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CREATING DEMAND FOR VMMC TO REACH PRIORITY AGE GROUPS: LESOTHO

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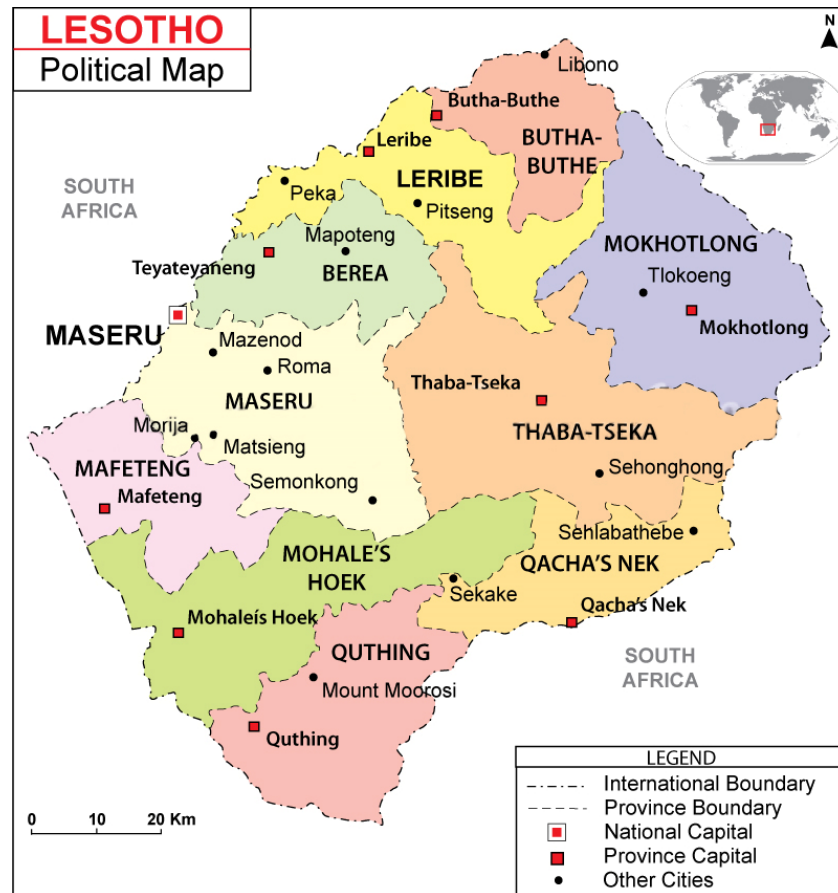
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Program Background



POP: 2.0 M
Capital: Maseru
Adult HIV prevalence: 25%
(DHS 2014)
Estimated PLHIV 319,000
MC Prevalence (15 – 49):
23%: medical
45%: traditional
(DHS 2014)

VMMC Target age group: 15-29



Overview: Approaches to Demand Creation

- Continuous engagement with chiefs and traditional sector
- Clear concept/ brand to differentiate from traditional initiation
- Radio spots nationwide, with emphasis on prioritized communities
- Collaboration with Ministry of Education to improve mobilization through schools
- Community Mobilizers and volunteers district-wide
- Collaboration with local organizations

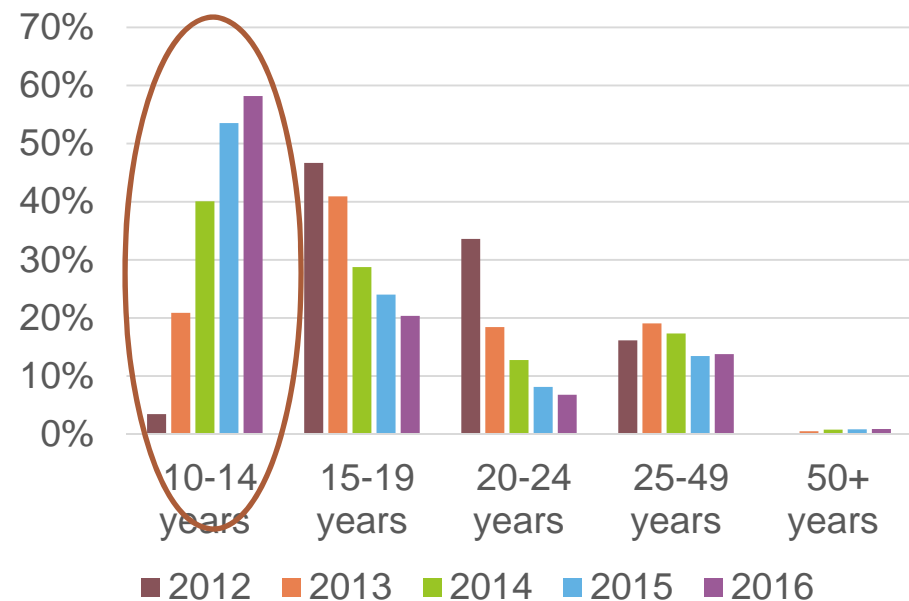
Our challenges

- How to overcome the strong seasonality barriers?



- How to reach older males in the 15-29 years age group?
- How do we reach males who have undergone traditional initiation?

% MCs done by age



Strategy 1: Summer Campaign

- Summer campaign piloted in 2 districts: Leribe and Mohale's Hoek
 - Training of all hospital staff
 - Recruitment and training of volunteers, Village Health Workers (VHWs)
 - Development of a leaflet with summer oriented messaging
 - Serving for longer period in selected communities
 - High involvement of district authorities (health, administrative)

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Strategy 2: District Volunteers

- Engagement of district volunteers in all the 5 districts
 - Training, monitoring and refresher trainings
 - Door to door, office to office, malls, bus stops, factories etc.
 - Informed consent acquisition for clients younger than 18 years
 - Supports wide dissemination of information on VMMC
 - Reimbursement with allowance to cover transport,
 - Use social media for mobilization (whatsapp and facebook)

Strategy 2: District Volunteers



Mr. Malefane, age 39 (father) - *“coming to [Jhpiego] gave me a good chance to ask and get all the information – both me and my son are circumcised now”*

Ms. Limpho, age 22 (Volunteer) - *“After the training I got more confident to talk to my peers about HIV- we understand how VMMC contributes to the other strategies”*



Strategy 3: Taxi Driver Initiative

- Orientation of taxi drivers on HIV, VMMC, and Social and Behavioral Change
 - Mobilization amongst peers
 - Mobilization of passengers
 - Themselves as clients
- Provision of fuel vouchers as transport reimbursement when clients are brought in



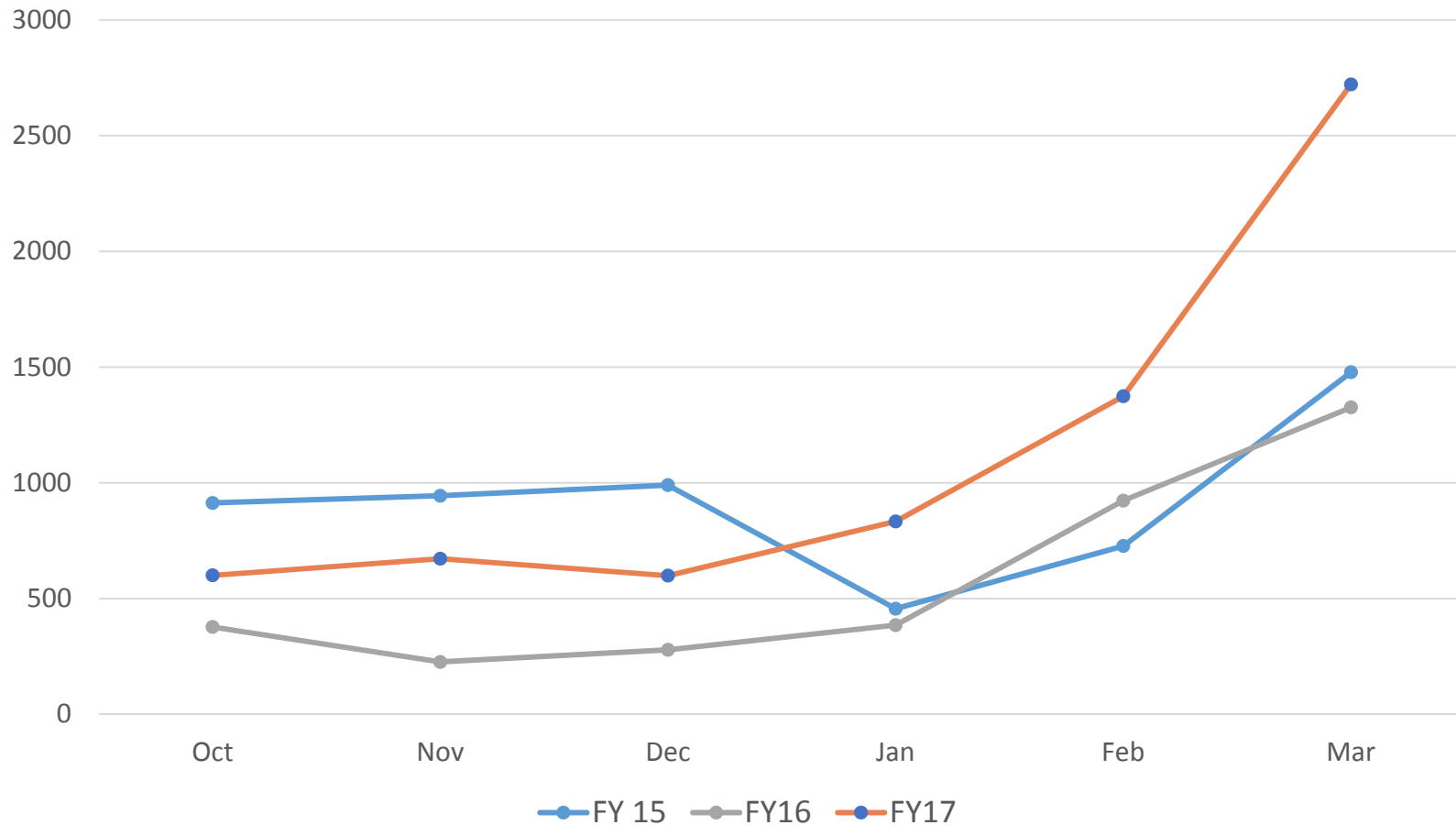
Strategy 4: Traditional Leaders

- Collaboration meeting with traditional initiators from all 10 districts
- Identifying traditionally initiated nurses/counsellors/mobilizers to link with the traditional schools
- MOH VMMC Coordinator focusing on traditional communities

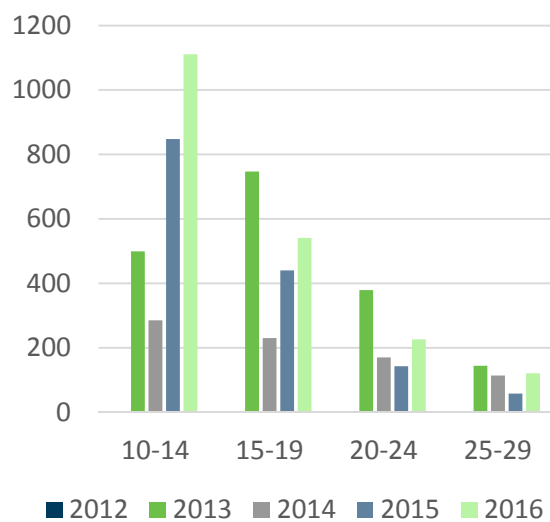
Impact

- Communities being reached with correct messages on VMMC
- Increase in clients being circumcised during 'summer' compared to previous years
- Reaching traditional communities is ongoing and may take longer to show results

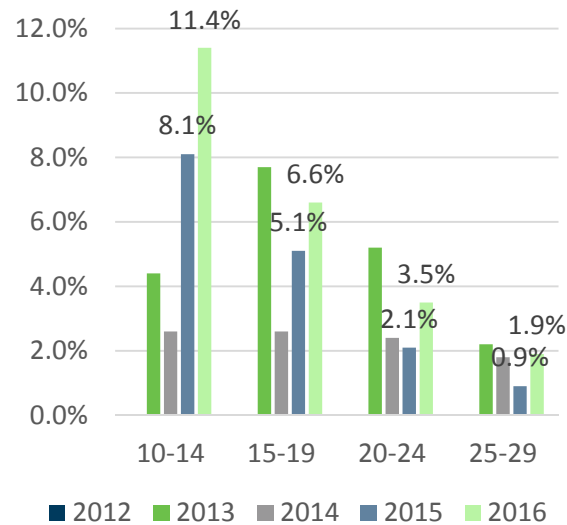
Client volume in 5 priority districts: Summer results FY15-FY17



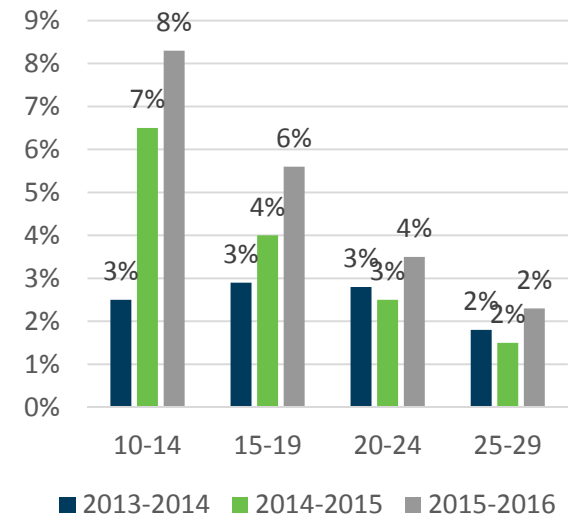
Number of Circumcisions (left), Uptake Rate (center), and Increase in Coverage (right) in Mohale's Hoek, Lesotho by Year and Age Group



Number of Circumcisions



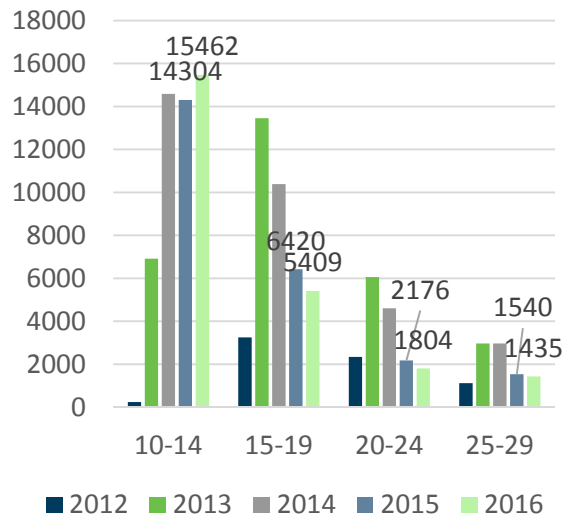
Uptake Rate



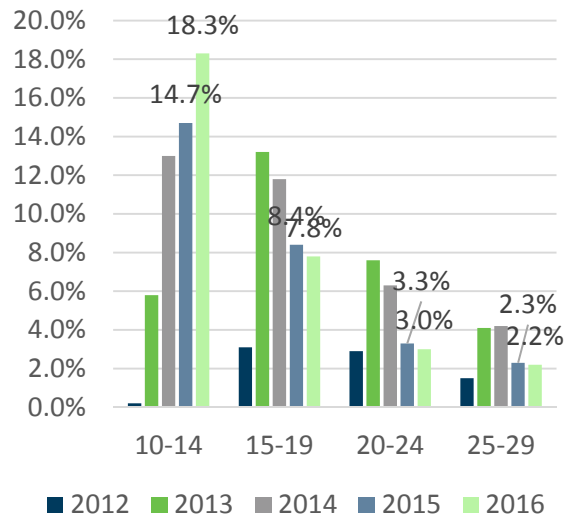
Increase in Coverage

DMPPT 2 Online modeling, Project SOAR

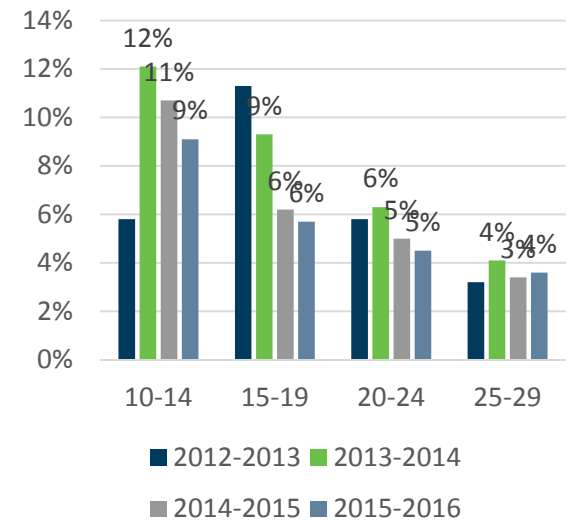
Number of Circumcisions (left), Uptake Rate (center), and Increase in Coverage (right) in Lesotho by Year and Age Group (National)



Number of Circumcisions



Uptake Rate



Increase in Coverage

DMPPT 2 Online modeling, Project SOAR

Lessons Learned

- Differential programming by district is necessary
- Breaking seasonality barriers is still difficult among older men
- Monitoring of taxi driver initiative and voucher system is time-consuming and may not work everywhere. Focus on high-transit areas
- Volunteers can have more impact than full-time community mobilizers but require ongoing follow-up support

Considerations for replication

- Recruitment of volunteers of the same age and from the same community as desired clients is essential
- Don't forget the volunteers! Ongoing refreshers and supervision helps break myths surrounding seasonality and promote 'peer support'
 - Continued support and monitoring improves volunteer motivation
 - Improve ease of communication through WhatsApp groups
- Be flexible – level of success per district can be variable
- Human Resources required for successful monitoring of initiatives and ensuring ongoing intensity of activities

Kea Leboha



An HIV-free generation is possible in Lesotho

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