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NEW TOOLS TO STRENGTHEN VMMC DEMAND CREATION WEBINAR

Thursday, February 7, 2019

Lei Hebel:

Good morning and welcome to today's webinar on new tools to strength VMMC demand creation. My name is Lei Hebel, and I an events and outreach manager at JSI. Before we begin today's presentations, I'd like to quickly review the Adobe Connect environment, and set a few norms for today's webinar. Today's webinar has two presentations followed by a discussion period during which our speakers will address your questions. Within the webinar environment, please make sure – sorry.

Please make use of the Q and A box on the bottom right side of your screens to share your thoughts, note your questions, or ask for help with sound during a presentation. Questions you ask are only visible to you, our presenters, and technical support. If you are experiencing difficulties, our technical support will respond to your question privately. We will collect your questions for our speakers and save them for the discussion period. It is great that we are able to connect people from so many places today, but your experience may vary based on your internet connection and computer equipment.

I will briefly go over a few troubleshooting steps if you have technology challenges today. A few troubleshooting tips. If you lose connectivity or cannot hear, please close the webinar, reenter the meeting room in a browser other than Google Chrome by clicking on the webinar link provided. Use the Q and A box to ask AIDSFree tech for assistance. If the troubleshooting steps are not successful, please rest assured, the webinar is being recorded, and you will receive an email with a link to the recording following today's events.

The recording will also be posted on the AIDSFree website. Questions that do not get answered during the Q and A session will be compiled after the webinar, shared the presenters, and responses from presenters will be shared with participants and others via the AIDSFree website. To get us started, I will now turn it over to our moderator, Erin Broekhuysen,

Erin Broekhuysen: Thank you so much, Lei. First, I'd like to welcome and thank everyone for joining us today. My name is Erin Broekhuysen. I am the knowledge management director for the AIDSFree Project and JSI. For today's webinar organized by AIDSFree, we will introduce two new tools to strengthen demand creation for VMMC. First, AIDSFree and JSI senior technical advisor for social and behavior change, Liz Gold, she will walk us through a new training curriculum entitled "Creating Demand for VMMC: A Training for Community Mobilizers." Then, USAID senior behavior change advisor, Maria Carrasco, will share a new tool for assessing the quality for your program's demand creation. Please be sure to add your questions in the Q and A box for our discussion period, and please, everyone silent your phones and devices. I'd like now to introduce our first speaker, Liz Gold, who is the AIDSFree senior technical advisor for social and behavior change. Liz, the floor is yours. Thank you.

Liz Gold: Thanks, Erin. Can everyone hear me okay?

Lei Hebler: Yup, we can hear you.

Liz Gold: All right. Thanks, everyone for joining. I know it's early for some and late for others. Okay. So, this morning I'm going to tell you a bit about – hold on one second. Let me make sure I can – okay. Great. This morning I want to tell you a bit about why we decided to develop this curriculum, who it's intended for, how it's structured some of the training methods that are used in this, and you might adopt this for your own local context. So, first, why did we decide to develop this curriculum? I mean, everyone has their own training curriculum, right?

But given the critical role of community mobilizers and generating demand, we decided to just take a closer look at how our AIDSFree country programs were training their mobilizers. And for

those who don't know, those countries are Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, and Namibia. Well, as you see here, a small survey showed each country was kind of doing their own thing when it came to training. In addition, discussions with mobilizers showed the content that was included in their training really varied widely. When I asked some of our demand creation leads how would you rate the quality of the training curriculum that you're using now, no one really gave themselves very high marks.

So, we decided in the end, there's a need to standardize the training for higher quality and better results, but still allowing for adapting to local context. So, who can use this curriculum? The curriculum's designed to be used by ministries of health and VMMC implementing partners when training their mobilizers or volunteer community advocates, sometimes referred to as recruiters or ITC agents. The objective, the aim is to train participants to increase their knowledge of VMMC for HIV prevention to become familiar with communications strategies, tools, improve their interpersonal communication skills, and gain the confidence to promote VMMC in their communities and effectively mobilize men for services. So, we went back and forth about should this be a two-day training, a four-day training, but after some discussion with field staff, in the effort to balance all of the content that needs to be covered but with the practical reality of your time and budget constraints, we've decided on a three-day training. The first two days are spent in the classroom with a third day for a site visit to a VMMC clinic and observation of a mobilization activity.

The curriculum consists of the trainer's manual, plus there's a slide deck that goes with the manual. A very, very large slide deck. Because the training's designed to be highly interactive and hands-on, it's really best to have a smaller group, no more than 20 participants in one workshop if you can do it. Because otherwise, it just won't be as effective of a training. On day one, as you see here, it's focused on the clinical aspects: what is VMMC, the benefits and limitations, its role in combination prevention, and what happens the day of the procedure, walking through the process of what a client would go through before, during, and

after.

Day one should be facilitated by a clinical director or a very experienced provider. There's also a brief overview that day of the country's national VMMC program that would be presented by the ministry. There's small group discussions and games, so it's not just death by Powerpoint. Then day two gets a bit more fun and participants learn about strategies for creating demand for VMMC. They gain an understanding of the key barriers and the motivators that can either hinder or facilitate men's uptake of VMMC. And they have a chance to role play and mobilize their – and a potential client interaction.

On that day, they work on effective communication techniques, practicing those in pairs, and learn about planning and executing mobilization activities. And then day three starts with a site visit to a VMMC site. There the participants meet the site staff. They get to see the client flow, and they see for themselves what they learned about in the classroom on day one. This is then followed by the observation of a mobilization activity. And that can be sort of any type of mobilization activity, but ideally, some – located somewhat convenient to where your training venue is. So, you don't have to waste too much time for travel that day.

Participants have a series of questions that they are answering about what they're observing related to what they learned the day before in the classroom. Then after the site visits, they return to the classroom for the final quiz and wrap-up of the training. As far as training methods, there's a variety of methods that are used depending on what the learning objectives of a particular session are, such as role plays, small group discussions, games, and a mock mobilization session. A satisfied client is invited to participate throughout the three days and shares his experience as different topics come up in discussion.

So, for example, if the topic is barriers, motivators, he might share what his personal motivation was for going for circumcision. In this photo, you see a satisfied client sharing his experience of managing pain. This was a couple weeks ago in a training in Eswatini. The presenter was talking about the procedure and pain management and then the satisfied client shared his experience

and took questions from the participants. I think his participation was kind of a highlight for the participants.

So, at this point, you're probably thinking, "Okay, this is all really nice, but how am I going to use this generic curriculum in my local context?" So, we've actually thought a lot about that, and there are several areas that can be easily adapted to better fit your context. So, for example, the overview of the country's program, that section has placeholder slides in the slide deck where you can customize for your country targets, et cetera. For the session on common myths, you'll probably want to add a few of your own local myths if you don't find them here in the curriculum. You might even want to switch out some of the photos in the slides for more local photos.

And in some cases, you'll probably need to translate into local language. So, one question you might have is "What do we do with our current curriculum that we're using right now?" So, while we're recommending that you use this because it is so comprehensive, you could consider adding modules or information from your current curriculum that you find missing from this one. Or, alternatively, if you already have a curriculum that's working well for you, fine. Then you could cross-check it with this curriculum, and then add any missing sessions to yours. It's totally up to you, of course.

So, quickly, just **[chair moving] [00:11:04]**, I'll go through very quickly to show you some of the slides. So, this is just from a session on day two where the participants are being introduced to various strategic approaches that can be used to create demand and which one is suited for which particular objective. Here's another example where it's being explained to participants that going for VMMC is a complex decision-making process that may happen for some over a long period of time with different channels reaching the man at different stages of his journey. And in this session here, participants are learning various communication techniques that help to create a supportive environment and meet the individual's needs. There's also a role play exercise where they practice the skill of active listening.

So, that's about all I'm going to say for now because I'm actually

hoping that I got your interest enough that you're going to take a look at the curriculum for yourself. At the end of Maria's presentation, you're going to find a link where you access the training manual and the slide deck. But I just want to thank and acknowledge the contributions of all the people that I've listed here, but in particular I want to call out Maende and Maria Tanque, the demand creation gurus out there because in developing this curriculum, I really drew heavily on the training that they are doing in Tanzania and Mozambique.

I was constantly bugging them and bouncing ideas around with them, so I really want to show my appreciation to them. Okay. Back to you, Erin. Thanks.

Erin Broekhuysen: Great. Thank you so much, Liz. That was a really excellent presentation and overview. It sounds like and looks like this curriculum is very comprehensive, and it's going to be a really useful tool. Just as a reminder to all of our participants, please add your questions for Liz in the Q and A box for our discussion. And our next presentation is from Maria Carrasco from USAID. She's the senior behavior change advisor. She will be discussing a new tool for assessing the quality of your program's demand creation. So, Maria, I turn it over to you.

Maria Carrasco: Okay. Thank you very much, Erin. Good morning and good afternoon to all. I am actually very happy to have the opportunity to share this tool with you. It's been a long time in the making, and it's great to finally have it ready and to share it, wow, with you all for use. So, if you have wanted to assess your VMMC demand creation efforts and at some point have trouble knowing where to start or how to maximize your time or how to go about in general, you know, where to go, what aspect of VMMC demand creation to assess, well, this is the tool for you. So, I'm happy that you are here with us to know a little bit about this tool. So, in my presentation, I will give you – okay. I will give you a brief background on the tool development and also details on how to use the tool, tool structure and content, and finally, suggestions on how to report results. So, a little bit of the background. The purpose of the assessment tool is to identify strengths, gaps, challenges, and areas in need of improvement in your VMMC demand creation

work. The tool was developed by AIDS Free in collaboration with USAID technical staff, and it is based in experience conducting VMMC demand creation assessment in various countries over the five years, or even maybe a little bit longer.

So, as you can see, we've really put into this tool all the experience from various assessments. We pilot tested the tool in Malawi and South Africa. And in advance, thanks to the teams in both of those countries for their help with this. And then the tool is meant to be used by USAID VMMC point of contact, VMMC coordinators of the Ministry of Health, and also VMMC implementing partners in the field. Okay. So, in terms of what the tool entails, the tool has four parts. Part one is an interview with the project demand creation lead.

Part two is an affixed site observation. Part three is a discussion guide for community mobilizers, and part four is observation of a mobilization activity. Part one and two are actually a rapid assessment that could be used by people involved in VMMC or prevention programming in general. And then, part three and four, if added to part one and two, provide a longer and more in-depth view of VMMC demand creation efforts. And part three and four could be used again by folks involved in VMMC in general, but we recommend that people have a specialized knowledge of behavioral sciences or are experts in VMMC demand creation are the ones using those two tools.

Okay. So, for parts one, two, and four, the questions point to what an evaluator would hope to see in place to ensure strong VMMC demand creation. So, and also, just, you know, having showed you the different parts here, that each part has a series of questions that can be answered in different segments of time. So, again, for parts one, two, and four, the questions are general information that you would help to see or general activities that you would hope to see.

In the tools, you can for this part, there's a column to answer yes, no, don't know, and then, also a column for comment.

So, for the questions that have no answers and don't know, it's always important to know what the comments are to have more

information for when you are writing the report. For part three, the questions help to assess the work with community mobilizers. And the mix of the demand creation strategy implemented will be different in different countries and in different locations and at different times. So, because of this, we were not able to come up with a numeric score. We thought about that quite a bit, actually, but then we realized that that didn't make to sense to have a numeric score because of these variations and if you will, heterogeneity among the different countries, and again even within a country.

So, the tool in this sense is really more of a tool to promote conversation and to look in-depth into what's happening in your demand creation efforts. The tool helps to take a snapshot of demand creation efforts and identify strategies that could be added and the questions in the tool, like I said, are meant to facilitate conversation and to know that these questions may have to be adapted to fit your local context. In the following slides, I will show you an example of this. And but, you know, don't be concerned about this. The adaptations will have to be minor, so the tool can still be useful in various VMMC priority countries.

Okay. So, with all that informational background, let's take a look at the tool. So, here is a snapshot of part one, which is the interview with the demand creation point of contact. This part includes 45 questions that give an overview of demand creation efforts in a specific geographic area. The different questions are subdivided in subsections. And there are six subsections: one on community mobilization, a second one on structural service-level factors, a third one on planning and coordination, a section on overcoming seasonality, a few sections on media, and finally, a section on referral and linkages.

And to prepare for this to assess this part, you should set up an appointment of about one hour to 1.5 hours with a VMMC demand creation lead. And you can see, some of the questions in this slide. There are some examples here. So, for example, one of the questions is do you have a dedicated community mobilizer for each site, and are you recruiting satisfied clients as mobilizers and so on and so forth.

Again, as mentioned previously, you see here the columns yes, no, don't know, and comment, whenever you no or don't know, please make sure to include comments to understand where that no or don't know is coming from because if there's a no, it doesn't mean that something's missing. There could be a perfectly reasonable answer for why that particular strategy was not implemented in that particular context. Again, the questions are meant to be a guide for conversation, and something to know is that some new questions may pop up when you are going through the tool. And if that is the case, it's important to write them down, so that you can also include that information when you do your report. Okay. Very good.

So, onto part two. Part two is a site observation. Part three includes 15 questions and to implement this part, you set up the site visit to a VMMC site, and in this slide, you can also see some sample questions. So, for example, do you find five or more clients at the site? And again, if you find that the answer is no, there may be a reasonable explanation. Another question here in the slide in this tool is are the majority of clients you find there of the age group of 15 years and above? And I am highlighting this question because this is one of the questions that you may need to contextualize for your country or for the geographic area.

So, for example, in at least two countries in **[inaudible] [00:21:51]** Tanzania, the priority age group starts at 10, so you know, you adjust the minor change to this question and look to make sure that the clients are 10 years and above. So, one thing to know about one and two is that again, the don't know column, in some cases, the demand creation lead may not know the answer, and this is okay, but it's important to always have a conversation and a discussion of what the situation is. Great. So, next slide. So, part three is a discussion with community mobilizers.

And part three is meant to assess whether mobilizers are well-managed, resourced, mentored, trained, and supported to ensure strong demand creation efforts. And this part is very important because as Lei mentioned, mobilizers are essential to having a strong VMMC demand creation. In fact, data shows that most clients accessing VMMC are coming because of their efforts. So,

part three includes 24 questions to facilitate rich conversation. And to prepare for this part, you should have five to eight mobilizers for a group discussion of about one hour, maybe one hour and 30 minutes at the most.

And for some of you, like in the case of Lei and me, we've done this, you have to make sure to get a translator in advance. Then, onto the next section. Part three – I mean, part four entails the observation of a community mobilization activity, and this could be implemented at a school, at a workplace, a taxi stand, bus stop, soccer match, and so on and so forth. In this section, in this part, there are 11 questions to gauge the quality of community mobilization activities. And to prepare for this part, you should set up a field observation of the community mobilization activity. And of course, the choice is up to you in terms of what you would prefer to observe. And finally, in terms of the report, we actually – in the tool we provide a template that you can use for reporting. You should also feel free to use a template that you already have to structure the report as you think is best for your country or your context.

And we recommend developing your report after using the tool because this helps to digest the information that you have collected with the tool. And we also recommend that you summarize the information and include observations and then list these six areas that are noted in the slide. So, for community mobilization, this will be your work with community mobilizers. For structural and service-level factors, these include information about transportation, hours of operation, access for clients, and so on and so forth.

Planning and coordination includes whether the service delivery team is coordinating with the demand creation team and also if currently the program is using a site optimization tool or some other tool to ensure that the site used is optimized, so you don't have staff sitting idle. Then, the section on media includes an assessment on printed media and mass media, data collection and analysis. There's a section on what data is being collected to inform demand creation efforts and making the data is enough or noting that more data is needed.

And the last part is part on referrals and linkages to look into whether referrals to VMMC are being conducted from other HIV service platforms, particularly from HIV testing. And then, I think that's all I have in terms of an overview of the tool. I would like to acknowledge Liz Gold of course, who is the main author of this tool, and also, Valerian Kiggundu and Anouk Amzel, who provided leadership and support from USAID, and also, many, many thanks to the team, the AIDSFree team in Malawi and the URC team in South Africa who helped us to pilot test the tool. That's a disclaimer.

And then, finally, here is the link where you can actually download the tools and adapt them, contextualize them, and use them in your programs to enhance your demand creation efforts. So, with that, I conclude my presentation, and over to you, Erin.

Erin Broekhuysen: Great. Thank you so much, Maria. That was an excellent presentation and overview of this new tool. I wanted to remind participants to please continue to add your questions for Liz and Maria in the Q and A box for our discussion. And thanks again to both of our speakers for their presentations. We'll now use the rest of the time for discussion. And the good news is, we have plenty of time. Thanks Liz and Maria for being **[feedback] [00:27:19]** to your time, which, you know, we have about 30 minutes left for discussion.

And we'll try to get to as many questions that we can and any questions that won't be answered – that if we run out of time to answer today, they'll be collected, and we will ask the speakers to share their responses and then post them on AIDSFree website following the webinar. So, yeah. So, as we get started, let's see. Oh. I have – our first question is from – and this one is for Liz. Insofar as how often you do trainings as part of and use this curriculum, how often would you give this training, and can you talk a little bit about a refresher training or how often should this training occur?

Liz Gold: Thanks, Erin. Sorry. I just noticed people are asking you to put the link slide back up again with the training link. Yeah, I'm here.

Erin Broekhuysen: Okay.

Liz Gold: How often? That's actually a really good question. I don't know if

I'm even the best person to answer that because I think people that have more experience with actually doing the training might – I would think every six months is probably – I know there's a high turnover often of the mobilizers, right? So. But one thing I think would be tricky would be to combine people at various levels in one training.

So, I wouldn't advise doing new trainees with refreshers together because I think that would be tough. You would rather have people that are at the same experience level in one training. But others may have a better response to that. I don't know. Maria, do you have thoughts on that?

Maria Carrasco: Yeah. No, that's actually a great question. Well, when developed these – the idea behind the training was really – the training that Liz presented was providing a comprehensive initial training for mobilizers. So, you know, that's important to know. This is their initial comprehensive training with everything, hopefully, with most things or everything a mobilizer should know, and for example, one thing to highlight is the mobilizers knowing what's happening during the VMMC service. We think that that's a gap, and we've added that information in the training. Another thing, for example, is ethical considerations. In some countries, they think that's a gap, so we've added that.

So, with that said, you know, in terms of when should a refresher be done and what should be the content, well, you know, since in the initial training, we've already covered the basic ground, one thing to consider for refreshers is of course focusing more on actual mobilization skills. So, for example, communication. You know, different communication skills, and also how to reach potential clients and follow up with potential clients. Now, we **[inaudible] [00:30:28]**, have not developed a refresher training. Maybe that's something, Liz. An idea to consider and look into for our next step.

But those are some thoughts in terms of why you would do some refresher trainings. Maybe others want to add? Other colleagues from the ACL that have joined?

Liz Gold: Yeah. Are they able to speak, Erin?

- Erin Broekhuysen: No. Unfortunately, no. Yeah, their audio is all muted. But they can certainly respond or type additional questions into the –
- Liz Gold: Yeah.
- Erin Broekhuysen: – Q and A box. So, maybe we could move onto the next question? And this is for Liz. So, a community mobilizer can be but isn't necessarily a VMMC client. Can you talk about the various motivations of the people who become mobilizers?
- Liz Gold: Oh, that's an interesting question. So, you're saying what is their – you're asking what is their motivation for becoming a mobilizer?
- Erin Broekhuysen: Yeah.
- Liz Gold: Is that the question? I think.
- Erin Broekhuysen: Yeah.
- Liz Gold: Okay. So, right. I mean, it is our goal to get as many satisfied clients as possible. As you said, not all have to be, but a good percentage should be because find that they are definitely very effective as mobilizers because the men really can relate to them and trust them and feel like their concerns are being addressed by somebody who's been through the experience.
- As far as their motivation, I think it depends. I've talked to some that really want to share this thing with their peers. They're excited about it. They want their peers to know about it. They may get some sort of positive reinforcement from their community. There can be incentives. Not – I wouldn't use the word "incentives." It's probably not a good word. We'd probably like to stay away from that word. But there certainly is some remuneration for it. But I don't know. I don't know if others have other motivations. I've seen them sort of feel kind of a – being a role model among the men in their community. That type of thing.
- Maria Carrasco: Yeah. Yeah, and I would add to that, also contributing to the health of their community and having a sense of, you know, that they're contributing to improving –
- Liz Gold: Yeah.
- Maria Carrasco: – their community. I've heard that from mobilizers before. So, but I mean, one thing to definitely put out there is that there is that

incentive in terms of having some kind of income, some kind of supplement to their income. That's always helpful. Especially in some of the communities where we work, where there are not a lot of job opportunities, it may actually be a very important consideration for folks.

Erin Broekhuysen: Thank you.

Liz Gold: On the flip side of that, I think it can be very demotivating if they don't – if they aren't given the tools to do their job. We've seen that also where they feel very demotivated and they quit because they're not given proper uniforms or ID badges or compensated on time. Those kinds of things can demotivate. So, I think when we do the opposite and we really give them the tools to do it, they are much more motivated. We've seen that.

Maria Carrasco: Yeah, and really quickly, to quickly add to that, a good, strong training is actually a good motivator because then folks feel that they – mobilizers feel that they are able and ready to mobilize the community. So, I've heard that from some mobilizers, too. And then also, and you know, going back to refreshers, the need for refreshers, because things always come up. So, it's always good to bring mobilizers back to discuss skills and things that have come up during their mobilization activities.

Erin Broekhuysen: And Maria and Liz, could you talk a little bit about the recruitment and the role of a volunteer community advocate versus a community mobilizer? You know, besides the volunteer part of their title or role. Is it hard to recruit community advocates? What's the approach of doing that and sort of what the difference – the separation or the difference in role between a community mobilizer and a volunteer community advocate?

Liz Gold: I think our Tanzania program is probably the best example of the volunteer community advocates, right, Maria? I mean, they've had very good experiences.

Maria Carrasco: Yeah.

Liz Gold: With – yeah. They're probably the best example of where it's worked well.

Maria Carrasco: Yeah. I would say, I mean, in general, you know, and it's too bad

Maende cannot come in and speak, too about it because in Tanzania is primarily where they work with community advocates. I mean, in general, you know, these words or these labels that we use, community mobilization, community mobilizers, take different shapes in different countries. In some countries, they use community volunteer advocates. In some other countries, they use some – anyway, there are different titles that mobilizers use. And that depends on the context and why folks in the field it's more appropriate. And it's also, you know, the title is also a motivator.

So, you know, what is going to be the more motivating title to give to the people who are actually mobilizing potential clients and bringing them into the service? So, in terms of the differences, I mean, to really respond to that question, we would almost have to take these roles in the different countries and see how they vary, but the factors where they vary are sometimes in terms of compensation. In some countries, the mobilizers or advocates are part-time. Some countries actually have some full-time folks.

But I think it's primarily **[feedback] [00:36:58]** say in terms of how they are supervised and managed, also what resources they get. So, there are variations like that, but I should say in general that the training we have developed, it should apply – or that we are sharing, it should apply for mobilizers, community advocates, and people on the ground that are helping you to mobilize potential clients and bring them onto the VMMC services.

Liz Gold:

So, Maende has just written in the box regarding the last question about refreshers that in Tanzania, they've used biweekly monthly supportive supervision and field coaching to address areas of additional capacity and new knowledge. So, rather than where you might have used a refresher, it's been effective in closing that gap that a refresher may be traditionally used to address. So, a low-dose, high-frequency approach may be a good substitute for refreshers. That's really interesting. Thanks, Maende, for that.

Erin Broekhuysen:

Great. Thanks. We'll let's move onto the next question. So, there's some evidence that women can be just as effective as men in the role of the community mobilizer. Has that been your experience, and is it more of a local question insofar as the role of women?

Liz Gold: Definitely women can – oh, yeah. Definitely. They can be. From what I've seen, I think it kind of depends on the audience or the age group or you know. The women seem to do very well with the younger ones, for example, whereas the men or the satisfied client could be more effective when you're talking to someone, you know, 20 and above. It's not to say that they're not – they are effective for sure. I think it kind of depends on who they're talking to and the context. What do you think, Maria?

Maria Carrasco: Yeah, no. I totally agree. It depends on you know, one – some countries, what they've done is they've set different cadres of mobilizers to reach different audiences. So, in a particular country, maybe women are more successful at mobilizing youth, for example. In another country, maybe you actually want the satisfied client to mobilize them. One of example of that I'm thinking of is Lesotho, for example, where we have a lot of traditional circumcision.

And in that, to get to men who have been traditionally circumcised, to incentivize, actually promote their access to VMMC, one strategy that is particularly helpful is to have other men who are traditionally circumcised that have gone through circumcision to talk to them. Even if they don't talk directly about their experience with traditional versus VMMC because there will be some cultural challenges there in terms of respect because people don't talk about traditional circumcision openly. Just giving the example. You know, just standing of their peers as a person who, you know, has undergone traditional circumcision and now is talking about VMMC is actually a very powerful modeling example. So, again, it depends, but yes, women are definitely and can definitely be very effective mobilizers.

Erin Broekhuysen: Great. Thank you. I just wanted to remind everyone the tools are posted on the AIDSFree website. They're in the resource library in the VMMC section of AIDSFree and also on the webinar page. So, if you go back to the webinar page, you can access links to all the tools that we're talking about today. I have another question for Maria from a participant. The question is has the evaluation tool been pre-tested?

Maria Carrasco: Yes. Yes, absolutely. We tested it in Malawi, and we tested it in

South Africa with our colleagues from AIDSFree in Malawi and URC in South Africa. And with that pre-testing, we modified various questions.

Liz Gold: Absolutely.

Maria Carrasco: We also realized and came to the conclusion that it was not possible to come up with a numeric score, which is actually something we wanted to do at the beginning of tool development, but it quickly became clear that that was not feasible. And again, though, remember that while this has been tested, you will need to contextualize some questions to fit your local context.

Liz Gold: We also tested the shorter version and the longer version, right?

Maria Carrasco: Yeah.

Erin Broekhuysen: Great. Thank you. And another question was do you have a training curriculum for mobilizers? So, is there a specific curriculum for mobilizers, or will you be moving in that direction?

Liz Gold: What do you mean? This is the training curriculum. Sorry, I'm not understanding your question. Sorry. What was the question?

Erin Broekhuysen: So, we had a question about is the training specific to mobilizers or...?

Maria Carrasco: Yeah.

Liz Gold: Yes.

Maria Carrasco: Well, no. It's definitely specifically designed for mobilizers, and it's based on experience with trainings in other – in various countries. So, we've taken the best of what we've seen in various curricula and put it into this training. So, we hope that it is very useful, and again, in terms of how to use the training that we are sharing with you, you know, you can either take it as is and run with it and use it without making any changes. You can actually, if it's better actually to contextualize some of the sections like Liz said, or you could just take some of the sessions and integrate them into your current curriculum.

Or you could actually take the training we're providing and take some of the sessions of your current curriculum and adapt. And

so, there are many things you can do. But what we are hoping that we're providing with this training is the minimum items that should be included in a training for community mobilizers working on VMMC demand creation.

Erin Broekhuysen: And it sounds like the tool is very flexible in being able fit it into your country context and regarding with your local laws and putting it into your local language and such with sort of a menu of options.

Maria Carrasco: Yeah.

Erin Broekhuysen: I'd like to move to another question. It says it looks like the tool focuses on the quality of demand creation efforts. Does it address how to evaluate the impact the efforts have had on VMMC uptake?

Liz Gold: **[Inaudible] [00:44:28].**

Maria Carrasco: Yeah, that's a great question. Do you want to start, Liz?

Liz Gold: No. No, that's a really question, and yeah. The answer is no. It's not evaluating the impact. So, the way this tool came about is in countries where USAID was finding it challenging to meet targets, they would ask to have an assessment done to identify okay, what's going on? What are the challenges? What are the barriers? Why aren't we getting where we want to be with our demand creation? So, it's really an assessment to determine what are the strengths, what are the weaknesses, what should we be doing better, and to make some course correction, so to speak, going forward. What can we improve upon? It is not going to assess the impact as you're asking.

Maria Carrasco: Yes. Yes. And just to add to that, I mean, you know, assessing impact is very important. I mean, just very roughly, you know, to assess your impact, the first thing you look at of course is your numbers. Right? What are your numbers? Are you reaching your target? But and then, of course, you go back from there. What's happening for **[inaudible]**. But like Liz said, this tool is not assessing impact, but it's actually more of an exploration of what it is that is happening on the ground on VMMC demand creation. What activities are being implemented? What activities are not

being implemented? And what could be added to strengthen your demand creation effort? So, and again, the questions included in the tool allow for a conversation with different key players in demand creation in VMMC to help you answer the question of what can be done to strengthen your demand creation effort.

Erin Broekhuysen: Great. Thank you, Maria. Thanks, Liz. I have another question, and this is from the AIDSFree of Zambezi. So, thanks for your participation. They would like to know who would be the person to conduct this assessment, the VMMC national coordinator or who would conduct this assessment?

[Crosstalk]

Liz Gold: Maria, do you want to take that one, or do you want –?

Maria Carrasco: Sure. Go ahead, Liz. Go ahead.

Liz Gold: Well, we actually – in designing it, our thought was that a variety of – we wanted to design it in a way that a variety of people could do the assessment. So, for – I think Maria explained that we did two versions of the tool. There's sort of the shorter version with parts one and two and then if you add part three and four, you get a more in-depth assessment. But our thinking was, it could be, for example, the USA point of contact for VMMC or it could be the Ministry VMMC coordinator. It really could – anybody could really use the tool, that was sort of our thinking, that wanted to get a snapshot of their demand creation effort.

I think if you for the more in-depth four-part version, it's probably better to have someone that really has expertise in demand creation and SBPC, whereas the parts one and two are more geared towards somebody who may not necessarily have the expertise but wants to get a quick snapshot of the program. Does that make sense? I don't know, Maria.

Maria Carrasco: Yes, but **[inaudible] [00:48:09]**, I don't do that. You know, in terms of particularly who could use the tool, that's what Liz answered. But in practical terms, you know, how to use the tool, who should use it to assess the program? Well, for example, if you are doing an internal assessment, you could have the program director use the tool to understand exactly what's happening on demand creation and again on how to strengthen demand

creation efforts. You know, from the USAID or donor side, the USAID – the point of contact in the field, in the USAID, the mission officer could actually use the tool to do an assessment of the implementing partner’s demand creation effort.

And also, finally, the Ministry of Health, the VMMC point of contact could actually take the tool and go out and assess what’s happening in VMMC demand creation in their geographic area of purview. So, you know, there could be various people using the tool, and again, with the goal of understanding what’s happening on VMMC demand creation and how to strengthen VMMC demand creation efforts.

- Erin Broekhuysen: Great. Thank you. I have another question. What’s the minimum qualification of a mobilizer?
- Liz Gold: I think that that definitely varies by country some. I know in Mozambique, they want them to have a certain educational level, but that completely varies by country program. I don’t know if Maria Tanque or Maende want to comment, but that varies country by country.
- Maria Carrasco: Yeah, I mean, one thing to consider there is your mobilizer, what is the audience, the key of potential VMMC clients that they would be reaching or targeting? If the clients are highly educated or have high education level, then of course, you want your mobilizers to have a higher level of education. If your clients have a lower level of education, then they can – you know, it may not be necessary to have a highly educated mobilizer. Now, in terms of what is the level of education for a mobilizer that is going through the training that we have shared today, it’s meant to be for any level of education.
- So, we put it at a level so that it can encompass mobilizers with low level of education to high level of education. It’s a very hands-on, engaging training where people at various educational levels and from various backgrounds can benefit and can learn from this training. Do we have any other questions?
- Liz Gold: Oh, I think –
- Maria Carrasco: Oh, it looks like AIDSFree is having a bit of a challenge with the phone. So, let me read the next question. It says: “It looks like the

tool focuses on the quality of the demand creation effort. Does it address how to –“ Oh, sorry. We already went through that. Apologies. Okay, the last one. What is the attrition rate for the mobilizers?

Liz Gold: What is the attrition? Yeah.

Erin Broekhuysen: Yeah. Could you talk – yeah. We’re back on. I’m not sure what happened to our AT&T phone line, but it’s back on. Yeah. We – the last question, thanks Maria, was to talk a little about the attrition rate –

Maria Carrasco: I –

Erin Broekhuysen: – of mobilizers.

Liz Gold: Yeah. I think a lot of countries are struggling with that, where there’s a high attrition rate where they’re losing – you know, they’ll have a mobilizer do all this effort and then they lose them. And I think that has a lot to do with how you’re compensating them and equipping them and treating them basically. So, you know, if they can’t – I’ve seen where they leave because they said, “We’re not getting paid on time” or “It’s not worth my while. I’m having to pay my own transport” or whatever it is. They’re not going to stay. So, and also, just valuing them. I had a conversation in one country with mobilizers where they said, “You know, everybody was celebrating the 100,000th man, but they didn’t even invite us to the celebration. So, they don’t value the role that we play.” So, I think you’re going to have a high attrition rate if you don’t really invest in these folks because they bring a lot to table, and they’re really the backbone of the program. So, it’s worth supporting them and giving them the equipment they need.

Erin Broekhuysen: And one of the things –

Maria Carrasco: Absolutely.

Erin Broekhuysen: Thank you, Liz. And what about, you know, with community mobilizers and VMMC and HIV-positive men and boys, what – we haven’t really talked about that much. Or around the ethical considerations of informed consent. Do you have any thoughts around training for mobilizers and you know, HIV testing and getting people into treatment as well as the ethical considerations

around informed consent?

Liz Gold: There's a whole section on informed consent in the training. Sorry. I wasn't sure what the question – what you're asking.

Erin Broekhuysen: So, there is a whole section around informed consent?

Liz Gold: Oh, yeah. Definitely on informed consent. Yes.

Maria Carrasco: To just add onto that very quickly, informed consent is very important, and the training clearly defines what it is. It identifies that in different countries, it's different age ranges, and that's where that contextualization will come in. But it emphasizes the critical importance of informed consent. So, you know, take a look at the training. There is a very thorough section on the training about that. And we hope that really equips and prepares mobilizers to understand what it is and also its importance.

Erin Broekhuysen: Great. Thank you. And someone was asking about is it possible to share the curriculum for community mobilizers. I just wanted to remind everyone to if you access the tools, the curriculum and information is all included in the tools. And could you talk, Maria and Liz, maybe a bit more broadly or bigger-picture around what's the difference between demand creation versus awareness creation?

Maria Carrasco: Yeah, just very quickly before we go there, I just wanted to make sure also that we understand that all the tools we're making available. So, you have access to everything on the links that were on – maybe we can put it up at some point, Erin? The link. The slide with the link. So, go to that link and you will have the full training with all of the materials, the Powerpoint presentation. You'll also get the external – sorry. The assessment tool. So, all of that is in there for you to just take on and run with it and improve your VMMC demand creation activities. So, sorry about that plug. So, the question was – sorry. Can you repeat the question, Erin?

Erin Broekhuysen: Yeah, I just wanted to add onto that. The slide deck and everything related to the curriculum is all included on the webpage and in the materials. So, you should have everything you need around the guidance and the tool and the curriculum. And there's even parts of the tools that are culled out for the local context and good places where you can add in local laws, specific information, and

- things like that. So, it's very comprehensive and it's all included –
- Liz Gold: Right.
- Erin Broekhuysen: – in the tool and on the AIDSFree website.
- Liz Gold: Thanks, Erin. So, just to be clear, when you download the curriculum, you're going to see two pieces. One is the facilitator's training manual, and that's accompanied by a slide deck. So, you need both of those pieces. And then for the assessment tool, you'll see the four parts that Maria described as well as a template for writing your report.
- Erin Broekhuysen: And after the webinar, we'll send around the link again and to the webpage and everything because you can download all of these materials quite easily. So, I think we have time for one more question. So, our last question is could you talk a little about the difference between demand creation and awareness creation?
- Liz Gold: Maria?
- Maria Carrasco: Well, I will give you a very simple example. You know, you create demand – I'm sorry. I'm going to be a little bit funny, but you create demand among men, and you raise awareness among women for VMMC. Sorry. I just had to – that just really came to me. But again, awareness creation is really about understanding what is VMMC, what are the benefits, and one of the groups with whom we do, and we might do a lot of our awareness creation is women.
- Studies in various countries show that women's support for VMMC is very important, if not critical in men accessing VMMC services. So, in some countries, like in Tanzania for example, I know there's a special effort to reach out to women and inform them about what is VMMC and what are the benefits for me and also for women that can come out from VMMC. Now, in terms of demand creation, that's more of linking people and trying to get them to access the service. We want them to come into our doors and get circumcised. So, in terms of now, the differences in terms of the information we provide, when you are raising awareness, you may provide some more general information and background information. When you're actually trying to create demand, you have to give more specific information and demand creation also

requires more follow-up. You know, it's not just a one-stop awareness creation where you provide information. It requires following up with the client to make sure that they have information they need and that they have overcome barriers they may have so that they can access the service.

So, in that sense, demand creation is more intensive. It requires more follow-up. It may require more time, more resources, even in terms of providing transportation, for example. Whereas awareness raising is really disseminating information, informing people about the benefits, and leaving it at that.

Erin Broekhuysen: Great. Thanks.

Liz Gold: And in most –

Erin Broekhuysen: So, I'm – oh. Go ahead. Sorry, Liz.

Liz Gold: I was just going to say really in most countries, we're past the point of awareness creation. People are aware of it. We're really working on creating the demand and addressing those barriers and facilitators to get men into services, which requires different, more interpersonal communication rather than the channels you might use to just raise awareness.

Erin Broekhuysen: Well, thank you both very much for your comprehensive presentations and this rich discussion around demand creation and this excellent tool. I think I'll hand it over to Lei now to wrap things up but thank you so much for all of your participation and questions. Lei?

Lei Hebel: Thank you, guys. Before we wrap up today, I'd like to again thank the speakers for sharing their time and expertise today and thank you to all of the participants for attending and for the rich discussion. In a few days, you will be receiving an email with a link to today's webinar recording. Before we sign off, I'd like to encourage all of you to take a moment to fill out the poll questions that have just appeared on your screen, as the feedback is always helpful for us to improve our future webinars. Thank you again and have a wonderful day.

Erin Broekhuysen: Thanks, everybody.

Liz Gold: Thank you.

Maria Carrasco: Thank you. Bye.

[Audio ends] [01:01:38].

[End of Audio]

Duration: 64 minutes