

Leadership for Zambia's Sexual Behavior and AIDS Indicator Surveys



MEASURE Evaluation Fact sheet M&E Surveys: Zambia

At MEASURE Evaluation, we know that improved analysis and use of data leads to better health program decision making and, ultimately, improved health outcomes. This fact sheet introduces one of the innovative toolsets created for monitoring & evaluating public health interventions.

MEASURE Evaluation is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through Cooperative Agreement GPO-A-00-03-00003-00 and is implemented by the Carolina Population Center at the University of North Carolina in partnership with Constella Futures, John Snow, Inc., ORC Macro, and Tulane University.

To learn more about MEASURE Evaluation and our current activities, visit us on the Web at www.cpc.unc.edu/measure.



Overview: MEASURE Evaluation has worked closely with the Zambia Ministry of Health and Central Statistics Office to implement four biennial rounds of the Zambia Sexual Behavior Survey/AIDS Indicator Survey.

The first Zambia Sexual Behavior Survey (ZSBS/AIS) in 1998 was the first nationally representative HIV/AIDS indicator survey in Africa. The two subsequent rounds, in 2000 and 2002, played a major role in development and testing of the HIV/AIDS prevention indicators promulgated by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) as an internationally-standardized core for HIV/AIDS prevention program indicators. Zambia is one of the original U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) focus countries and, in 2005, the survey instrument was revised and expanded to incorporate the new set of core indicators developed for use in PEPFAR-supported countries.

ZSBS/AIS survey data have been used to produce a large number of technical reports, handouts and brochures, and press releases. Tailored fact sheets based on ZSBS/AIS data have been prepared for the National AIDS Council, HIV/AIDS program managers, and the U.S. Agency for International Development mission in Zambia (USAID/Zambia). Over the years, the ZSBS/AIS data have gained in value and usefulness. ZSBS data sets are frequently requested by individuals, universities, and other organizations interested in evaluation research aimed at program improvement. The ZSBS/AIS surveys use an internationally standardized protocol to obtain information tracking a large number of HIV/AIDS program indi-

cators, measuring various aspects of HIV/AIDS prevention, care, treatment, stigma, and orphans and vulnerable children. An efficient and nationally representative sample of around 5,000 men and women 15-59 years of age allows for breakdowns by age group, gender, and urban and rural residence for key indicators. Results for each year are reported in standardized tables that incorporate findings from each of the previous survey years.

Consecutive data points: ZSBS/AIS survey data are unique in providing, to date, four consistently measured, consecutive data points that capture trends in HIV/AIDS-related behavior and prevention indicators in an African country seriously affected by the epidemic. Such trend data are critically important for efforts to monitor, evaluate, and improve HIV prevention and care programs. Trend data from the 2005 ZSBS/AIS revealed a six percentage point increase in abstinence among adolescents aged 15-19, from 60% in 2000 to 66% in 2005, and the median age at first sex rose from 16.5 years in 1998 to 18.5 years in 2005.

Also noteworthy was a sharp drop in the 15-19 age group among sexually-active adolescents who reported sex with more than one partner, from 12% in 2000 to 3% in 2005. While the percentage of youth aged 15-24 who were tested in the past year doubled from 3% in 2000 to 7% in 2005, the overall figure remained low, and condom use among youth aged 15-24 who reported risky sex in the past year declined from 9% in 2000 to 7% in 2005. Another round of the ZSBS/AIS, scheduled for 2008, will provide a fifth data point for the indicator series over a 10-year span, from 1998 to 2008.

Capacity building: An equally important component of the ZSBS/AIS survey activity is a continuing emphasis on technology transfer and capacity building. These activities promote sustainability and institutional strengthening of the CSO, as well as providing training opportunities for technical staff and other government officials.

The capacity-building collaboration between the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and MEASURE Evaluation recognizes a long-standing tradition at CSO of striving for excellence and a commitment to technological innovation and staff development. The goal of capacity-building activities is to expand and enhance the organization's capability to build upon this tradition, and permanently reduce

its reliance on technical assistance

from outside Zambia. To enhance sustainability, MEASURE Evaluation works closely with CSO to ensure that all capacity-building activities are designed around its existing organizational structure and staffing. Capacity-building activities include staff exchanges between CSO and MEASURE Evaluation,

jointly-organized workshops for selected CSO staff on topics such as survey design, sampling, data analysis, and data utilization. Joint assessments are undertaken to determine the need for targeted hands-on training and supervisory instruction in key focal areas during various stages of survey implementation, data processing, and data analysis. The goal of all capacity-building activities is to build sustainable quality systems at CSO that will ensure the continuity of the ZSBS/AIS survey series and enhance the organization's capability to meet the country's need for program and policy data.



For more Information

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