

Tingim Laip Elections Discussion Guide



In June 2012, there will be an election. From past experience, we know that during election period there is an increase in many activities that drive HIV. People's personal safety should also be considered during this time. In preparation for this, Tingim Laip has put together this discussion guide for Site Committees to reduce risk and vulnerability to HIV associated with elections in their communities as well as think of how they can keep themselves safe during the election period.

The sessions in this discussion guide can be conducted in one workshop setting, or separately over several days according to what will be most convenient for the Site Committee and their communities.

This session can be facilitated by:

Project Officers for Site Committee volunteers
Site Committee volunteers for community members (small group discussions/ peer group discussions)

Before you begin, you should remind volunteers of their responsibilities during elections. This includes:

- Tingim Laip volunteers are not allowed to be involved in the election in any way (campaigning, running for office, etc). If a volunteer wishes to be involved in the election, they should step down from their position as a volunteer until the election period is over. At that time they can express their interest to return to the project.
- Tingim Laip funds should not be used for any reason except for project activities as approved in the Site Committee plan. Tingim Laip funds used for any other reason, in particular for purposes related to the election or campaigning will be considered fraud. Site Committees found to be using funds for election or campaigning will have future funds suspended until a full investigation can be conducted.

Session 1: Mapping increased risk for HIV associated with the Election

Aim: To identify how and where Election will increase risk and vulnerability to HIV in your community

Participants: Site Committee Members (M/F)/ Community Members (M/F)

Materials needed: Butcher paper, Butcher paper calendar, markers

- Sit in a circle with the participants
- Explain to them that you are going to have a discussion to look at what happens during the election that could increase risk to HIV in their community
- Say that you are going to ask a series of questions to get the discussion flowing – to prompt discussion
- Ask community members to share what they know and what they have experienced in previous elections
- You can always add extra questions that you feel may be particularly relevant to your context

- You may want to divide the group into smaller groups – men, women, young men and young women. When you bring the group back together you can compare and discuss responses and ideas of each group. You can ask the group the following questions to get the discussion flowing: Are the responses the same? Do they differ? How are they different? Why do you think this is?
- Encourage them to draw on butcher paper (arrange stones, seeds, shells, leaves etc.) to demonstrate their points

Note to facilitator:

- Most of the talking in this exercise should, as much as possible, be among the participants, not by you.

a. Elections Discussion

- Share the following information with the participants (*prepare a butcher paper calendar in advance with each of the specific dates marked on the map*):
 - A National Election will be taking place in June 2012
 - From April 27th different political parties will begin campaigning for the election. This will continue until June when people got to vote. Counting will begin straight after until July.
 - The specific dates are:
 1. Campaigning period: April 27 – June 23
 2. Voting period: June 23 – July 6
 3. Counting period: July 6 – July 27
 4. Recounts, challenging of results, etc: August – October?
- Put up four pieces of butcher paper with different stages of election on each (one set of papers for each group, if you have multiple groups)

Campaigning Period April 27 – June 23	Voting Period June 23 – July 6	Counting Period July 6 – July 27	Recounts, challenging of results August to October
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- Ask participants to discuss the following questions and list their answers on the butcher paper:
 - What usually happens in their community during each of the election stages? (Campaigning period, voting period, counting period). List their answers on the butcher paper (campaign houses, police/ military move into communities...)
 - What are some of the things that people do during these times that puts them at risk of getting HIV/ STIs? (going to campaign houses, drinking, multiple partners, temporary breakup of marriages...)
 - Is this different for men and women?

- Who is most at risk during the election period and why? (young single women, police, politicians, young men....)
- How does this affect people's ability to access services (STI/ HIV testing, treatment and support for PLHIV)?
- Group discussion: lead a group discussion that allows the group to review all of their answers
- Remember that during the feedback sessions, this may be the first opportunity for people to learn of other people's opinions – ie what men think of women's behaviour during elections, what women think of men's behaviour during elections... be sensitive to the differences. While people can have their own opinions, remember that they must have the correct information.

b. Elections Mapping

- On a butcher paper, ask the group to map where each of these activities takes place in their community.

At the end of this session you should now have a good idea of:

- Activities that take place during each stage of the election period
- What activities lead to increase risk and vulnerability of HIV and STIs
- What puts men at greater risk of HIV during election period
- What puts women at greater risk of HIV during election period
- Who is most at risk of HIV during election period
- How access to services may be restricted during the election period
- Where all of these activities take place in your community.

Session 2: Reducing risk to HIV during election period

Aim: To identify activities that they can do to reduce the risk to HIV in their communities during the election period

Participants: Site Committee members (M/F) / Community members (M/F)

Materials needed: Butcher paper map from previous session, butcher paper, markers

- Sit in a circle with the participants
- Explain to them that you are going to have a discussion to look at what they can do to reduce risk for HIV in their community during the election period
- Say that you are going to ask a series of questions to get the discussion flowing – to prompt discussion
- You can always add extra questions that you feel may be particularly relevant to your context
- You may want to divide the group into smaller groups – men, women, young men and young women. When you bring the group back together you can compare and discuss responses and ideas of each group. You can ask the group the following questions to get the discussion flowing: Are the responses the same? Do they differ? How are they different? Why do you think this is?
- Ask community members to share what they know and what they have experienced in previous elections
- Encourage them to draw on butcher paper (arrange stones, seeds, shells, leaves etc.) to demonstrate their points

Note to facilitator:

- Most of the talking in this exercise should, as much as possible, be among the participants, not by you.

a. Activity Planning

- From the previous discussion, participants identified activities and groups of people who are most at risk during the election period. Participants also identified where risk behaviours might take place in their community.
- While it won't be possible to make everybody to change their behaviour, there are many things that people can do to make their community safer during the election period. The best way to do this is to:
 - Promote condom use and ensure regular supply of condoms
 - Encourage people to reduce number of sexual partners
 - Get tested
- Ask the group to look at their butcher paper from the last session:
 - Who is most at risk?
 - Where do the most risky behaviours take place in their communities?
- For each group of people who are most at risk of HIV, identify different activities that Site Committees can do to reduce their risk and vulnerability to HIV
 - Remember: TL volunteers cannot get involved in elections or campaigning. These activities should take place away from election/ campaign events or houses
 - Ex. Men who go to campaign houses can be encouraged to drink less
 - Activity: Discuss with men in community that they drink less at campaign house and why this is important for their health as well as that of their family. This can be done through house-to-house visits or small group discussions.
 - Ex. Men who go to campaign houses can be encouraged to use condoms if they have sex there
 - Activity: Discuss with men in community that they use a condom if they have sex in the campaign house and why this is important. This can be done through house-to-house visits or small group discussions.
- For each location where risky behaviours are thought to take place, identify different activities that Site Committees can do to reduce the risk of HIV
 - Ex. Police/ military headquarters
 - Activity: Works with sex workers to practice safe sex and to supply with condoms
 - Activity: Works with military/ police to promote condom use and to know their status
 - Activity: Arrange STI/ VCT testing at headquarters
 - Ex. Family Sexual Violence Units/ Family Support Centres
 - Activity: Where possible provide accompanied referrals for victims of violence and abuse during the election
- Discuss with the group which of these activities is possible? Who could do these activities?
- Work with your community to develop an activity plan to reduce risk for HIV in your community

Session 3: Personal safety and security during election period

Aim: To identify factors that might put people's safety and security at risk during election period

Participants: Site Committee members (M/F) / Community members (M/F)

Materials needed: Butcher paper, markers

- Sit in a circle with the participants

- Explain to them that you are going to have a discussion to look at what they can do to increase their safety and security during the election period
- Say that you are going to ask a series of questions to get the discussion flowing – to prompt discussion
- You can always add extra questions that you feel may be particularly relevant to your context
- You may want to divide the group into smaller groups – men, women, young men and young women. When you bring the group back together you can compare and discuss responses and ideas of each group. You can ask the group the following questions to get the discussion flowing: Are the responses the same? Do they differ? How are they different? Why do you think this is?
- Ask community members to share what they know and what they have experienced in previous elections
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Note to facilitator:

- Most of the talking in this exercise should, as much as possible, be among the participants, not by you.

a. Safety and Security Discussion

- During the election period, people’s personal safety and security may be more at risk in their day-to-day lives or when they are conducting activities
- People’s safety should always be a priority! It is important to think about these issues and to plan for ways that we can reduce the risk. In some instances we may even have to reduce activity levels – this is fine. The safety of staff and volunteers is more important.
- Put up four pieces of butcher paper with different stages of election on each (one set of papers for each group, if you have multiple groups)

Campaigning Period April 27 – June 23	Voting Period June 23 – July 6	Counting Period July 6 – July 27	Recounts, challenging of results August to October
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- Ask participants to discuss the following questions and list their answers on the butcher paper:

- What usually happens in their community during each of the election stages that can affect your safety and security?
- Is there increased risk for people conducting TL activities? What is this?
- Is this different for men and women?
- Group discussion: lead a group discussion that allows the group to review all of their answers
- Remember that during the feedback sessions, this may be the first opportunity for people to learn of other people's opinions – ie what men think of women's behaviour during elections, what women think of men's behaviour during elections... be sensitive to the differences. While people can have their own opinions, remember that they must have the correct information.

b. Safety and Security Plan

- Ask the group to look at their butcher paper from the last discussion.
- What can they do to increase their safety and security when doing TL activities during election period?
 - Receive funds only on a weekly, or activity, basis
 - Focus on small scale activities, and not large community events (e.g. peer education)
 - Restrict activities to only certain hours during the day
 - Restrict locations
 - Restrict use of public transport
 - Agree to always work in pairs, or groups of 3
 - Agree that some activities may not be possible during the election period
 - Always keep their phones charged in the event of an emergency
- For factor that could affect Site Committee's safety and security during the election period, identify different measures that Site Committees can take to improve their safety and security.
- Work with your Site Committee and PO to develop a safety and security plan for the election period
- How will this affect activities in session 2?