

How MEASURE Evaluation Supports DREAMS

Girls and young women account for 71 percent of new HIV infections among adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa. They are often devalued because of their gender and seen by their families and communities as unworthy of investment or protection. Social isolation, economic disadvantage, discriminatory cultural norms, orphanhood, gender-based violence, and dropping out of school all contribute to girls' vulnerability to HIV.

In partnership with numerous private donors, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) launched DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe) in 2015. This initiative is designed to reduce HIV incidence in adolescent girls and young women in 10 sub-Saharan African countries by 25 percent by the end of 2016 and by 40 percent by the end of 2017.

DREAMS is delivering a core package of evidence-informed HIV prevention interventions to benefit girls and young women who are HIV-negative but who live in regions of high HIV prevalence in the 10 target countries. With support from PEPFAR, MEASURE Evaluation is conducting research to inform DREAMS programming, as well as the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of DREAMS programs in Swaziland, Mozambique, and South Africa—all to help achieve the global health goal of an AIDS-free generation.

MEASURE Evaluation provides critical data for program managers and decision makers to effectively design and target their programs and to make program course corrections in order to better reach PEPFAR's test, treat, and retain goals.

- In Swaziland, we are implementing the PLACE (Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts) method to identify characteristics of high-risk groups among adolescent girls and young women and their sexual partners; describe the nature of these sexual partnerships; and identify where young women and their partners socialize.
- Similarly, in Mozambique we are using quantitative and qualitative research to examine sexual and gender norms and behaviors of adolescent girls and young women, and the characteristics, behaviors, and health service preferences of their sexual partners.
- In South Africa, we are writing the DREAMS M&E plan, coordinating the planning process, and developing the indicator reference manual. The project is also tasked with building the DREAMS management information system, called DREAMS Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (DIMES).



Source: Jack Hazerjian

The results of our work in these countries will inform the design of HIV and reproductive health prevention programs for high-risk girls and young women and their partners.

Experience Monitoring and Evaluating Adolescent-Focused HIV Programs

MEASURE Evaluation has years of experience in adolescent research and M&E outside of DREAMS-related work. We conduct impact evaluations of adolescent-focused HIV programs; analyze secondary data focused on gender-related factors that affect the health of youth; design and implement research to identify gender- and age-related barriers to health service use for young females and their male sexual partners; develop indicators to measure outcomes related to programming for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC); and identify and recommend improvements in outcome and impact evaluations that measure the effectiveness of interventions for preventing HIV transmission, including programs related to women's and girls' empowerment.

Expertise Helping Countries Plan DREAMS Programs

MEASURE Evaluation provides the following technical assistance to USAID Missions:

- **Rapid assessments** to monitor and improve HIV prevention program coverage in high-risk areas, using the PLACE and other venue-based research methods. These data help to target interventions to groups at higher risk of acquiring the virus.
- **Male sexual partner characterization studies.** For the design of more effective HIV programs, MEASURE Evaluation uses quantitative and qualitative research methods to understand the behaviors, attitudes, motivations, and other characteristics of sexual partners of adolescent girls and young women.
- **Process, outcome, and impact evaluations focused on adolescents and gender.** Our staff has experience in the full range of evaluation steps, from assessing stakeholder information needs, to data collection implementation, to data use and dissemination. We also have the expertise to address complex measurement, ethical, and implementation challenges inherent in these types of adolescent and gender programs.
- **Analyses of data** drawn from multiple sources (for example, data triangulation). When new data collection is not feasible or is determined to be unnecessary, MEASURE Evaluation extracts maximum information from the data on hand to contribute to the M&E of youth-focused programs.
- **Development and selection of indicators** to measure the implementation, progress, and impact of DREAMS. In South Africa, for example, MEASURE Evaluation is coordinating the development of the DREAMS M&E plan, writing the plan, and developing the indicator reference manual.
- **Youth-focused and gender-sensitive desk reviews.** These help USAID Missions and other health agencies understand their country context, examine the gender norms and power dynamics that influence HIV risk for youth, or synthesize evidence on a particular approach. MEASURE Evaluation has expertise carrying out both rapid literature reviews and in-depth systematic evidence reviews to examine special issues in youth and gender policies and programs. Desk reviews can help inform program approaches and contribute to understanding of the types of additional data that may be needed.
- **Youth-relevant and gender-sensitive M&E plans and data collection instrument tools.** These help to monitor and evaluate programs tailored to a population of interest in order to measure gender-related factors that influence young people's attitudes, perceptions, behaviors, and health.
- **Management information systems (MIS) for DREAMS.** Strong MIS can help DREAMS programs make better use of data to uncover trends, employ geographic information systems to enhance understanding of the data, and improve referral linkages between facility- and community-based services. MEASURE Evaluation helps countries set up an information system, or add a component to an existing system, to capture gender-sensitive data on youth and HIV that otherwise were unavailable, develop management strategies for MIS, and encourage data use for decision making.
- **Capacity building to conduct gender-sensitive and youth-focused M&E.** Our staff can conduct formal workshops for local agencies and organizations or work with individuals and small groups over time to strengthen local and national capacity to monitor and evaluate programs serving youth—especially adolescent girls—at higher risk of acquiring HIV.

MEASURE Evaluation's Services

To access the project's capabilities statements, visit: <http://www.measureevaluation.org/about/services/capacity-statements>. To access MEASURE Evaluation resources, country governments should contact their local USAID mission. The mission, in turn, can contact the USAID AOR for MEASURE Evaluation, Lisa Maniscalco (lmaniscalco@usaid.gov). For more information, e-mail measure@unc.edu or go to our website: www.measureevaluation.org.