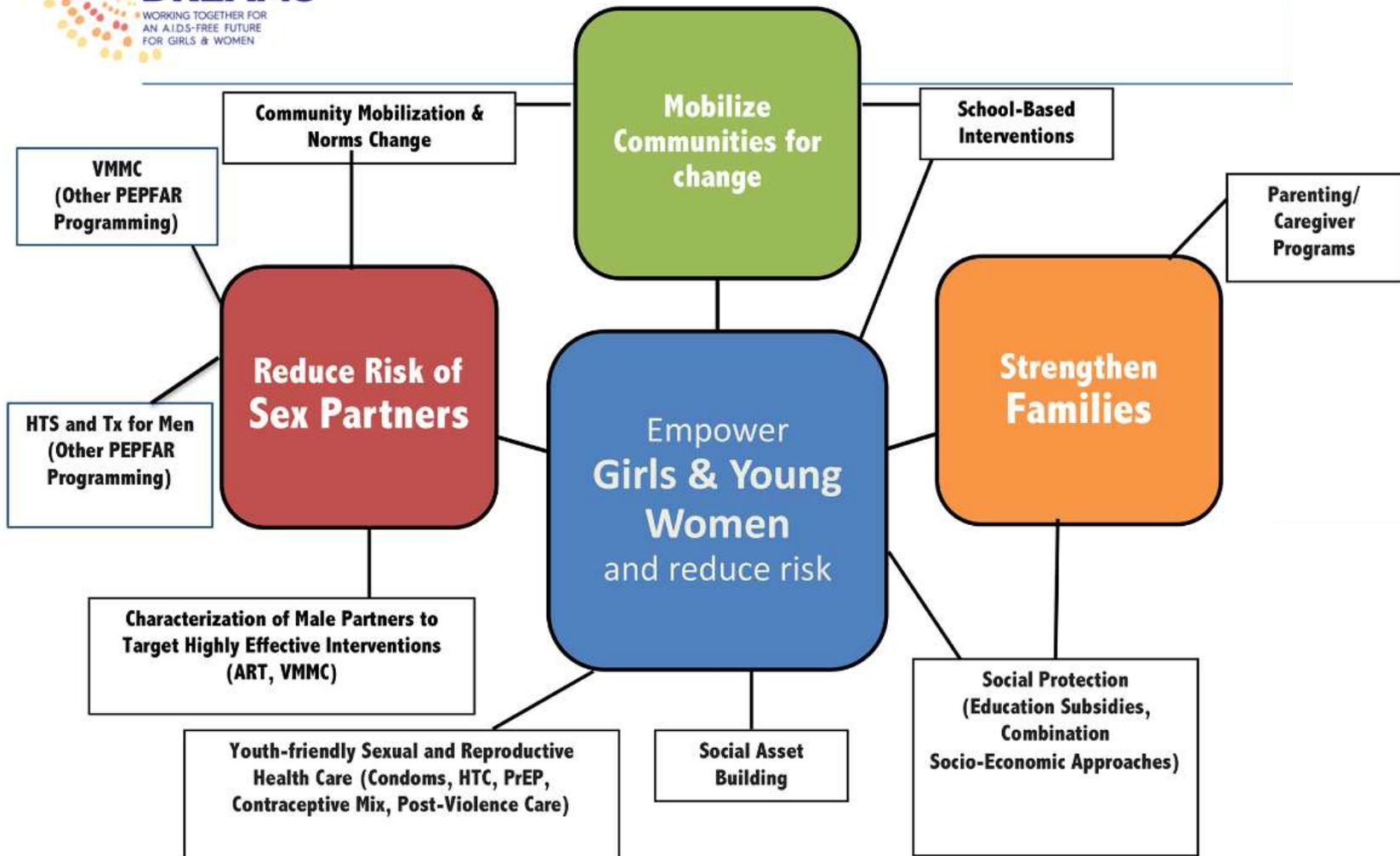
Kisumu county

- Median age at 1st :
 - sex: 16.2 yrs
 - marriage: 19.1 yrs
 - birth: 19.4 yrs

There were wide geographical variations in HIV prevalence in Kenya with Nyanza region being disproportionately affected.



The Core Package



Determined **Resilient** **Empowered** **AIDS-Free** **Mentored** **Safe**

Study design & data collection, Kenya



Mixed-methods study design

- **Quantitative survey** with AGYW enrolled in DREAMS, surveyed during Round 1 & again after 16 months during Round 2
- **In-depth interviews** with AGYW enrolled in DREAMS, after 3–6 months & after 12+ months

Sociodemographic characteristics

Characteristics	Kenya (N=736) Round 1
Mean age (in years)	19
	%
Currently in school	60
Never married	77
Ever had sex	60
Lost 1 or both parents	47

Why do we care about relationship power and sexual violence among AGYW?

High levels of sexual violence from partners in the last 12 months:

19%

(n=597; Kisumu, Kenya)



AGYW who experienced sexual violence were

2x as likely to report an **STI symptom**, and **anxiety and depression**

Having relationship power strongly associated with:

- ✓ **Less sexual violence**
- ✓ **More condom use at last sex**
- ✓ **More knowledge of partner's HIV status**

Pulerwitz J et al. (2018) How empowered are girls/young women in their sexual relationships? Relationship power, HIV risk, and partner violence in Kenya. *PLoS ONE* 13(7): e0199733. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0199733>

Mathur S et al. (2018) High rates of sexual violence by both intimate and non-intimate partners experienced by adolescent girls and young women in Kenya and Zambia: Findings around violence and other negative health outcomes. *PLoS ONE* 13(9): e0203929. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0203929>

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AGYW engaged in DREAMS reported higher power in interpersonal relationships over time

	Round 1	Round 2
	%	%
Relationship power ***		
Low	44.9	27.9
Moderate	37.0	29.1
High	18.1	43.0

Note: We see similar results in Zambia and Malawi

***p<0.001

AGYW's relationship power in Kenya

■ Round 1 ■ Round 2

AGYW who agree ...

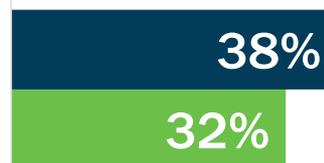
My partner has more say than I do about important decisions that affect us.*



If my partner wants to have sex, he would expect me to agree*



When my partner and I disagree, he gets his way most of the time*



*p<0.05

AGYW perspectives on DREAMS program

benefits: Increased self-worth/goals

- AGYW described self-worth and control in terms of their relationships (“take care of themselves” & “not to be cheated”)

Like issues regarding relationships we were taught...a boy shouldn't cheat you, lie to you with 50 shillings, and after making you pregnant they leave you with your mother. It taught me to take care of myself and not to be a cheap person even if lured with something small I just go.

—15 yr old, Kolwa East

AGYW perspectives on DREAMS program

benefits: Increased confidence/assertiveness

- Most AGYW reported being able to assert themselves in the face of pressure as a result of the DREAMS program.

...what I learnt mostly is how to say No [to sexual advances] because...we were taught how to say no and mean that no is a no. And truly even now if someone comes for me [sexual advances] I can say no. ...So at least now I have that confidence to stand up in front of someone and to tell them no and I mean what I say....

— 17 yr old, Nyalenda

AGYW enrolled in DREAMS report lower physical and sexual violence from partners and non-partners over time

	Round 1 %	Round 2 %
Among sexually active		
Physical violence from partners	24	20
Sexual violence from partners	20	9 ^{***}
Among all AGYW		
Sexual violence from non-partners	26	17 ^{***}

- Regressions confirm that AGYW are less likely to experience sexual violence from partners (Adj. IRR 0.43 (0.31-0.59) and from non-partners (0.65 (0.53-0.81) over time.
- Note: similar results in Zambia and Malawi

***p<0.001, Regression models adjusted for age, current schooling, marital status, orphanhood status, continuity of program exposure, and site-level clustering

Implications

- Power in interpersonal relationships can accentuate HIV risk
 - Unpacking these relationships can provides useful insights for strengthening program/policy
 - Should be more consistently measured in programs
- AGYW enrolled in DREAMS report more power and fewer experiences of violence over time
- Need closer examination to assess if shifts in interpersonal power & experiences of violence are attributed to program exposure

Acknowledgments

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- Study participants
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