



Increasing Access to and Uptake of HIV Testing, Counseling and PMTCT Services among Women in Purdah in Resource-Limited Settings of North East Nigeria



Introduction

- Women in purdah – the seclusion of *women* from public observation by using a veil and limiting movement.
- They are segregated physically from men and only participate in limited activities outside their home.
- More than 75% of women who don't access HIV/AIDS services are in purdah or have husbands who restrict their movement.

Methods

- Facility data audit-baseline assessment of women and men who access facility for HTC.
- Community mobilization and Sensitization.
- Use of Voucher and Escort Services.
- Daily service registers and referrals.
- Monthly and yearly monitoring systems.

Methods-contd



Methods-contd



Advocacy Visit to Local Government Chairman in Michika LGA, Adamawa State, Nigeria

Methods-contd



Advocacy visit to some religious leaders in two Local Government of Adamawa State, Nigeria

Outcome of Intervention



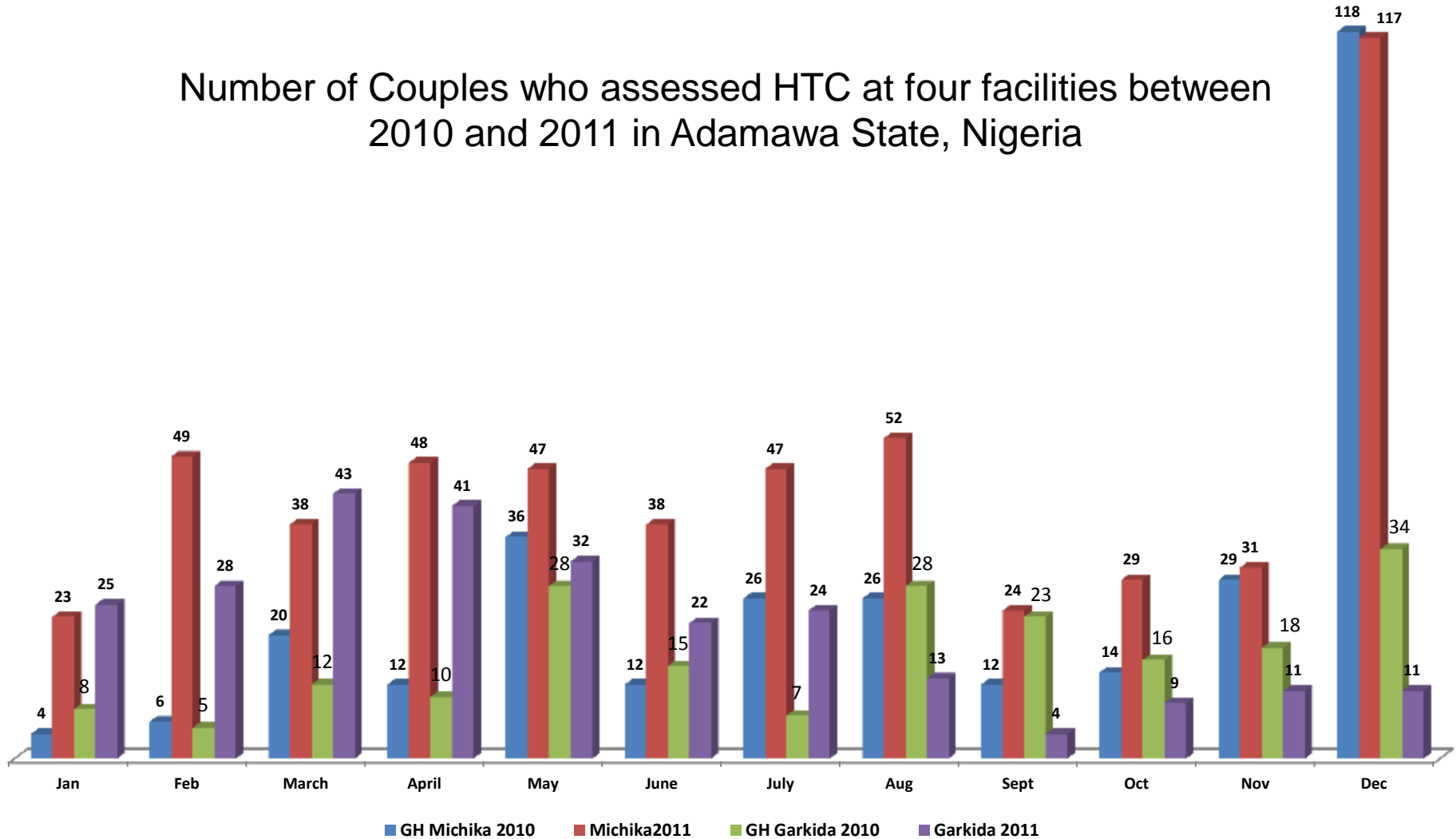
Some women in Purdah attending Health talks and ANC at the Facility in Adamawa State

Results

- Five (5) couples averagely accessed facilities monthly before intervention.
- Post intervention figures after third and twelve months increased uptake to 32 and 77 couples respectively.
- In the two facilities, more couples accessed services in May, August and December due to increased sexual activity during festivals and holidays.
- GH Michika has higher uptake.
- At the end of year two, more than 1000 intending or married couples had accessed both HTC and PMTCT services.

Results-contd

Number of Couples who assessed HTC at four facilities between 2010 and 2011 in Adamawa State, Nigeria



Challenges

- Request for written documents on test results from religious leaders.
- Inadequate staff for follow-up services with community and religious leaders.

Ways to Overcome the Challenges

- Continuous advocacy to community and religious leaders on confidentiality issues surrounding HIV/AIDS in Nigeria
- Task shifting and multitasking of volunteers in the community, churches and mosques

Conclusion

- Advocacy and community mobilization are important tools in HTC.
- They increase knowledge of and access to PMTCT services among women in purdah when supported by men.
- To increase PMTCT uptake, government, donors and NGOs should expand efforts in advocacy and community mobilization and engage more men.

Appreciation

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Thank you Olukunle Omotoso MPH Community HIV/AIDS Services Specialist



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