

**An Evaluation of the Impact of a Radio Diaries Program on  
HIV-related Stigma and HIV Testing in Ethiopia**

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## ABSTRACT

Radio diaries programs that feature people living with HIV/AIDS narrating everyday their everyday stories may play a role in reducing HIV-related stigma and increasing HIV testing. This study examined the impact of the *Betengna* radio diaries program on HIV testing and HIV-related stigma in Ethiopia. The *Betengna* radio diaries program was developed by the National AIDS Resource Center and the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs and funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ethiopia and the high levels of stigmatizing attitudes towards people living with HIV/AIDS. A household survey was administered to a random sample of 2,026 individuals aged 15 years and older between September and December 2007 in four regions in Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, Amhara, SNNPR, and Tigray. HIV-related stigma was measured across three dimensions: social rejection, fear of casual contact, and values. Exposure to the *Betengna* radio diaries program was found to be associated with having ever been tested for HIV ( $p < .05$ ). Individuals exposed to the program were more likely to have been tested for HIV than individuals not exposed to the program. Fear of casual contact stigma was found to be negatively associated with HIV testing ( $p < .05$ ). Individuals with high self-efficacy were more likely to have been tested for HIV ( $p < .05$ ). Exposure to the radio diaries program was not found to be associated with reductions in HIV-related stigma. This study suggests that radio diaries programs highlighting the everyday lives of people living with HIV/AIDS may play a role in increasing HIV testing. However, further studies are needed to determine effective ways of reducing HIV-related stigma.