

Identification of HIV-positive male partners and changes in sexual behavior following secondary distribution of HIV self-tests by high-risk women in Kenya

Harsha Thirumurthy^{1,2}, Noora Marcus^{1,2}, Elizabeth Bair¹, Perez Ochwal³, Sue Napierala⁴, Suzanne Maman⁵, Kawango Agot³

¹Division of Health Policy, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, United States; ²Center for Health Incentives and Behavioral Economics, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, United States; ³Impact Research and Development Organization, Kisumu, Kenya; ⁴RTI International, San Francisco, United States; ⁵University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, United States

Introduction

Secondary distribution of HIV self-tests by women to their male sexual partners has been shown to increase male partner testing.

However, there is limited data on the extent to which this approach results in identification of HIV-positive partners or changes in sexual decision making.

Methods

Data derived from an ongoing cluster-randomized trial of an HIV self-testing intervention in Siaya County, Kenya (**NCT03135067 – the Jikinge Study**).

66 communities were randomized into intervention (participants given multiple self tests for secondary distribution to their partners) and comparison (participants given multiple referral coupons for facility-based testing).

Eligibility: HIV-negative, age ≥18 years, ≥2 sexual partners in past 4 weeks.

Participants in intervention clusters received 5 oral fluid-based HIV self-tests at enrollment and additional self-tests as needed at 3-month intervals.

6-month follow-up data are presented from intervention arm only.

Participants reported on self-test distribution, partner testing, partner test result, and sexual behavior in their 3 most recent transactional sex encounters.

Results

Among the 1,058 participants in the intervention clusters, 922 (87%) completed the 6 month follow-up.

3.6 tests per participant were distributed to sexual partners, and 153 sexual partners (0.17 per participant) were identified as HIV-positive.

Condom use was significantly higher with transactional sex partners who obtained a HIV-negative versus reactive result (56% vs. 90%, $p < 0.01$), and versus those who were not offered or refused to self-test (56% vs. 64%, $p < 0.01$).

Discussion

Secondary distribution of HIV self-tests is a promising strategy for reaching men who have been traditionally hard to reach with testing.

Identifying and scaling-up effective HIV prevention strategies that increase condom use, decrease risky sexual behaviors and promote HIV testing, are essential for reducing HIV risk.

Providing high-risk women with multiple HIV self-tests promoted high levels of partner testing and condom use with HIV-positive partners.



“Protect yourself”



Figure 1. Use of HIV self-tests (N = 7,292 tests)

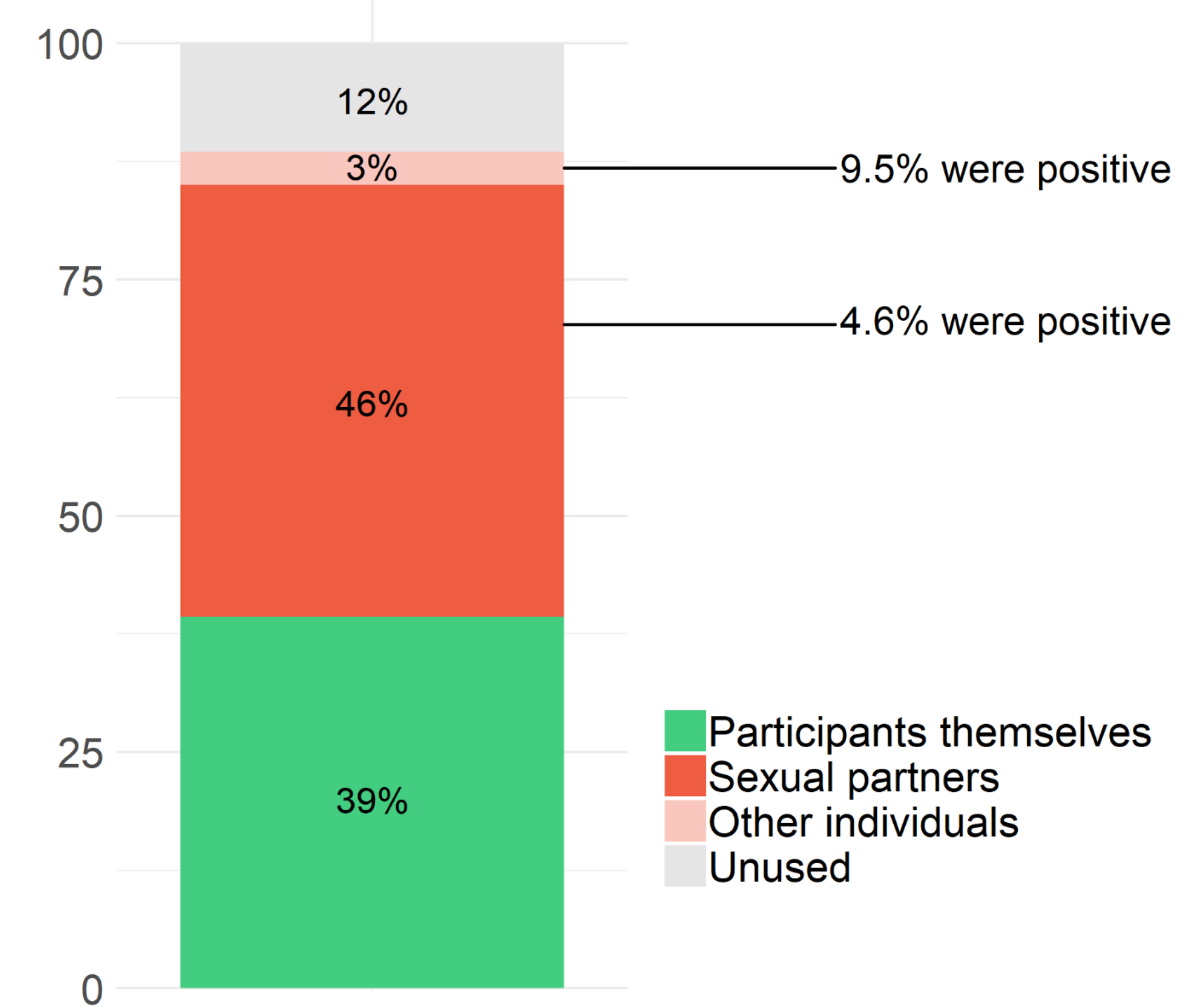


Figure 2. Primary partner and couples testing (N = 891 participants)

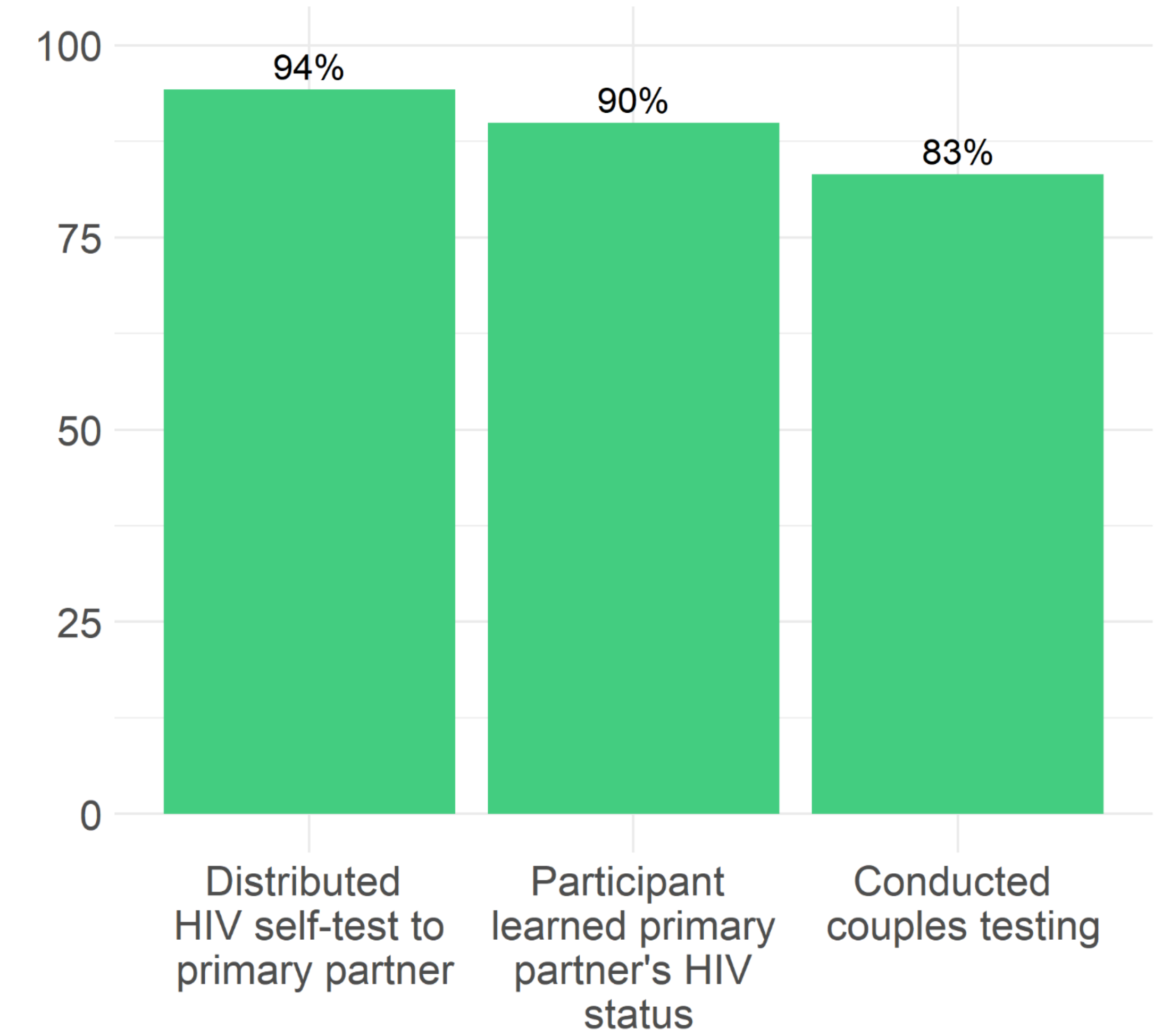
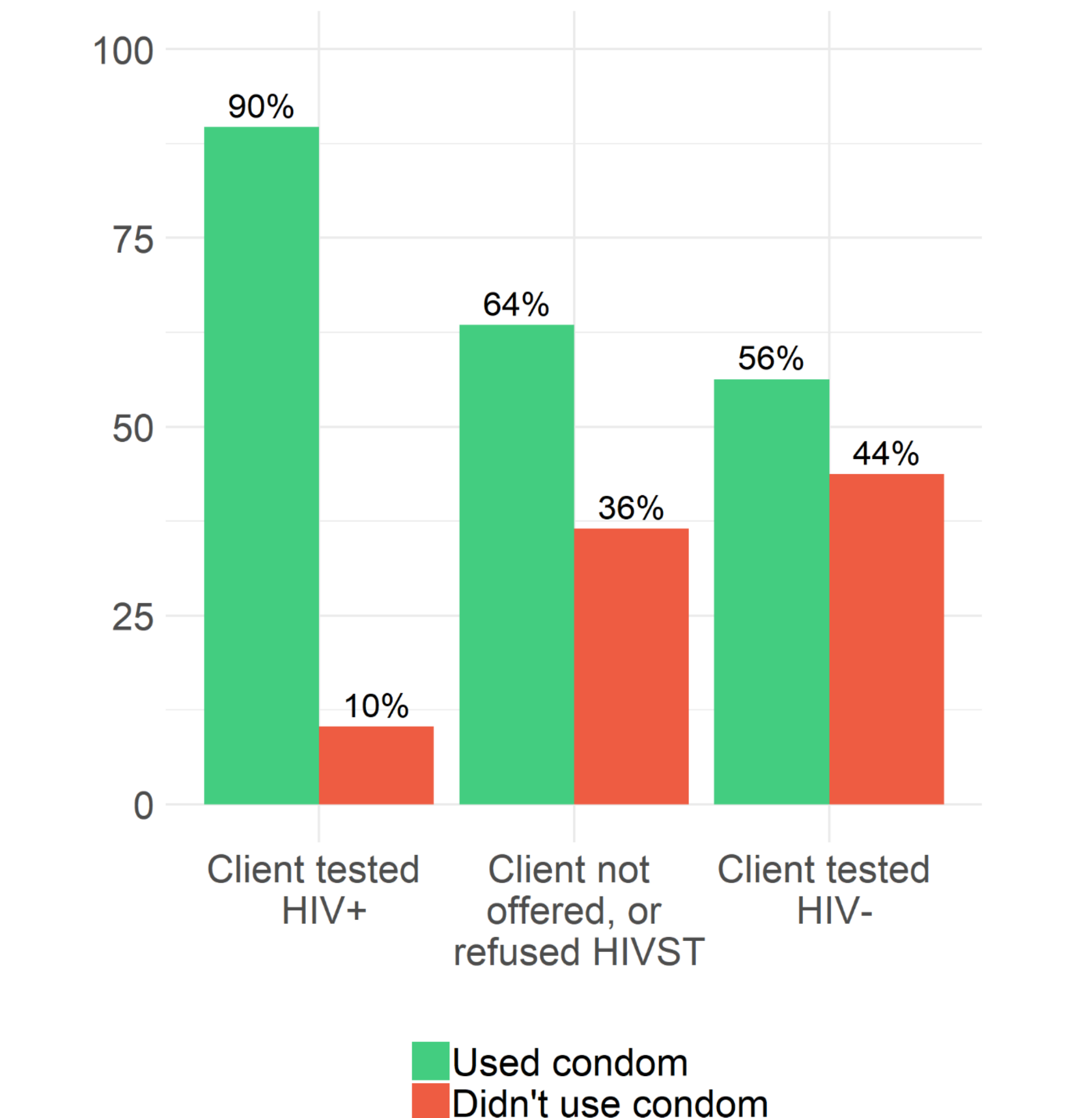


Figure 3. Condom use during recent transactional sex encounters (N = 1,885 encounters)



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