PEPFAR
U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

Health Living Platform: Leveraging on technology to provide differentiated HIV service delivery to key populations in Ghana

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Problem

In Ghana, key populations (KPs) such as female sex workers and men who have sex with men prefer anonymity to avoid stigma and discrimination. This results in social exclusion and low utilization of healthcare services, and makes it challenging to reach them with HIV services.

There is a need to identify innovative strategies and build on existing platforms.

ACCESS THE **HEALTHY LIVING PLATFORM (HLP)** **FOR FREE!**

DIAL ***212#** ON ALL NETWORKS

HLP provides you with health information and tips on STI, HIV, life skills and gender-based violence. **It connects you to a helpline counselor.**

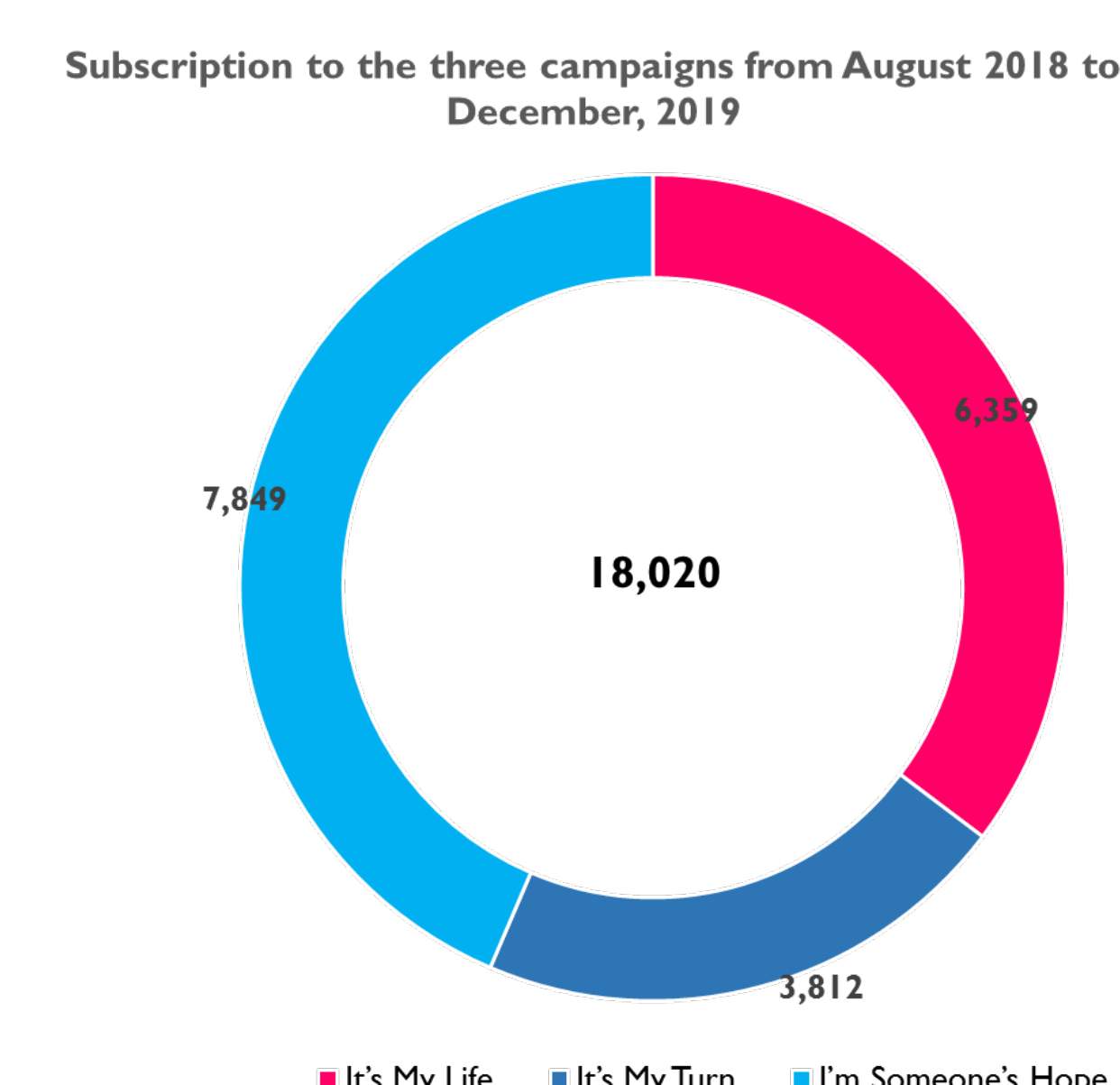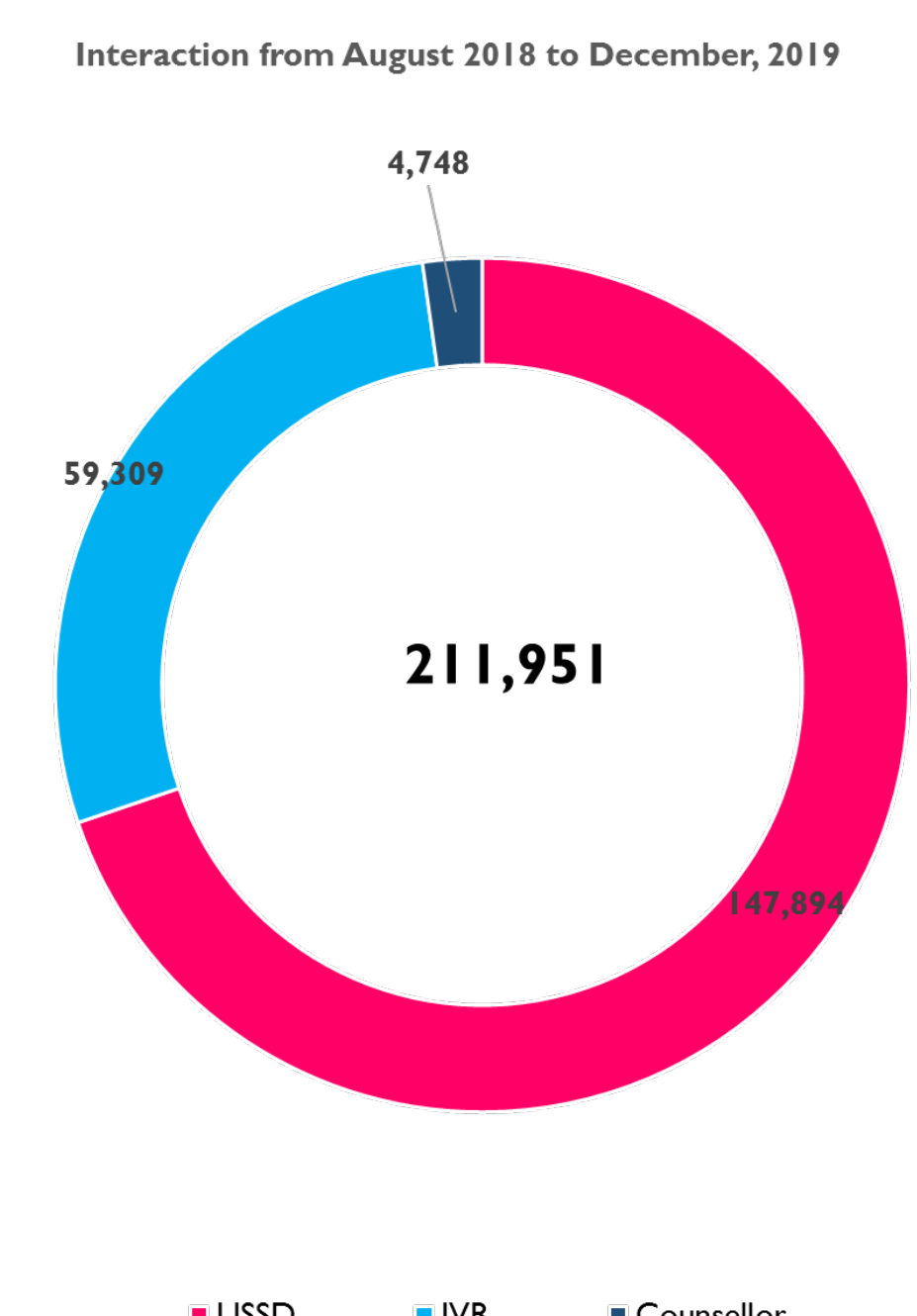USAID STRENGTHENING THE CARE CONTINUUM PROJECT // JSI.com/GhanaCareContinuum

Response

- JSI's USAID Strengthening the Care Continuum project developed the Healthy Living Platform (HLP), an interactive two-way system that transmits short message services (SMS) and interactive voice response (IVR) and is integrated with a helpline counselor (HLC) platform.

The Healthy Living Platform:
- Is available in English and four local languages (Twi, Ewe, Ga and Hausa).
- Is accessible via a three-digit short code (212) on the major telecommunication networks in Ghana.
- Allows access to (text and voice) professional counsellors who provide HIV, STI and ART counselling and referrals for follow-up services.
- Contains three campaigns (*"It's My Life," "It's My Turn," and "I'm Someone's Hope"*) for clients to receive pre-recorded messages on HIV, STI, life skills and gender-based violence.

Lessons Learned

- HLP sent out 2,303,731 messages to KPs who subscribed to the various campaigns over the period.
- For KPs, it's easier to reach HLCs than to direct dial 10-digit personal numbers
- HLP discreetly reaches KPs missed out by peer education.
- Subscriptions to the platform have increased:

Subscription to the three campaigns from August 2018 to December, 2019

18,020

7,849   6,359   3,812

■ It's My Life ■ It's My Turn ■ I'm Someone's Hope

- Interactions on the platform have increased:

Interaction from August 2018 to December, 2019

4,748

59,309

211,951

■ USSD ■ IVR ■ Counsellor

Conclusions

- HLP effectively meets the HIV-related needs (i.e. education, counseling, service access) of high-risk KPs.
- This system of reaching KPs has the potential to eliminate both structural and individual level barriers, including stigma and discrimination, and fear of breach of confidentiality.
- Our client feedback mechanism helps to improve HLP content and the unmet needs of KP sub-groups.
- There is a need for wider evaluation to generate evidence for scale up.

Number of KPs who subscribed and accessed the platform monthly

(bar chart, y-axis 0 to 3,000; x-axis Aug-18 through Dec-19)

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