

HIV/AIDS information Flow and Access: Experiences from Babati District, Tanzania

By

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Abstract

This paper is based on an empirical study of the flow and access to HIV/AIDS information in the Babati District of Manyara region in Tanzania. The study integrated both qualitative and quantitative research designs. A sample of 131 respondents comprising of 50 male and 81 female was conveniently selected from three villages in Dareda ward. Primary data was collected using face to face interviews, focus group discussion, dissemination workshop, and in depth interviews with key informants. Findings revealed that the provision of HIV/AIDS information in the study area is undertaken by multiple agencies including: the district council, village governments, private and public health institutions, civil society organizations, schools, faith based organizations and other community-based organizations. The data showed that access to HIV/AIDS information is through radio; television and video show programmes, newspapers, oral presentations in schools and clinics, and various types of meetings. Other delivery methods include posters, songs, dances, and dramas. The findings revealed that, while information on HIV/AIDS prevention was available, limited information was available on care and support of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). Furthermore, access to current and up to date information on all aspects of HIV/AIDS was found to be problematic. Generally, HIV/AIDS information system and structure at local level was found to be inadequate. Major challenges that limit access to and flow of HIV/AIDS information include low levels of education, language barriers, lack of information and library services, limited access to radio, television programmes, and newspapers. Family structures were also found to inhibit the free flow of HIV/AIDS information between parents and children.

Keywords:

HIV/AIDS; Information flow and access; Babati district; Tanzania