

Good Lessons from Bad Data: The case of Peer Mentors for HIV positive and expecting women in South Africa



Osama Safer, MPA 2, SPIA
 UNICEF South Africa
 Funded by CHW under the Research and Internship Program

Introduction

- Peer Mentors support expecting women who are HIV positive during their antenatal and postnatal visits, entering data on a mastercard
- UNICEF South Africa hired enumerators to digitize the data

Objective of the Study

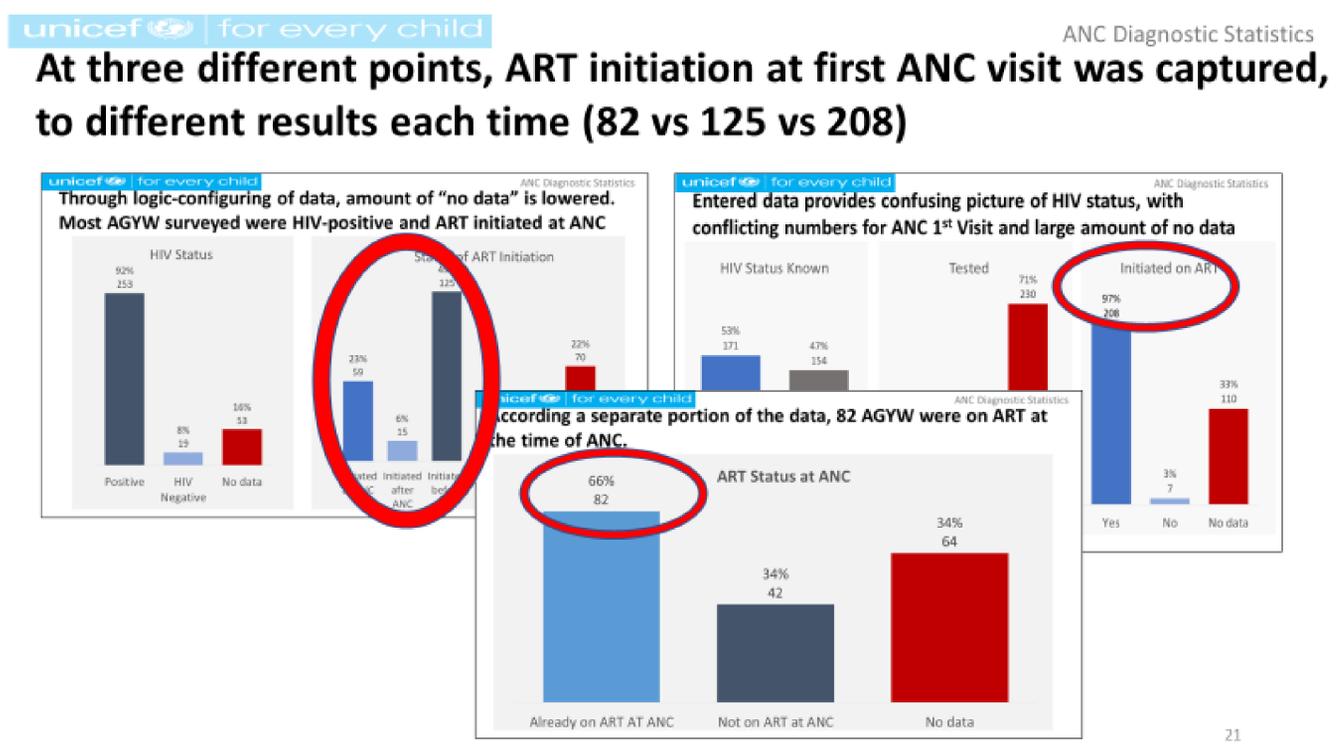
To merge, clean and analyze the database of 300+ women's mastercards, with the objective to create research publication investigating linkages between antenatal practices and post natal Mother to Child Transmission of HIV

Methods

- Microsoft excel analysis
- Cleaning based on logical cross referencing
- Analysis using excel tabulations
- Presentation of graphics based on analyses

Results

- There were large amounts of fields with missing or no data, especially in the postnatal stages
- There were several entries with faulty entries, due to lack of data entry standardization
- Creating summary totals and tabulations, the data was not logically consistent. E.g. more entries showed positive results of HIV testing than the number of tests conducted in the first place.
- Overall, the data was not fit to be used for research publications.
- Nonetheless, the analysis was useful to "open eyes" regarding data quality
- Recommendation was to move from printed mastercards to digital forms, where data entry standardization and logical cross checks can be implemented to improve data quality



Discussion

- A database on a program is only as good as the implementation of the program itself
- Even with good implementation, data collection is a science with its own best practices

Questions

- Was the missing data reflective of poor implementation, or just poor documentation?

Conclusion

- UNICEF South Africa will support digitization of mastercards

Acknowledgements

Sunette Pienaar supervised the day to day work of the internship, and was extremely supportive and enabling. Thanks to UNICEF South Africa team (Sunette, Sharon Schulz and Dr Sufang Gao) and CHW at SPIA for funding and facilitating the internship.