



## A Guide for Male Circumcision Community Mobilizers

Help reduce HIV by encouraging Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC) today



## Introduction

Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC) is the removal of a man's foreskin. It is a simple and safe procedure when done at a health facility. A circumcised man is up to 60% less likely to get HIV than an uncircumcised man. VMMC cannot protect a man 100% so he still needs to use condoms and reduce his number of sexual partners. VMMC also reduces a man's chances of getting other infections like syphilis and herpes. For women, VMMC can protect them against cervical cancer.

VMMC is a choice that each person needs to make. Many people do not know about VMMC or how it can help them. These materials will help you get people talking about VMMC to help them decide if it is right for them. Encourage people to ask questions and create discussions.

### Before You Begin:

- Learn the important facts about VMMC.
- Get comfortable using the tools in this guide.

### Working with these Materials

These are only suggested tools. You can make your own tools which you

think might work better with your community. The best tools are made especially with a certain group of people in mind. Making your own tools also helps you talk about issues that are happening in your community right now.

### Community Discussion Cards

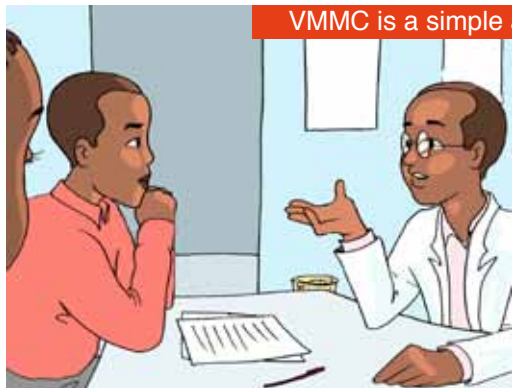
There is a set of five cards, with a picture on one side and an explanation on the other side. The goal is to get people talking about the topics on the card. The cards can be used in many different ways. Here is one way.

#### *The Guessing Game:*

Hand out the cards. Ask one person to show their picture to the group. Everyone must guess what the card means or role play them. The group then talks about what the 'reason', 'risks', 'rights' and 'responsibilities' are for each of the topics.

The game keeps going until all the cards are finished or as long as people are interested. Do not worry if people do not say the answer right away. You can always give small clues. The important thing is to discuss some of the points on the card and hear what people say about them.

VMMC is a simple and safe procedure



## Community Drama

The purpose of this drama skit is to tell people about VMMC so they can decide if it is right for them. When choosing the people who are going to act the parts, look for those who are naturally outspoken and funny. They will not feel shy on the stage. Other community members can help with setting up the stage and props.

### *Community Drama Steps:*

1. Go to the community chief or local leader and inform them of your plans.
2. Find an open space where you can set up the performance. This can be outdoors or in a hall or classroom. Make sure that there is enough space for the audience to sit comfortably and see the action.
3. Find three people to act out the parts. You can work with other mobilizers or people from the community.
4. Once you have chosen your actors, take some time to rehearse the performance with them in advance. Remember to speak loudly and dramatically. You want people to hear you. You can improvise and try to make people laugh. Do not worry if you make a mistake or forget your lines. Just remember to say the important facts - the rest is up to you.
5. When you are ready, introduce your drama group and tell the crowd you want to perform for them. Talk to them in a language they are comfortable with and make sure they understand you.
6. Begin your performance.
7. After each section in the play, ask the questions included to get people talking.
8. At the end, let people from the

- audience come on stage to act out scenes and/or create their own endings. Create a discussion about the new topics that get raised.
9. Make sure to ask for questions at the end and take time to answer them all.
  10. Hand out leaflets and let people know where they can go for VMMC.

## Leaflets

The leaflets are for you to pass out after your community discussions or drama sketches. Give them to men and women of all ages. Make sure to pass them out to all different kinds of people. The leaflets help people learn more about what you have just told them. Write down how many leaflets you handed out.

After a few weeks, visit the areas again and speak to the same people and others you did not talk to before. Ask them if they have any questions. See if they liked the materials. Find out if there is any other information they want to know. Write down these answers, and tell your organization.

## When You Talk to People, Remember to Tell Them These Key Messages:

- VMMC reduces the risk of HIV by up to 60%.
- VMMC does not give 100% protection from HIV. People still need to wear condoms and reduce their number of sexual partners.
- Just because a man is circumcised does not mean he does not have HIV. Circumcised men can be infected with HIV, and some circumcised men are already HIV positive.
- VMMC benefits sexual partners of men, decreasing their risk of cervical cancer.
- Male circumcision is safe when performed at a health facility.
- VMMC is good for the whole community because it reduces the chances of getting HIV.

# Community Drama

**Location:** A fishing beach

**Props:** A fishing net

**Characters:** Ochieng, a fisherman

Ajuma, his wife, who is preparing fish

Otieno, a man who is a friend of theirs

## Act 1

**Setting:** Ochieng and Ajuma are sitting on the two stools repairing a fishing net, facing the audience.

**Action:** Otieno walks past Ochieng and Ajuma. Otieno is day dreaming and he doesn't really see them.

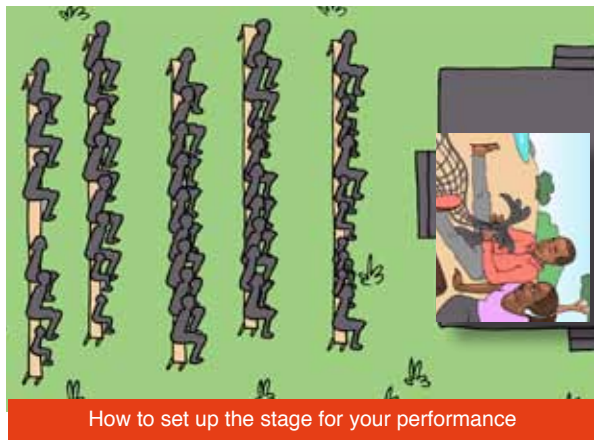
**Ochieng:** Otieno!

**Action:** Otieno jumps in surprise. He drops his bag in shock.

**Ochieng:** (Laughing) Otieno! You didn't see us? Were you dreaming of Akeyo again?

**Otieno:** No I was... um... I was... doing mathematics in my head!

**Action:** Ochieng and Ajuma laugh.



**Ajuma:** Otieno. What is in that bag you dropped?

**Otieno:** Um. Some tablets I was given by Omondi. He says that if I take them every day I won't catch HIV.

**Ajuma:** Ha! Tablets that can protect you from HIV! What else has he given you? A drink that can make you fly?

**Ochieng:** (gesturing to Otieno) Let me see...

**Action:** Otieno hands over the bag to Ochieng. Ochieng looks at the tablets and shakes his head before placing the bag at his feet.

**Otieno:** What is wrong? Are they the wrong color?

**Ochieng:** What! Otieno my friend, how can you believe that man? Do you think such things can really protect you from HIV?

**Otieno:** But Omondi studied in Nairobi...

**Ajuma:** Omondi didn't study in Nairobi! He didn't even finish primary! He went to Nairobi once to see his uncle but got lost and ended up in Garissa!

**Ochieng:** Otieno, are you serious about protecting yourself from HIV?

**Otieno:** Of course... HIV is not a joke...

**Ajuma:** Then why are you joking with such tablets?

**Otieno:** What should I do?

**Ochieng:** You know, they say the best thing is not to have sex...

**Otieno:** But I am a man!

**Ajuma:** I knew you would say that...

**Ochieng:** Yes, you are a man, but that does not mean that you cannot control yourself...

**Otieno:** You know I have a girlfriend...

**Ajuma:** And have you both been tested for HIV?

**Otieno:** No! But I don't have it...

**Ochieng:** How do you know? Are you a doctor? You have to know your status, and hers, and you must behave, both of you!

**Otieno:** I do behave!

**Ajuma:** Very few men behave... that's why a condom is a must...

**Ochieng:** Do you use condoms?

**Otieno:** Sometimes...

The action breaks. Ochieng now asks these questions to the audience. A different audience member is given a chance to answer each of the questions, and the facilitator corrects them if their answers are wrong.

1. What is the best way to protect yourself from HIV?
2. If you are in a relationship, what is the best way for you and your partner to protect yourselves from HIV?
3. If you are having sex, what must you do to ensure that you are protected against HIV?
4. Why is it important to know your HIV status?
5. Does anybody have any questions?

# Act 2

**Ajuma:** Also, I think that you should get circumcised!

**Otieno:** (Very angry) What! A Luo man like me?

**Ochieng:** This is about your health, not about culture!

**Otieno:** But why should I get circumcised?

**Ajuma:** For the same reason that Ochieng had it done... It reduces the chances of you getting HIV by up to 60%...

**Otieno:** That's a lot...

**Ochieng:** Yes! You should do it!

**Otieno:** Woi! But it sounds painful!

**Ochieng:** No! You get an injection so that you feel little pain. It is over within a short time...

**Otieno:** But really, how can removing skin protect me from HIV?

**Ajuma:** Let me ask you a question, under your foreskin, is the skin not soft...?

**Otieno:** I don't know. Let me check. (Starts looking in his trousers.)

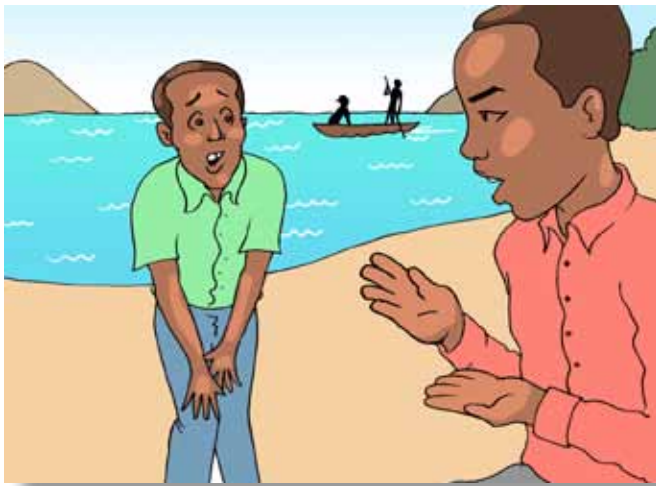
**Ajuma:** Don't be stupid, just answer...

**Otieno:** OK... yes it is...

**Ajuma:** Sawa. Because that skin is soft, sometimes when you are having sex it tears, doesn't it...?

**Otieno:** Woi... now such questions...

**Ajuma:** Well that is one way that HIV enters your body...



**Ochieng:** Also that soft skin has special types of cells on it, called target cells, through which the virus can pass easily into your body...

**Otieno:** Ahh! So after circumcision the skin becomes tougher, so it is harder for the virus to enter my body.

**Ajuma:** Exactly! Also, because you have a fold of skin there, infections are more likely to occur – and infections help HIV enter the body.

**Otieno:** But I have a question....

Ochieng: Ask...

**Otieno:** Afterwards... how is the sex... is it still good?

**Action:** Ajuma and Ochieng laugh.

**Ajuma:** Do you see me complaining?

**Ochieng:** And do you see me complaining...?

**Otieno:** So now, if I want to do this, where should I go, how does it work...?



**Ochieng:** Just go to a clinic or a hospital...

**Ajuma:** But a proper government registered place!

**Ochieng:** Yes. You must have it done by a qualified professional, or it can go wrong...

**Otieno:** What is the procedure?

Ochieng: After the cut, you are given some pain killers...

**Ajuma:** Proper medicine, not Omondi's nonsense...

**Ochieng:** After three days you carefully remove the bandage. Then you go for another check up after seven days...

**Otieno:** That is it?

**Ajuma:** Not quite. After the cut, you must not have sex for six weeks.

**Otieno:** WHAT?

**Ajuma:** Is it so long really?

**Otieno:** Aieeee...

**Ochieng:** My friend... six weeks, then you are healed properly, and you can 'proceed'...

**Otieno:** Safe from HIV!

**Ajuma:** NO! Your chances of getting it are less, but you must still...

**Otieno:** I know, reduce your sexual partners and...

**All:** Always wear a condom!

At this point there is a second question and answer session. The format is the same as the first. The questions are:

1. Why should Luo men get circumcised?
2. How does circumcision help reduce a man's chances of getting HIV?
3. How much does it reduce the chance of getting HIV?
4. Where is the best place to go for male circumcision?
5. After circumcision, do you still need to protect yourself from HIV? How?

After this discussion, ask if anyone from the audience wants to do their own role play about the topic. Give them some time to prepare. This time, people from the audience can call out 'stop' and can trade places with an actor when they feel like they can act out scenes with the new information they learned. Let them act out new endings and encourage discussion on the new topics that are raised.

At the end, ask for more questions from the audience and take the time to answer them all. It is important that people know all the facts so they can make the correct decision for themselves. Thank the audience for watching your performance and take the opportunity to hand out material like leaflets and let them know where to go for VMMC.





# Continue to prevent HIV through:

- Reducing number of sexual partners
- Staying faithful to one partner of known HIV status
- Using condoms consistently and correctly every time
- Rapid treatment of STIs

## Quiz

This multiple choice quiz tests you on your understanding of male circumcision. There is one right answer for each question. We suggest you ask these questions after outreach activities to check people's understanding.

1. VMMC is the removal of the:

- a) hand
- b) foreskin
- c) all the skin on the penis

2. What level of protection does VMMC give?

- a) up to 10%
- b) up to 60%
- c) 100%

3. After VMMC men have to delay having sex for how long?

- a) 3 days
- b) 5 days
- c) 6 weeks

4. What benefit does VMMC have for women?

- a) reduces risk of cervical cancer
- b) reduces pregnancy
- c) reduces chances of getting HIV

5. Circumcised men must:

- a) continue to practice HIV-prevention
- b) eat more
- c) have more sexual partners

6. Where is VMMC best undertaken?

- a) government approved health facility
- b) the local herbalist doctor
- c) the market place

7. What is VMMC good for?

- a) hygiene
- b) HIV prevention
- c) preventing other STIs
- d) all 3

8. What health benefits does female circumcision have?

- a) HIV prevention
- b) hygiene
- c) no health benefit at all

9. How long does a man have to wait before the dressing is removed?

- a) 1 week
- b) 3 days
- c) 6 weeks

10. Do you have to get tested for HIV before circumcision?

- a) yes
- b) no
- c) no, but it is a good idea to do so

**Answers:**

**1. b), 2. b), 3. c), 4. a), 5. a), 6. a), 7. d), 8. c), 9. b), 10. c)**