

# Assessing Food Insecurity Sister2Sister

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# Project Background

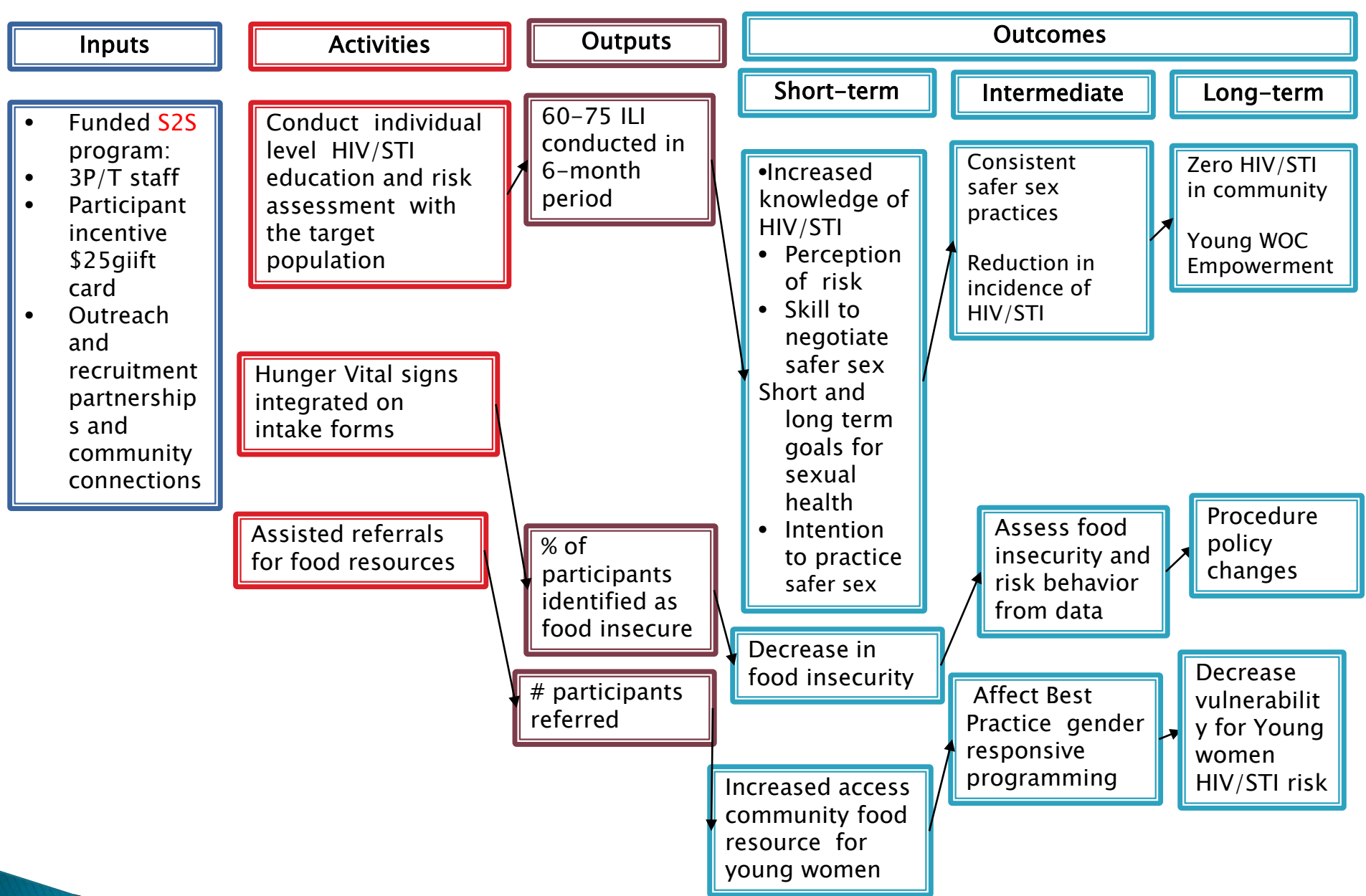
- ▶ **Sister2Sister** Assessing Food Insecurity in Program Participants
- ▶ **S2S** is a prevention and empowerment program for young women living in Boston where high rates of Chlamydia infection prevails among adolescents, with 70% of adolescents with a diagnosis are young women of color ages 15–25
- ▶ **S2S staff** brought food Insecurity to program attention and program policy adopted giving staff authority to provide additional program incentive (\$25 gift card) to address immediate needs of a participant.
- ▶ **S2S management team** is lead by me and program coordinators

# Aims & target population

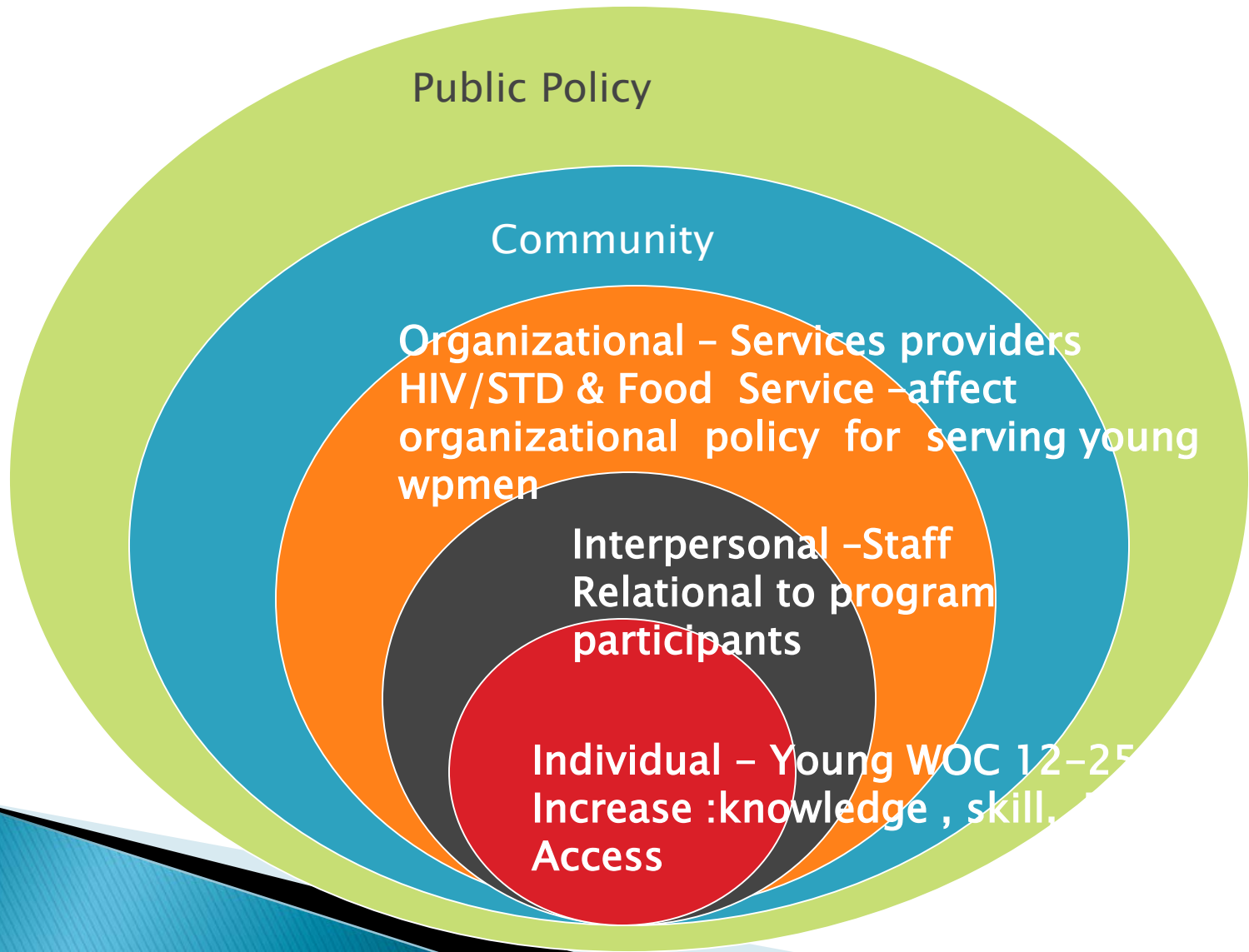
- ▶ Assess food insecurity in S2S participants
  - “limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food or limited/uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways” (USDA Community Food Assessment Toolkit)
  - Hunger Vital Signs validated 2 -item screening tool suitable for clinical and community-based use.
- ▶ Young women (Black/Latina) age 15–25 living in Boston
  - (Dorchester, Roxbury, Mattapan)
- ▶ Address participants needs/connect with resources to reduce vulnerability
- ▶ Inform Best Practice for serving young women

# Key activities & outcomes

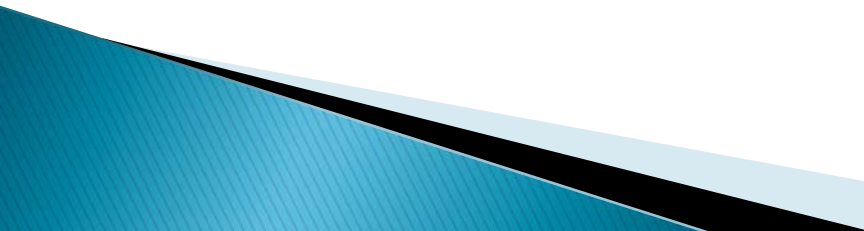
- ▶ Understanding the problem and issues
  - ▶ Youth as a primary population for food insecurity
  - ▶ Food Insecurity and HIV/AIDS – increased vulnerability to and worsens clinical conditions for HIV/AIDS
- ▶ Integrate Hunger Vital Signs into **S2S** individual assessment
  - ▶ Determine need with participant population (N=60–75)
- ▶ Identify referral resources for food and food programs
  - ▶ Referral relationship developed with programs serving youth/young women



# Social Ecological Model



# Initiative 1 – Conduct Focus Group

- ▶ Leaders in Health concept –
    - *“Formative Research”*
  - ▶ Key strategies–
    - *Education/Communication, participant involvement*
  - ▶ Short term action steps –
    - *Literature search on topic of food insecurity, youth, HIV/AIDS, focus group questions*
  - ▶ Long term action steps
    - *Conduct individual assessment/Hunger Vital Signs*
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# Initiative 2 – Staff Education

- ▶ Leaders in Health concept that you are applying–
  - Social Ecological Framework – Interpersonal
    - Self in Relation (Horntensia Amaro)
- ▶ Key strategies–
  - Education and Communication; feedback and support
- ▶ Short term action steps
  - In–service training with staff
    - Using assessment tool; focus group results
  - Develop referral relationships
- ▶ Long term action steps
  - Quality assurance conducting assessments



# Initiative 3– Disseminate Results

- ▶ Leaders in Health concept that you are applying –
  - *Social Ecological Model – Organizational*
- ▶ Key strategies
  - *Education and communication*
- ▶ Short term action steps
  - *Analyze data for impact of food insecurity and high risk behavior*
- ▶ Long term action steps
  - *Recommendations as appropriate for Best Practice*

# Conclusion

- ▶ Sister2Sister aims is to offer the best possible programs that support the sexual health of young women of color in Boston.
  - ▶ This research we hope will improve our responsiveness to the gendered needs of young women to reduce vulnerability and increase protective factors for their sexual health and empowerment.
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