# Strategies for Improving Participant Retention in Zimbabwe

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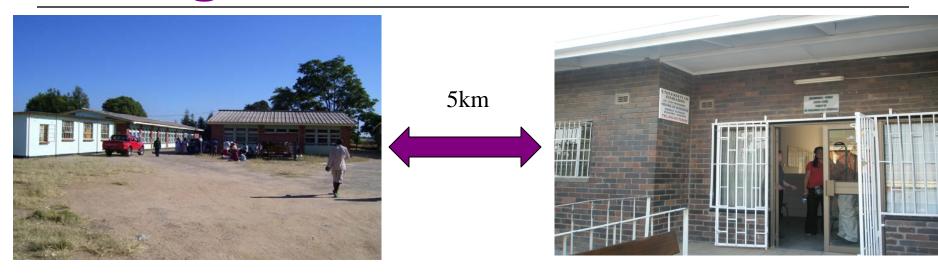


#### Presentation outline

- Background
- Retention Challenges
- Strategies to Improve Retention
- Lessons Learnt
- Conclusion



# **Background**



Seke South CRS Zengeza CRS



#### **Accrual, Retention & Early Terminations**

	Spilhaus CRS	Zengeza CRS	Seke South CRS	Total
Enrolment	205	208	217	630
Early exits	10	5	10	25
Chronic Defaulters	18	14	23	55
Retention rates	87%	89%	88%	



# Reasons for early exits & chronic defaulters

#### Early study exits

- 14 male influence lack of disclosure
- 5 Lack of time new jobs
- 1 Religious reasons blood draws.
- 5 Other personal

#### Chronic Defaulters

- New partners 5
- Relocation rural (20), neighbouring countries (26)
- Lack of time (4)

# Strategies to Improve Retention

- Timely identification of defaulters and follow up within a day - phone calls or home visit.
- Intensified courtesy phone calls, home visits and reminders about the next visit.
- Intensified rural home visits.
- Intensified follow up of early exiters.
- Rigorous update of locator information.



#### Strategies to Improve Retention

Intensified male involvement



#### Strategies to Improve Retention

- Identified regular defaulters and paid special attention to them when they attend for their visits.
- Regular staff meetings to review retention targets and to discuss regular defaulters.
- Emphasised the importance of retention to participants during retention meetings.
- Hold regular meetings with CAB.

#### Participants' Needs

- Picking up participants
- Reimbursement for long distance travel
- Open clinics after hours, weekends and public holidays
- Incentives for milestone visits
- Entertainment and refreshments suggested by participants
- 2 3 months product supply

### Impact of Strategies

Extensive follow up of exited participants – 10/25 rejoined study so far.

Maintain contact with participants in neighbouring countries - 1 transfer, 3 are back in Zimbabwe.

All rural participants are now attending

## Impact of Strategies

- Cultivated a culture that makes participants feel valued, needed, respected, wanted and this makes them look forward to the next visit.
- Retention meeting attendance for male partners from 52 to 175
- Retention rates as of 3 October 2011
   SP 89%, SS 89% and ZZ 91%

#### **Lessons Learnt**

- Retention is a process that starts from recruitment up to end of study.
- Extensive follow up of participants is crucial from the beginning of the study.
- Identify retention team/officer
- Relocation to neighboring countries has been there from time immemorial and will continue.
- Male involvement is key to high retention.
- Need to be sensitive to participants` needs.

#### Conclusion

- Retention is everyone's responsibility. Staff and participants should understand the importance of retention.
- Proper planning, continuous monitoring, and creative problem-solving are important to achieve high retention rates.



# Thank you

- Participants
- Staff
- CAB







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