Draft Dissemination Memo

The study included several findings that might be useful for decision-makers, academics & policy-makers when approaching future programs focused on 'blessers' & 'sugar daddies'.

- No Sugar found that sexual behavior changed based both on self-reported data as well as our measures pregnancy and missing from school, although here the data were ambiguous.
  >> This challenges the current narrative that information provision cannot lead to behavior change. It is possible that targeted information campaigns may change some behavior - but message content, messenger, and context matter greatly to yield desired outcomes.

- No Sugar found that the messenger matters. Peers as messengers of sexual risk information seem to lead to better outcomes than teachers.
  >> Future sexual health campaigns should consider their messenger, e.g. peer educators.

- The study assumed that sugar daddies were primarily men in their 40s. However, we found that the actual age of partners was concentrated on men in their early 20s.
  >> This points to a need to determine more accurately who actual partners are in future anti-sugar daddy campaigns.

- It seems primary school girls in Botswana engage in much less sexual activity, relative to junior school girls. Future campaigns should:
  >> Evaluate sexual behavioral programs at a later age, cognizant to sexual debut (e.g. wait for primary school girls to reach sexual maturity, and evaluate the program).

- Knowledge attained about HIV risk was mostly forgotten a year later, though some was retained.
  >> Future programs should consider methods of supporting knowledge retention.

- No Sugar found that pregnancy is a poor proxy for unprotected risk and thus HIV risk. HIV transmission is influenced by a number of factors that pregnancy does not measure in any way (for instance, the number of partners a 'blessee' has, whether each partner is circumcised, etc).
  >> We suggest that in future studies or campaigns want to measure HIV risk, they should measure HIV incidences directly, not pregnancy.

Summary of Recommendations

- Target information campaigns might lead to behavior change.
- Measure HIV incidences directly, if HIV is the outcome of interest
- Have a clear understanding of who the actual partners are
- Target the group who has actually had sex (or evaluate at a later age)
- Consider methods of supporting knowledge retention over time

The approach taken by the Botswana Government, Baylor, J-PAL, Evidence Action and Young 1ove in this evaluation exhibited key principles of evidence-based policy and decision-making. Prior to scaling up a promising program, the partners re-evaluated the program in the Botswana context ten years after its initial evaluation in Kenya. This approach of conducting an impact evaluation prior to scale-up of a promising program is crucial for assessing whether it actually has the desired outcomes. Moreover, the COE and partners convened a Project Review Committee comprised of key implementers and policy makers in the government and civil society. This accountable party ensured that recommendations were responsive to the evidence. It is a promising model for future evidence-based interventions.