



13-15 October 2024 | Maison de la Mutualité, Paris

# Enhancing HIV Testing Services through Community Posts in Harare City, Zimbabwe, 2021- 2023

Dr Talent Bvochora-Mudavanhu



# Introduction

- In 2020, Zimbabwe fell short of achieving the USAID target of 90% of people living with HIV (PLHIV) knowing their status
- Harare City faced challenges related to ineffective case identification methods, including low positivity yield from community door-to-door testing
- The COVID-19 pandemic further hindered progress in HIV testing
  - Reduced outpatient department attendance nationwide
- Harare exhibited lower antiretroviral therapy (ART) coverage among children, men, and young adults compared to other provinces

# Barriers to HIV Service Delivery, Harare City, 2021- 2023

## Demand Side (Client)

- **Time** (client wait times and time to reach services)
- **Cost** of access (transport, fees for HIV related services)
- **Stigma** (especially among men and adolescents)

## Supply Side (Providers)

- **Poor leveraging** of relationship between community stakeholders (gate keepers) and clinic-based providers (silo mentality)
- **Poor customer care** (from service providers) - lack of client centered services
- **Competition** among sector players and stakeholders at various levels limits coordination and effectiveness

## Addressing barriers to HIV service delivery, Harare City, 2021- 2023

- Harare City partnered with stakeholders to implement an integrated HIV testing services model
- Community posts—easily accessible decentralized sites such as markets, bus stations, church grounds, and community halls
- Services provided, including HIV counselling and testing, index testing, partner notification services, ART initiation, viral load monitoring, opportunistic infection management, and tuberculosis screening

# What Is a Community Post?



An easily accessible site in the **community** for decentralized service delivery  
*e.g., markets, bus stations, church grounds, fishing camps*



Operated by **trusted** local staff trained in customer care and in the core values of the model



Platform for differentiated service delivery:

- HIV Testing
- Test & Start
- Routine Monitoring HIV Care
- Referrals to certified parent facility

# Mapping for Strategic Site Selection

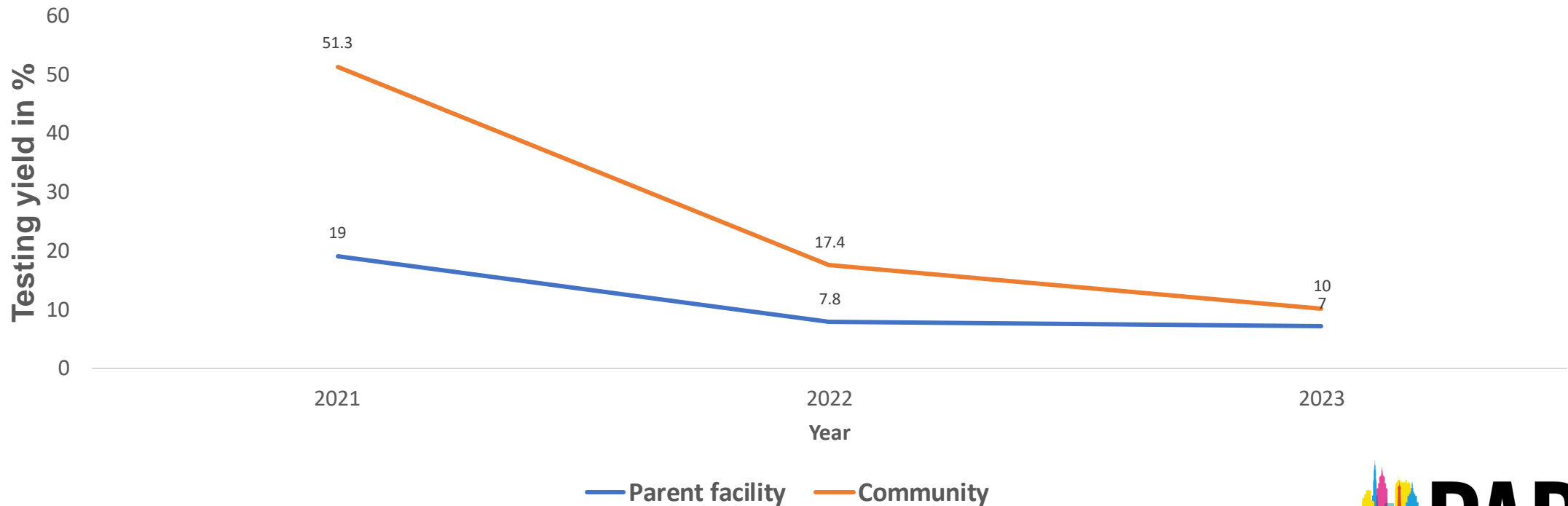
- Decentralized service delivery improves case identification and continuity of treatment
- Key is to identify potential CP close to the community where people live, work, socialise, and worship
  - Markets (trading areas for men, women & adolescents)
  - Bus stops (finding men & adolescents )
  - Busy residential settings (migrant patients)
  - Fish camps and weekly farm produce sales centres for rural areas (migrant patients)
- Sites are NOT branded as CP on the outside



# Lessons learnt

# HIV Testing yield, parent facility vs community, Harare City, 2021- 2023

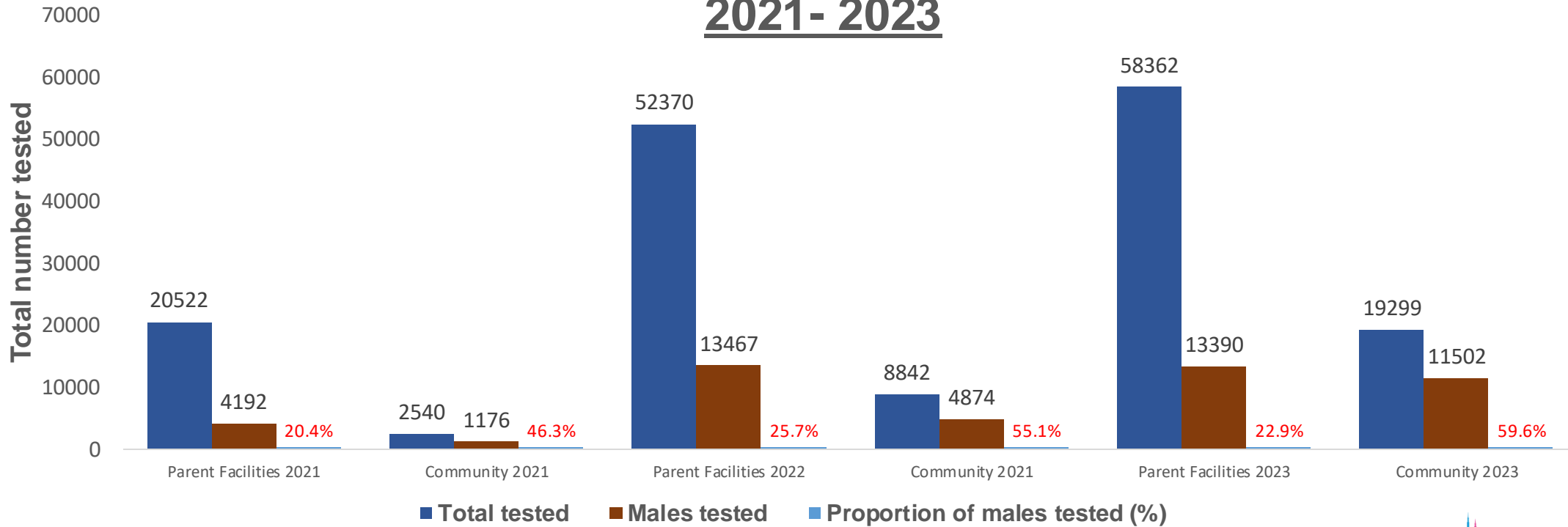
Parent facility vs Community HIV testing yield in Harare City, 2021- 2023





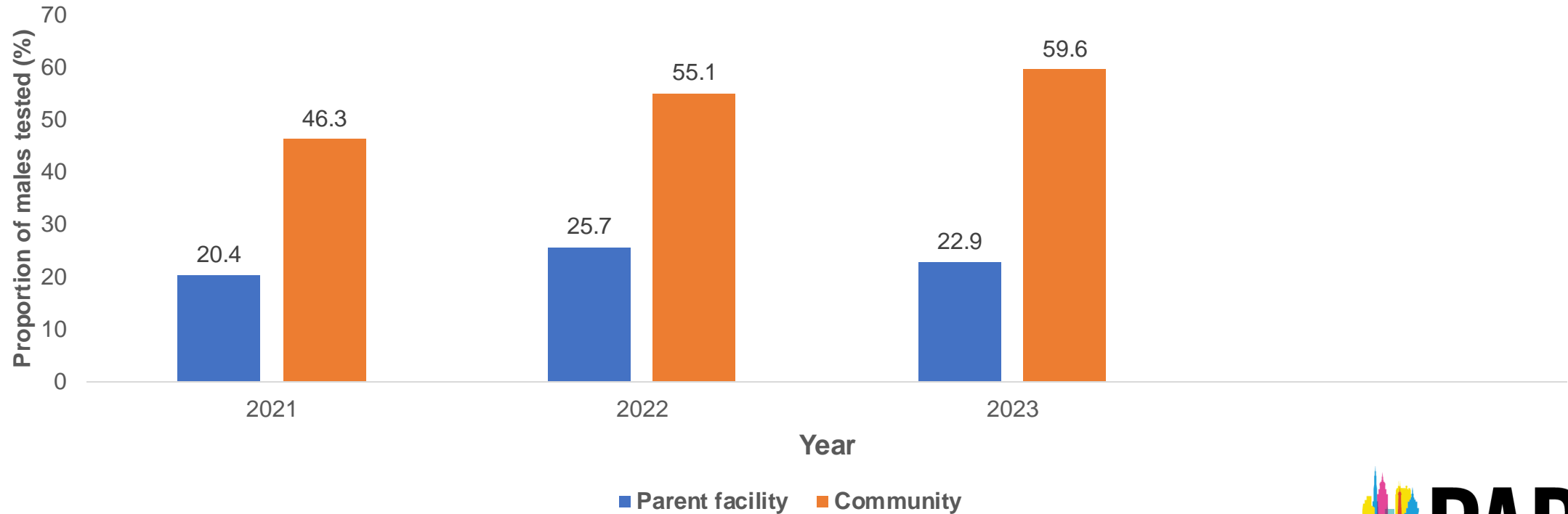
# Males HIV tested, Harare City 2021- 2023

Proportion of males tested (Parent Facilities vs Community)  
2021- 2023



# Males HIV tested, Harare City 2021- 2023

## Proportion of males tested for HIV- Parent Facility vs Community, Harare City 2021- 2023



# Challenges

- Balancing the priorities of implementing partners during project execution
- Community health workers and healthcare providers faced capacity limitations
- Identifying suitable and affordable spaces for community posts proved difficult at some sites.

# Recommendations

- Expanding the coverage of community posts across the city can enhance HIV testing accessibility
- Orienting, training, and coaching service providers are critical for successful implementation
- Transportation needs for staff and sample collection to optimize the community post model needs addressing

# Key Successes of Community testing in Harare City, 2021- 2023

- Improved case identification
- High yield through index testing
- Has attracted more males compared to conventional health facilities
- Improved continuity of treatment

*Thank  
you*

