Background

• Rakai Health Sciences Program research is integrated with comprehensive HIV prevention and treatment

• RHSP has supported HIV prevention and care since 1990s and added antiretroviral therapy in June 2004

• Currently, comprehensive HIV services fully supported by the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

• Implemented through a District-led programming approach

• Supported only Rakai district between 2004-2016

• 2017 to-date, services to 12 districts to cover Rakai, Kyotera, Bukomansimbi, Lwengo, Lyantonde, Ssembabule, Mpigi, Kalungu, Butambala, Gomba and Kalangala (84 islands)
Services Provided

- HIV testing and counseling
- Antiretroviral therapy
- Diagnosis and treatment of opportunistic infections
- Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (eMTCT)
- Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Services
- Tuberculosis diagnosis and treatment
- Laboratory services
- Services to Orphans and Vulnerable children (OVC)
- DREAMS (Determined Resilient Empowered AIDS-free Mentored Safe) programming
- Voluntary male medical circumcision (VMMC)
RHSP Service Program

- Serving 198 health facilities in Masaka region
- ~27% of clients are in districts covered by the RCCS
- Special focus on key and priority population programming (fisher folk, sex workers, MSM, ..)
- Test and start strategy-same day ART initiation

- Emphasis on
  - retention in care
  - Roll out of the Unique identifier system

- Patient transition to safer and more efficacious ART regimens (Dolutegravir-based)

KASENSERO FISHING COMMUNITY, home to KP, PP
Transition to Dolutegravir-based regimen

*TLD (Tenofovir 300+Lamivudine 300+Dolutegravir 50)*

Cumulatively, **36,501 (64%)** Patients transitioned to TDF-3TC-DTG (TLD) by Mid sept 2019.
RHSP Service Program

Recency testing

- Aimed at identification of Recent HIV Infection for HIV Public Health Response
- Have procured test kits, trained providers
- Will use *Asante* Rapid Recency Assay kit Sedia Biosciences
Unique Client identification (UI)

- Unique identifiers are numeric or alphanumeric codes that can be used to correctly identify a client when accessing health-care services at same or multiple health facilities.

- **Rationale:** Client self-transfers among clinics undermines retention estimation.

- Rolled out use of Unique Identifiers in 15 Health facilities in Kalangala district, 48 facilities (in Rakai, Kyotera, Masaka in progress).

- UI will support client follow-up and tracking within and across health facilities.

- Currently using **Fingerprint** reader through the Ug Electronic medical Record system.
**Progress**

**ART Cascade**

- ~116,984 on ART (out of 125,592 HIV positive persons in the region; ~93 % coverage )
- ~90 % of clients on ART are virally suppressed

![Bar chart showing progress in ART cascade]

**eMTCT**

- ~90% of HIV-positive pregnant women on ART

  - HIV infection among infants and young children has declined to 0.9%.

  - Pregnant women whose partners remain of unknown status are given HIV self-testing kits to facilitate diagnosis among men
DREAMS Programming

- **DREAMS** (Determined Resilient Empowered AIDS-free Mentored and Safe)
- Adolescents and Young Women 10-24 years
- Focuses on the reduction of HIV incidence in AGYW by delivering age-appropriate package of evidence-based interventions that include:
  - condom promotion
  - HIV testing and counselling
  - community mobilization and norms change
  - post-violence care
  - parenting/care-giver programs
  - expanded and improved contraceptive mix
  - combined socio-economic approaches
  - educational subsides and cash transfers
- Have supported **115,700 AGYW**
Orphans and Vulnerable children (OVC)

- OVC services in 8 of the 12 districts (Kalangala, Masaka, Bukomansimbi, Lyantonde, Sembabule, Kalungu, Mpigi and Lwengo).
- 35,569 OVC, ages 10-17 years, supported
- Focus on keeping OVC and caregivers/family
  - Healthy
    - HTS, ART, viral suppression, nutrition, food security
  - Case management
    - Household visits, assessment of vulnerability, child protection, hygiene and sanitation
  - Safe
    - Support for sexual and gender-based violence survivors
  - Schooled- Education subsidies
Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis

- **Oral** tenofovir and Lamivudine
- Delivery approaches: static, outreaches
- Provided PrEP to **4037** Clients
  - 1710 males, 2,327 (58%) female
  - Fisher folk, Females sex workers, Discordant couples, Truckers Men who have sex with men

12-months Retention on PrEP

Retraction is a major challenge
VMMC

- RHSP provides VMMC services to males ages 10 years and older in Masaka region.
- Services are provided via static clinics and mobile VMMC camps
- Supports training of VMMC providers nationally
VMMC

281,064 circumcisions provided between 2007 to date

VMMC training

VMMC training for 2,622
- 872 surgeons
- 956 theater assistants
- 794 VMMC counselors.

- Training of trainers to
  - 79 surgical trainers
  - 32 theater assistant trainers
  - 19 counsellor trainers
Evaluations

- Combination HIV prevention impact evaluation (CHPIE)


- Program evaluation protocol-
  - Will support evaluation of the HIV services provided in Masaka region