

# Scaling up voluntary male circumcision for HIV prevention

## LESSONS FROM A DISTRICT-BASED PROGRAM IN UGANDA

In just **SIX YEARS**, more than

# 408,000

men voluntarily circumcised in East Central Uganda with the support of the USAID-funded STAR-EC<sup>1</sup> program.



up to **60%**  
up to protectiveness against HIV infection



Male circumcision is a proven, one-time, low-cost procedure that saves lives and can save significant resources. Its safety and efficacy to reduce risk of HIV transmission during vaginal sex was demonstrated through three randomized control trials conducted in Uganda, South Africa and Kenya where the **protective effect was shown to be up to 60%**.

<sup>1</sup>Strengthening Tuberculosis & HIV & AIDS Responses in East Central Uganda

**STAR-EC** is a USAID-funded public health program that provides HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment services to communities in East Central Uganda.

Through STAR-EC support, the proportion of circumcised men in East Central Uganda increased from

# 37% to 57%

in just five years.



Which means that approximately

# 21,250<sup>2</sup>

new HIV infections have been **averted** in East Central Uganda due to the VMMC.

<sup>2</sup>The number of HIV infections prevented is calculated by dividing the number of male circumcisions performed on HIV-negative men by the number of circumcisions needed to avert one new infection in Uganda.

### HOW DID STAR-EC ACHIEVE THIS SUCCESS AT SCALE?

- Rapidly increased the number of health facilities able to perform male circumcision to include **all major public health facilities** in the region.
- Provided circumcision services at **over 160 outreach sites** every month, in addition to health facilities, in order to bring services directly to potential clients.
- **Extended outreach services**, such as week-long "circumcision camps" held every few months, to high HIV prevalence, hard-to-reach areas – for example, the islands in Lake Victoria.
- Employed a well-known model, MOVE, to assist health facilities to rapidly scale up their ability to perform circumcisions. The model employs surgical and personnel efficiencies, including "**task shifting**," where some medical responsibilities are transferred to lower level, but fully capable, health workers.
- Rapidly **trained 156 health workers** as part of surgical teams to tackle the unmet need for male circumcision services.
- **Promoted male circumcision awareness** at events such as radio talk shows, fairs, market days, couples testing and counseling weeks, and youth football competitions.

