CONDUCTED 49%

11%

Financially

78%

All

Most participants found support groups 81%

Have children

Agriculture

G

8

58%

52

61

51%

Overall

42

Overall

7

21%

Focus

Impact

Support group financial

Support group participation

Support group monthly cost

“Groups are very good because stress disappears when you attend their meetings. Because of the way we speak and the fun that we get when we meet, especially if it is a support group where you freely disclose your feelings and the stress disappears.” (Group A, Women Focus Group 1)

“Before we formed the groups many of us were unable to educate our children through secondary school. But the groups changed all that because when a financial need arises one runs to her group and gets a loan at very attractive interest rates and the stress is alleviated.” (Group B, Women Focus Group 1)

Both Groups: Financial challenges but different dimensions

Is support groups membership beneficial?

Most participants found support groups helpful overall (93%), socially (81%) and psychologically (81%)

Group A (HIV+) members found support groups less helpful compared to Group B (non-HIV) members

Overall, only half found support groups financially beneficial: Fewer Group A members (33%) compared to Group B (67%) benefited a lot financially from group membership

HIV Status and Testing

A majority (92%) had been tested for HIV

63% reported partners had been tested for HIV

37% were unaware of main partners’ HIV-status either because their partners had never been tested (24%) or not disclosed their HIV status (13%)

58% (n=42) were in seroconcordant partnerships (22 HIV-; 20 HIV+ partnerships)

Socio-psychological benefits

“So far, having a group membership is a great experience. There are so many benefits. There is increasing financial self-worth and psychological needs also a lot of support that we get from the group.” (Group A, Men Focus Group 6)

“Support groups help you to get off the merry-go-round and to be empowered.” (Group B, Men Focus Group 1)

“Support group members are motivated to work together. There are so many benefits from these groups, you get financial and psychological support. It only benefits the officials. Only those at the top benefit from the money.” (Group A, Women Focus Group 1)

“[The] support group is a place where we receive care and love that are not available anywhere else. And to me, it is so good because it just helps to free my mind.” (Group B, Women Focus Group 4)

“[Support groups] are responsible for my survival and they have changed my life.” (Group A, Women Focus Group 1)

“Support group membership is important because it provides a sense of belonging and is helpful to members. It is a place where women can come to discuss their problems and get support.” (Group B, Women Focus Group 4)

“Support groups have improved my life. I am empowered and work confidently.” (Group B, Women Focus Group 4)

“[Support group] have helped me to be confident in my life. I can do anything now. I can help others.” (Group B, Women Focus Group 4)

“Support group has helped me. I was not aware of my rights until the support group informed me.” (Group B, Women Focus Group 4)

“[Support group] are crucial for my life. I came to support group and now I can talk about my problems.” (Group B, Women Focus Group 4)

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