

Differentiated health services for key populations: Partnership between the IRIS Association and the Rangel Health Center, Luanda - Angola

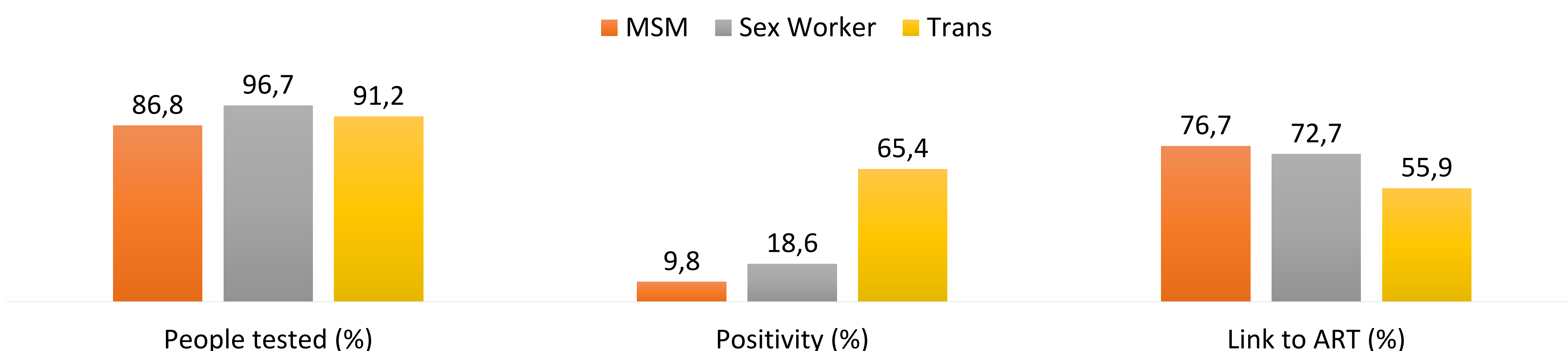
Introduction

Regardless of social status, occupation, gender or sexual orientation, all people are vulnerable to HIV, but certain social groups as are key population (KP), are more exposed. A national study (Place , 2017) reported the prevalence of HIV in female sex workers (FSW) as 8%; in transgender people (TG) as 9%, higher than the national average; while in men who have sex with men (MSM) at 2%. There are still several barriers that hinder access to prevention, diagnosis and treatment services for these subpopulations, due to the legal, social and cultural context. The provision of differentiated healthcare is essential to guarantee comprehensive and humanized access, meeting specific needs and preventing new infections .

Description

In 2018, a partnership between the KP community and the Rangel Health Center, through IRIS Association, sought to ensure the provision of health care in a humanized and ethical manner, without discrimination. IRIS association is an NGO that defends the rights of members of the LGBTIQ community, including access to healthcare. The Rangel Health Center offers counseling, testing, prevention, psycho-emotional support and referral services, resulting in a significant increase in demand for KP until 2019. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of funding led to a reduction of about 90% in community activities and, consequently, in the demand for services.

The promotion of the center with the support from PEPFAR/Linkage Project resulted in a service demand increase, especially from MSM (246%) and TG (966%) until 2019. In 2020 onwards, due to covid 19 and the end of the project LINKAGES, there was a 90% decrease in the community activities and therefore a reduction in demand for services. From 2018 to 2023, 1.877 men who have sex with men, 61 female sex workers and 57 transgender people were sensitized. The results in the graph below represent HIV testing coverage, positivity rate and linkage to ART.



Lessons learned

- Promotion of extra-hospital activities in the community with members of the LGBTIQ+ community increases their participation in seeking health services;
- The lack of financial support for community activities affects the coverage of services in the key population;
- The changing legal and social environment increases knowledge about constitutional rights in sexual minorities.

Recommendation

- Involve social actors and local companies to promote and ensure the rights of key populations.
- Mobilize resources to implement activities at the community level with key populations.

Speaker

Maria Elina Malau, Municipality Supervisor of the HIV Program – Luanda

Co-Authors: Carlos Fernandes; Neusa Lazary; Henriqueta Paim; Maria do Rosario; Tânia Chilumbo; Inocêncio José; António Muinga