

Transformative Partnerships: Perspectives on Implementing Research Best Practice with Key Populations in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Implementing best practice in research involving key populations particularly MSM and LGBTQ populations is essential for HIV and sexual health. A community advisory mechanism in Kenya (G10) was involved in participatory approach. 27 community members completed training, a research literacy handbook was developed, and a study protocol was submitted and approved by ethics for the first ever community led study. Community researcher partnerships increases understanding, research opportunities and participation. This is needed to ensure sustained best practice in research.

BACKGROUND

Meaningful community engagement and ownership across the research process is a key requirement of best practice guidance for HIV and sexual health research involving MSM and LGBTQ.

Participatory research approaches have the potential to:

- Conceptualize research questions
- Optimize conduct of studies and
- Broaden ownership of findings.

A national research advisory committee (G10) was formed to bring together LGBTQ community members and tasked with increasing community involvement in all research processes

METHODS

G10 developed **a roadmap and milestones based upon best practice indicators from Respect Protect Fulfill² and GPP guidelines¹**. Learning outcomes and curricular outlines were developed for **two community training initiatives**.

The first workshop aimed to **increase research literacy** through:

- 5-day classroom-based training in basic qualitative, quantitative research design and ethics concluding in an exercise to initiate to identify community key research priorities.

The second workshop led to **selection of a research question**, development of a research protocol and certification in research ethics.

Financial support for workshops and protocol development were provided by XX. Training facilitators and mentors were drawn from the MSM Health Research Consortium.

RESULTS

27 LGBTQ participants from diverse CBOs attended the workshop and developed a **community research literacy handbook** for wider use. Further to community-led consultation on priorities for research, 9 community members attended a training that led to the **writing and submission to scientific and ethical review** of the first ever community-led research study in Kenya - the **Mtazamo Mpya Study protocol**.

The study team is led by a community-based Principal Investigator, and comprises representatives of both community and academic organizations.

RESEARCH PROTOCOL: A COMPARISON OF ACTUAL AND PERCEIVED SEXUAL RISK AMONG LGBT PERSONS IN KENYA: MTAZAMO MPYA STUDY

Thank you for submitting your protocol to the Amref Health Africa Ethics and Scientific Review Committee (ESRC).

This is to inform you that the ESRC has approved your protocol. The approval period is from September 24, 2018 to September 23, 2019 and is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

CONCLUSION

Strategies to initiate partnership between researchers and community **broadens opportunities to better understand, influence and increase participation** in the research process. Success of such initiatives should form the basis of evaluation and need to be sustained to ensure best practice in research.

REFERENCES

1.G10 research engagement Roadmap:
<https://www.iavi.org/media-center/publications/file/138-g10-research-engagement-roadmap>

2.Respect Protect Fulfill:
<https://www.iavi.org/component/phocadownload/file/123-respect-protect-fulfill-msm-research-guidance-2015-english>

