

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES USED IN
SUPPORT GROUPS FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH
HIV/AIDS IN LUSAKA**

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research report has not been previously submitted for a degree in this or any University.

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Date:.....

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This report has been approved in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Award of
the Master of Communication for Development Degree (MCD) by

University of Zambia, Lusaka

Supervisor.....

Signature.....

Date.....

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of the communication strategies used in support groups for people living with HIV/AIDS in Lusaka regarding HIV/AIDS prevention, reduction of stigmatisation and discrimination. The study was conducted between May and August, 2008.

Data was collected in through the administration of structured questionnaires to 100 randomly selected respondents in 10 randomly selected HIV/AIDS support groups located in high-density areas in Lusaka. Data was also collected involving interviews with key informants from the Network of Zambian People Living with HIV/AIDS, Lusaka District Chapter Secretariat, and with 30 focal group participants purposively selected from support groups. The research findings were that person to person contact, testimonies from HIV-infected people, events and festivals were communication strategies mostly used by support groups to reach the community regarding HIV/AIDS prevention, reduction of stigma and discrimination. Communication strategies used by support groups are centrally planned and designed by implementing AIDS organisations and are therefore less effective.

The researcher concluded that support group communication should be enhanced through partnership in planning and designing of communication messages at community level regarding HIVAIDS issues so that there is harmonisation and standardization of communication messages used by support groups and that NZP+ Secretariat should to establish a communication budget line for effective communication among support groups.

To my spouse Lydia Serenje and daughter Jessie Mseteka

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARDC	Area Resident Development Committees
CATF	Community AIDS Task Force
CBOH	Central Board of Health
CRAIDS	Community Response to AIDS
CSO	Central Statistics Office
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GIPA	Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV and AIDS
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIV	Human Immune Virus
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
MIPA	Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV and AIDS
NAC	National AIDS Council
NZP+	Network of Zambian People Living with HIV and AIDS
PLHA	People Living with HIV and / or AIDS
PLWHA	People Living with HIV and AIDS
PSRP	Public Sector Reform Programme
SGPLWHA	Support Group for People Living with HIV and AIDS
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection

TB	Tuberculosis
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
URT	Uncertainty Reduction Theory
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
ZDHS	Zambia Demographic and Health Survey
ZNAN	Zambia National AIDS Network

