

Requirements for a psychosocial shift in behaviour towards an AIDS free generation



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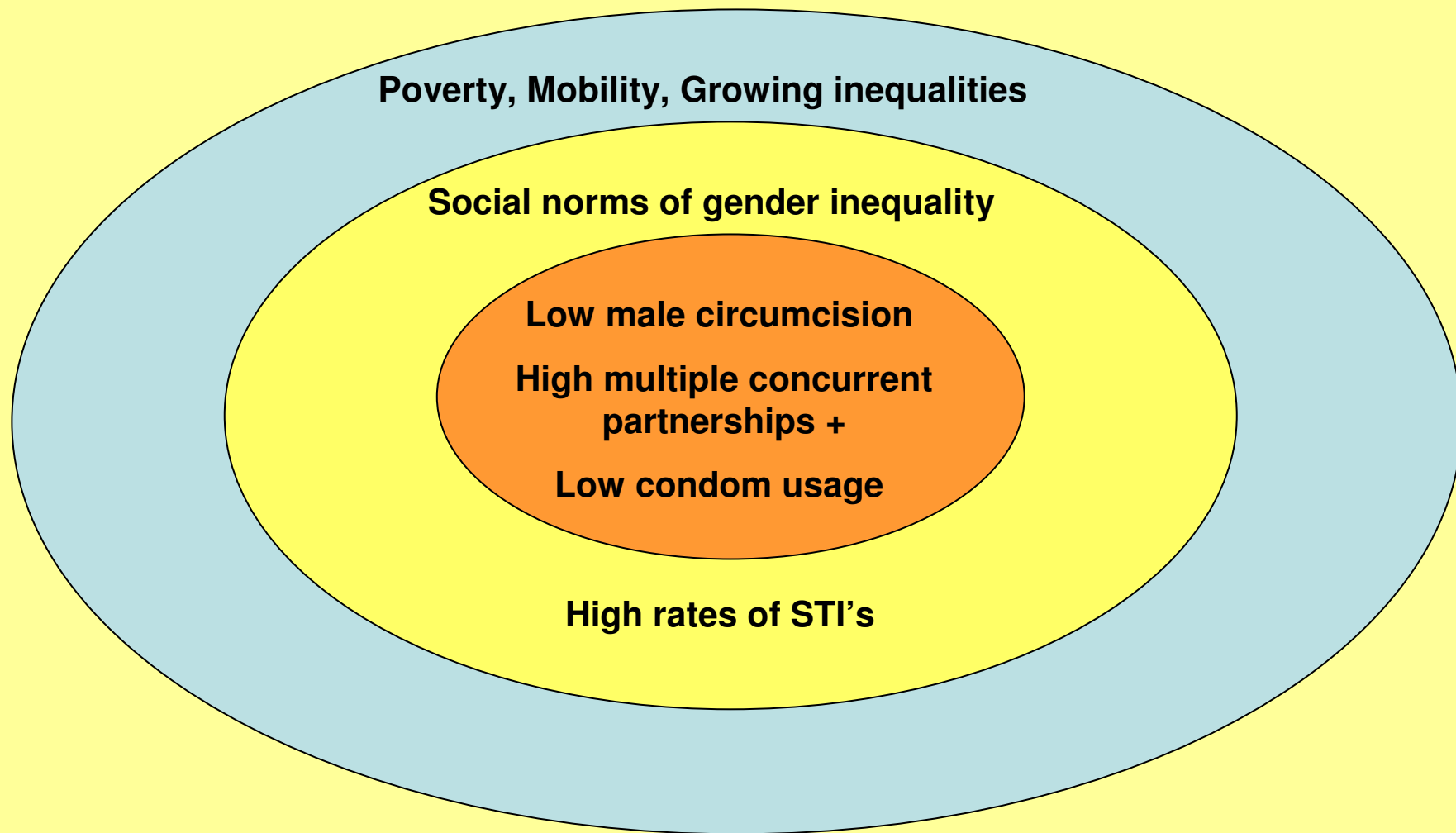
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Social science that makes a difference



1. Know your epidemic

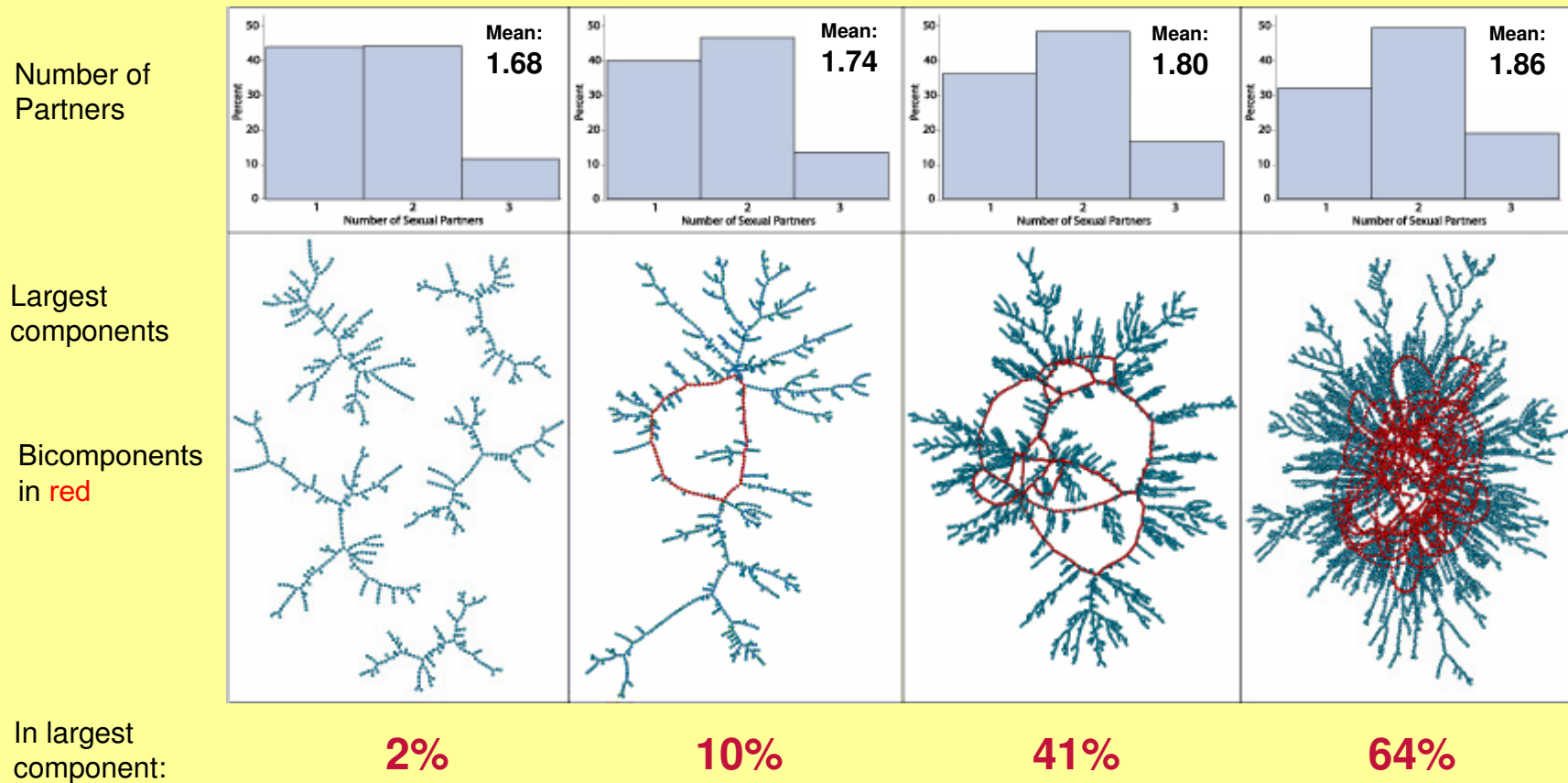
(What are the drivers of HIV in the region?)



Consensus findings from “UNAIDS/SADC Expert Think-Tank Meeting on HIV Prevention in High Incidence Countries”, Maseru 2006

2. Know how your drivers put people at risk

Even Low degree sexual networks create a transmission core



Source: Martina Morris, Univ. of Washington, used with permission from a presentation given at a meeting on concurrent sexual partnerships and sexually transmitted infections at Princeton University, 6 May 2006.

4. Understand how the context shapes vulnerability

Most all southern African societies are traditionally polygamous, patrilineal and patrilocal, with large bride-wealths conferring large degree of jural rights over woman and children

Social Implications:

- *Values & norms developed to uphold men's privilege and constrain women's autonomy.
- *The verification of a man's wealth, standing and manhood closely tied to ability to secure women (wives) & cattle as property.

Today:

- *Modified polygamy: 'monogamy *de jura* - polygamy *de facto*', or multiple concurrent partnerships.

***Many socio-cultural norms & values for gender relations that support this system still persist.**

5. Identify dominant messages or 'scripts' that are problematic for HIV prevention

A similar constellation of cultural scripts for sexuality exist throughout the region

- Such scripts are learned through socialisation and other enculturating processes and circulate as messages, expressing recipes for living.
- They prescribe appropriate behaviour.
- They often reveal and set moral standards.
- **They play a major role in making southern Africa the absolute epicenter for the global HIV/AIDS pandemic**

What are some of these pervasive scripts? (and how might the FBO sector address them?)

- 1. Male sexuality, unlike female sexuality, is non-restrainable. Men are biologically programmed to need sex regularly and with a variety of women.
- 2. Sex is one of very few ways to show love and to get love.
- 3. Sexual violence can be a way to demonstrate passion, affection or caring. Understanding of normal male behaviour are closely aligned to understandings of rape.
- 4. Pleasurable sex is to be found outside marriage; marriage is for procreation.

- 5. To show respect a woman is conditioned to accept, endure and forgive a partner's bad/irresponsible behaviour including infidelity.
- 6. A man should not be expected to be faithful when his partner is unavailable (during confinement, out of town, sickness, etc.)
- 7. A woman with self-respect does not give sex for free. She expects an exchange of goods, services or money for sex.

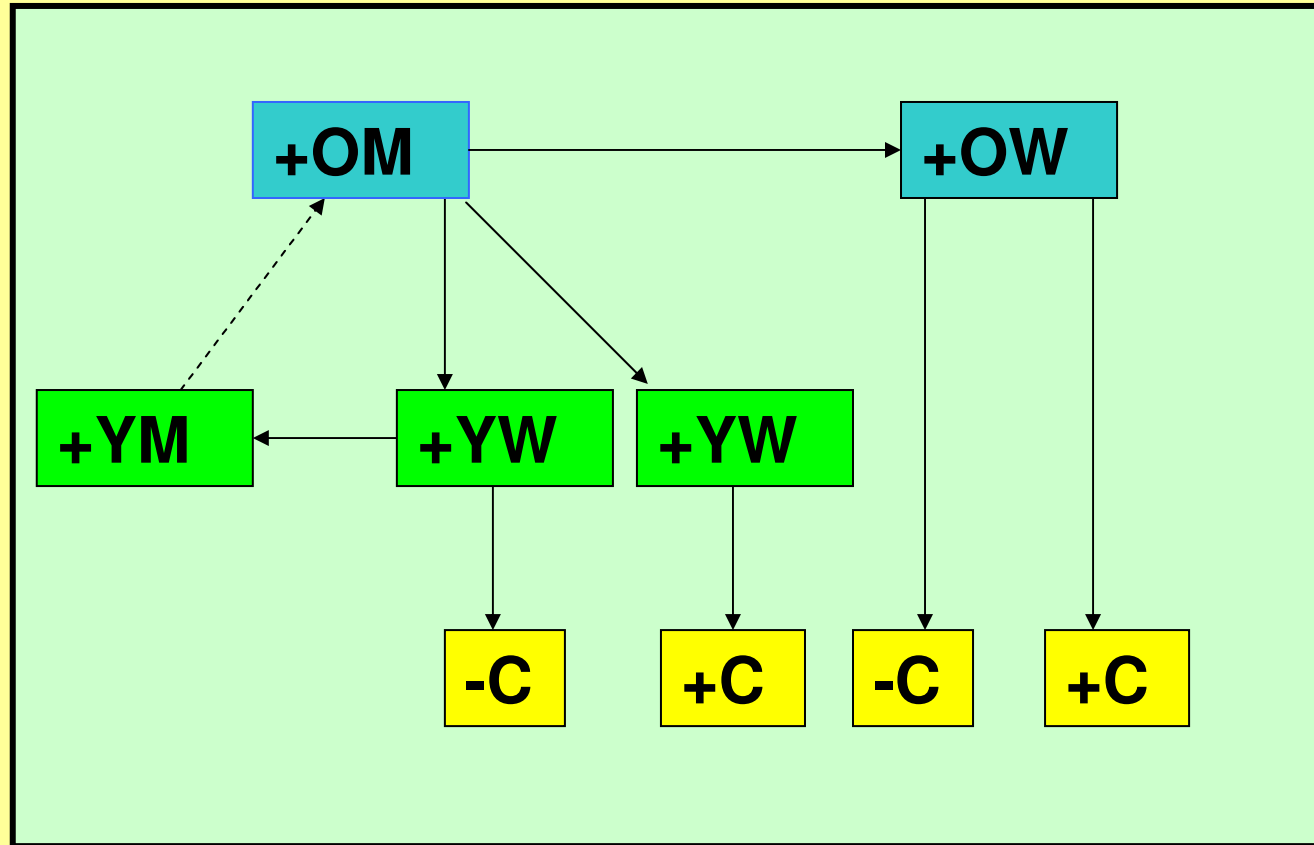
(conversely) A man demonstrates his social worth, affections, or commitment through the giving of goods, services or money.

How does this socio-sexual system catalyse the rapid transmission of HIV?

1. Throughout southern Africa multiple concurrent partnerships are common and are viewed as normal.
2. Multiple partnerships are legitimised through enculturation of boys & girls with supportive ideas, beliefs & values (i.e. male sexuality is un-restrainable, or men 'cannot eat cabbage every night')
3. Transfers of money, gifts or services (transactional sex) have long been and remain an important and normative part of courtship and sexual relationships.
4. Transactional sex is about more than 'survival sex'. Consumerist aspects increasingly come to the fore with expansion of economies, growing aspirations, and widening wealth gaps.

5. Many young women today are active agents in seeking multiple partners and exploiting them for gain.
6. Age-disparate relationships are common, have cultural resonance, and are quasi-acceptable.
 - *There is a significant & negative association between age disparity of partners & likelihood of safe sex.
 - * There is a significant & negative association between economic disparity & likelihood of safe sex. While wealthier men more likely to use condoms also more likely to have more partners.
7. Our stereotype of 'sugar daddies' is far too limited. They can be rich or poor, and 'sweet mammas' seemingly a growing phenomenon.

A common HIV transmission model



Source: S. Leclerc-Madlala (2002). Youth, HIV/AIDS and the Importance of Sexual Culture and Context. *Social Dynamics* 28(1):32.

What is the economic cost of maintaining multiple non-married sexual relationships?

- Kisumu men's (N=2700) average giving per partner was 9% of monthly wages (Luke 2006).
 - * 7% for relatively wealthy men
 - * 15% for poorer men

What are young women's motivations for seeking multiple partners, especially older ones ?

There is always the possibility of finding love, affection, or marriage:

- **Vulnerable victims--** report hunger, coercion, manipulation, pressure to conform, cultural expectations to obey and show 'respect', need for protection, employment.
- **Active agents--** boast of taking charge, 'milking the cow', seeking fun/adventure/opportunities to make contacts among 'sponsors', 'investors' or 'ministers' for present or future social mobility, looking for 'top-up' income.

Urban-Rural distinctions:

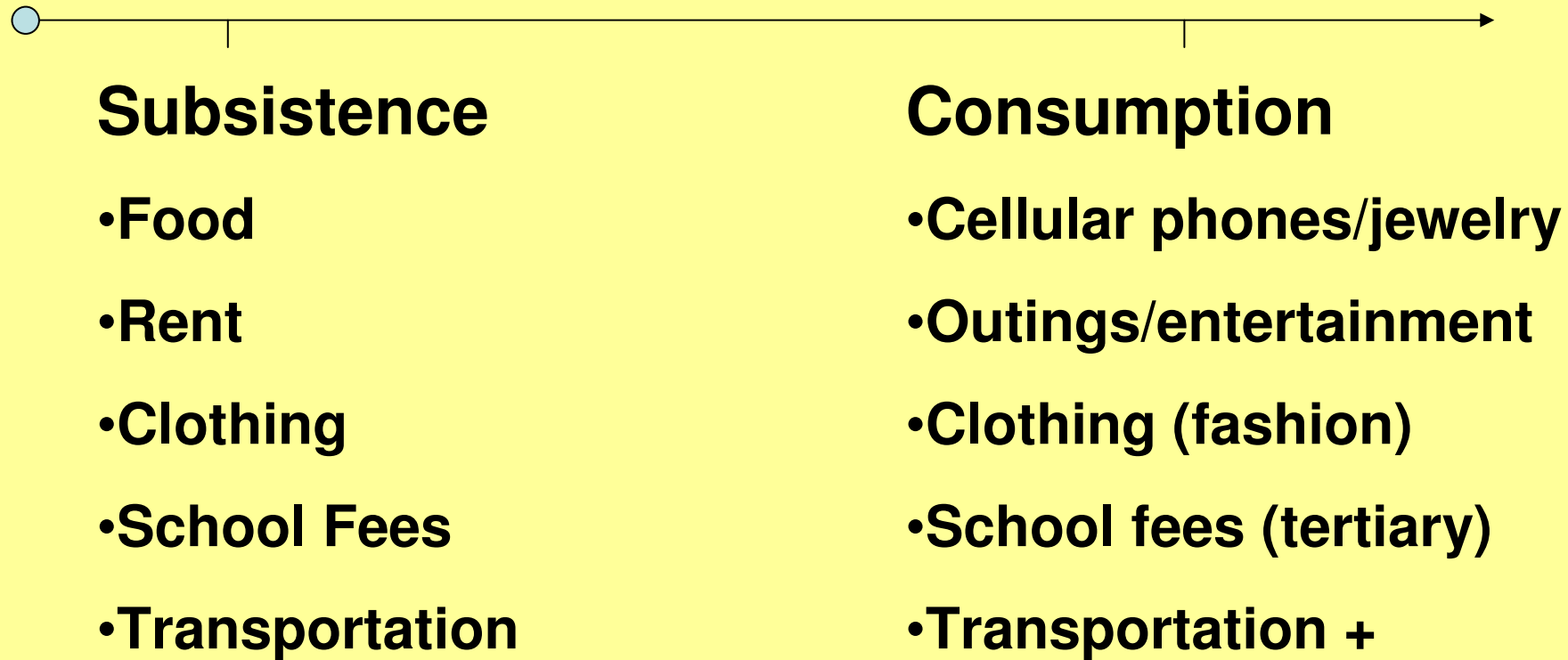
- **Urban--** fashion clothing, cellphones, jewelry, desires consistent with urban lifestyle/glamour & entertainment
- **Rural--** food, fees, clothing, simple cosmetics, needs consistent with rural poverty

((Kambou et al 1998, Mukondo 1998, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2000, Leclerc-Madlala 2002, Hunter 2002, Kaufman & Stavros 2004, Karlyn 2005, Nshindano 2006, Poulin, 2006, Nkosana & Rosenthal, 2007)

What reasons do women give to justify multiple concurrent partnering?

- Different partners largely fulfill different needs i.e. one for companionship, sexual fulfillment, transportation, help with school work, one for food or necessities, one for entertainment.
- Faithfulness often perceived as 'unstrategic' sometimes 'stupid', concurrency viewed as a back-up strategy, hedge against inevitable disappointment, way to 'keep up' with peers, or a distraction from personal/family problems.

Continuum of 'needs' in sexual exchange



Source: S. Leclerc-Madlala (2003). Transactional Sex and the Pursuit of Modernity. *Social Dynamics* 29(2):224.

What are men's motivations for multiple concurrent partnerships ?

- Young men: Peer pressure to prove normality and masculinity identified as #1. Concurrency also viewed as 'strategic', hedge against disappointment, recreational, means constant availability of a woman.
- Older men: Report need for variety, relief from stress or boredom, desire for 'clean' partners, desire for sexual rejuvenation, also pressure to demonstrate manhood & social worth, often perceive themselves as victims of women's attractions and societal pressures.

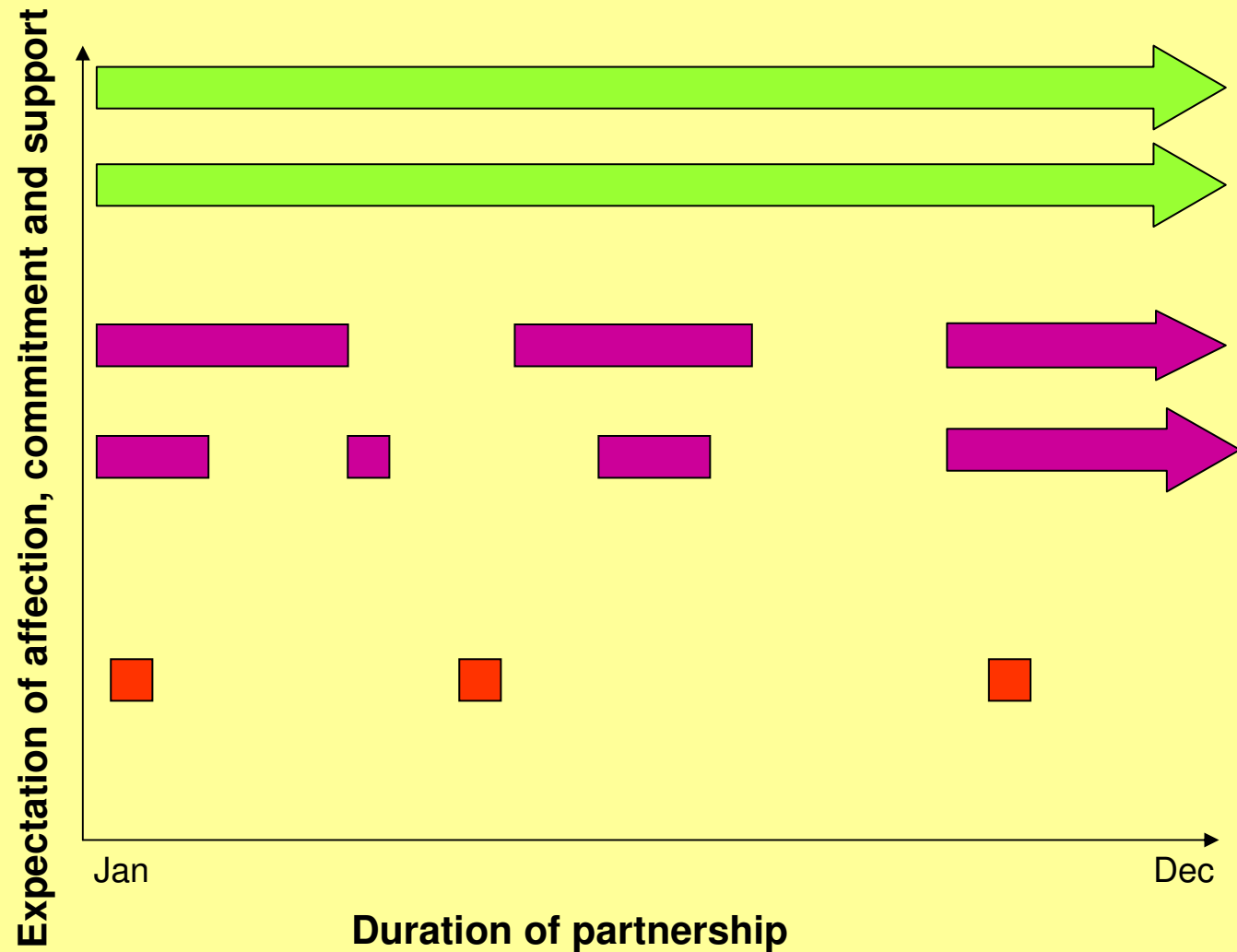
"Throughout sub-Saharan Africa as a man's wealth increases so does his sexual access increase and social expectations of sexual access increase (Swidler&Watkins 2006)"

Types of Concurrent Partnerships

❖ **Ongoing** (main partner),
(co-wife, mistress, 'small
house')

❖ **Intermittent or
occasional** (co-parents,
location dependent
relationships, 'little
girlfriends')

❖ **One-off** (sex-worker,
casual encounter, 'take-
aways', 'local bicycles')



What is required for a psychosocial shift towards an AIDS-free generation?

Roadblocks on the bridge that moves HIV between generations!

- A great increase in awareness of the evidence on HIV risks and multiple concurrent partnering.
- Need for greater awareness on the specific risks involved in age/wealth disparate (intergenerational) relationships.
- More efforts to keep girls in school, alert them to dangers of the consumer revolution.
- More effort and creativity required to directly engage men for change, **young and old. Local champions for HIV prevention need to be identified, mentored & supported to promote & model new norms of masculinity that protect self and others from HIV.**
- HIV prevention is about the disadvantages of un-safe sex. What about the advantages? Need to explore opportunities for promoting **advantages** of mutual faithfulness and/or partner reduction...
- (less STIs, less expensive, less stress due to deception, contribute to building trust & partner faithfulness, intimacy & emotional fulfillment, family stability, etc).

“HIV/AIDS will continue to ravage communities across southern Africa if its underlying drivers remain unaddressed”
(WHO/UNAIDS 2008)

*A change in current sexual norms and behaviours still remain **the only hope** for long-term sustainable protection of our communities against this disease.*

“If rates of HIV in the region do not markedly go down within the next 3-5 years, treatment will simply not be sustainable. The world cannot be expected to pay this bill”

(Kent Hill, US Assistant Administrator for Global Health)

Thank you

Ngiyabonga.