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## **Moonlight camps and uptake of HIV testing services among young men (10-24 years) in Karamoja sub-region, North Eastern Uganda**

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The HIV prevalence in Uganda dropped from 36% to 7.3% (2011), while Karamoja sub-region doubled from 1.7% to 3.5% in 2006 and to 5.3% in 2011 (UAIS, 2011). However, new cases of HIV infections are on the rise in the Karamoja region, a trend that could jeopardize Uganda's goals to eliminate the epidemic by 2030. In order to increase access to HIV Testing Services among the young people aged 10 to 24 years, the prevention of HIV and AIDS in the communities of Karamoja project concentrated on night-time integrated HIV

Testing Services outreach camps code-named Moonlight camps which are combined with delivery of Sexual Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS services. Moonlight camps are staged near night recreation venues and community gatherings, public-address systems are used as a means of attracting people to come for services. A total of 2809 young people (1630 Males, 1179 Females) were reached in the Moonlight camps with HIV counseling and testing services with 32 (16 Males, 16 Females) testing HIV positive giving a positive rate of 1%. More men (58%) were reached with HIV Testing Services compared to females at 42%. The Moonlight camps contribute 35% of the total number of individuals who received HIV Testing Services in the region. These camps have minimized the stigma associated with HIV testing during day time with more men taking up the service.

### **Biography**

Boniface Epoku holds a Master's degree in Management Studies (Project planning and management) from the Uganda Management Institute and a Bachelor of Nursing Science from Mbarara University of Science and Technology. He is the Program Management Specialist for Prevention of HIV and AIDS in the communities of Karamoja project, under Straight Talk Foundation, an indigenous communication for development not for profit organization with invaluable experience in the design and management of health and development communications programs. He has 8 years of experience in managing HIV/AIDS programs in Uganda and is serving member at Uganda's Ministry of Health Technical Working group for Maternal Child Health.

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