

Analyzing skepticism of HIV self-tests among Kenyan truck drivers

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Truck drivers in sub-Saharan Africa are especially vulnerable to

infection with HIV due to contact with multiple sexual partners—often including sex workers—along their trucking routes. Accessing HIV testing can be a challenge for truckers due to their mobility and long working hours, as well as concerns about confidentiality and stigma.

In a [qualitative study](#)—part of a larger randomized control trial offering Kenyan [truck drivers](#) multiple forms of HIV testing—CUNY SPH researchers led by 2017 MPH grad Stephanie Christian sought to assess how offering choices in HIV testing would impact the uptake of testing for this population. The findings were published in the *African Journal of AIDS Research*.

The team interviewed 24 participants who refused testing about their thoughts and opinions on oral HIV self-testing kits. Using the social-ecological model as a guide, the analysis of the interviews covered intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional and community, and policy level barriers and facilitators to testing. For example, many participants noted lack of time to test or obtain a self-test kit as a major barrier (intrapersonal) and others had concerns about their partner finding the self-test (interpersonal).

The results from this study shed light on the overall acceptability and accessibility of HIV self-testing for this high-risk population.

"Accessible HIV self-testing is relatively new in Kenya," Christian explains. "Overall this study shows that this population may be willing to self-test with the proper counseling before and after testing. Concerns participants brought up regarding distribution, pricing, and amount of kits provided may be helpful in developing policies or programs that provide for self-testing kits for this population."

More information: Stephanie N Christian et al. Applying a social-ecological lens to opinions about HIV self-testing among Kenyan

truckers who declined to test: a qualitative study, *African Journal of AIDS Research* (2020). [DOI: 10.2989/16085906.2020.1764070](https://doi.org/10.2989/16085906.2020.1764070)

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