**Mixed Methods, Integrated Approaches and Synergies in HIV Research and Intervention**

**PE51 Stakeholder engagement in HIV cure research - Lessons learned from other interventions and the way forward**

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**Background:** Clinical and basic science advances have raised considerable hope for achieving an HIV cure, accelerating research in a number of related fields. The research is dominated primarily by concerns regarding the conduct and progress of the current trials, the nature and design of future trials and the preparedness of potential patients at the individual level. Given the complexity of curing diseases generally, and HIV in particular, a comprehensive social and policy analysis is needed to accompany clinical cure research. Addressing the role of stakeholders in the socio-cultural context of HIV cure may provide valuable information to guide the implementation of research and future programs.

**Methods:** We review stakeholder engagement in previous HIV research and implications for future HIV cure research. A research agenda to examine the engagement and preparedness of stakeholders in this long-term process is proposed.

**Results:** The experience from HIV vaccine development shows that early engagement of stakeholders helped managing expectations and mutual learning curves, mitigating the fallout of failure of several efficacy trials, and paving the way to continuum of clinical research. On the other hand, the relatively late engagement of HIV stakeholders in pre-exposure prophylaxis and adult medical male circumcision research may partly explain some of the implementation challenges. Stakeholder engagement represents therefore a key investment where researchers and stakeholders mutually accept to share knowledge, benefits and risk of failure.

**Conclusions /Next steps:** As HIV cure research advances from early trials involving subjects with generally favorable prognosis to more complex research phases involving toxic drugs and treatment interruptions, success will require early and deliberate engagement of stakeholders. This strategy may facilitate the implementation and sustainability of future programs.