

## (2GETHER) UNI2: Co-creación de una campaña educativa multimedia digital para la prevención del VIH y las infecciones de transmisión sexual en las comunidades LGBTQ+ de la macrozona sur de Chile.

## (2GETHER) UNI2: Co-creation of a digital multimedia educational campaign for the prevention of HIV and sexually transmitted infections in the LGBTQ+ communities of southern Chile.

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### Resumen

**Introduction:** Virtual technologies offer an alternative for promoting comprehensive sexuality education and prevention in sexual health matters; however, digital campaigns are often designed from biomedical approaches with little methodological systematization that integrates LGBTQ+ communities. **Objective:** Co-creation of a digital multimedia campaign focused on STI prevention in the population of southern Chile, using a participatory and reflective approach that incorporates transdisciplinarity and social networks. **Methodology:** Qualitative study, systematizing experience with a participatory action research approach involving activists and experts over 6 months. Information gathering included two phases: 1) mapping LGBTQ+ groups in southern Chile; 2) a transdisciplinary participatory roundtable for co-creating the script. A thematic-reflective analysis was conducted using resulting categories for the final script and visualization design. **Results:** Two audiovisual capsules identifying four key methodological components: 1) accessible narratives with a non-heteronormative approach; 2) use of inclusive language; 3) content validation; and 4) a community-based approach combining animation and real people. **Conclusion:** The participatory methodology with a transdisciplinary and territorial approach of this study constitutes a methodological proposal for the co-creation of online educational material for the prevention and promotion of sexual health and is proposed as a replicable strategy in disaster contexts where remote learning is not possible.

**Palabras clave:** Enfermería; Comunicación; Competencia Profesional; Educación en Enfermería; Comunicación en Salud.

### Abstract

**Introducción:** Las tecnologías virtuales ofertan una alternativa para la promoción de la educación sexual integral y la prevención en salud sexual, no obstante, las campañas digitales suelen diseñarse desde enfoques biomédicos con escasa sistematización metodológica que integre a las comunidades LGBTQ+. **Objetivo:** Co-creación de una campaña digital multimedia en torno a la prevención ITS en población en la macrozona sur de Chile, con enfoque participativo y reflexivo que incorpora transdisciplinaria y redes sociales. **Metodología:** Estudio cualitativo, de sistematización de experiencia de investigación acción participativa involucrando activistas y expertos durante 6 meses. La producción de información incluyó dos fases 1) mapeo de grupos LGTB en la zona sur de Chile 2) mesa participativa transdisciplinaria para co-creación del guion. Se realizó análisis temático-reflexivo mediante categorías resultantes para el diseño final de guion. **Resultados:** Dos cápsulas audiovisuales identificando cuatro componentes metodológicos 1) narrativas accesibles con enfoque no heteronormativo 2) uso de lenguaje inclusivo 3) validación de contenidos 4) enfoque comunitario combinando animación y personas reales. **Conclusión:** La metodología participativa con enfoque transdisciplinario y territorial constituye una propuesta metodológica para co-creación de material educativo en línea para la prevención y promoción en salud sexual, es una estrategia replicable ante la no presencialidad.

**Keywords:** Nursing; Communication; Professional Competence; Education, Nursing; Health Communication.

## Introduction

Currently, the digital age is considered the ideal space for participation, interaction, and construction of a just and diverse society. It represents an essential component for virtual inclusion, facilitating the search, creation, and dissemination of information and content online (Bonilla et al., 2020). Despite the increased information and awareness surrounding these issues, digital tools are being incorporated with a critical perspective. This allows the development of interesting online organizational and communication practices, such as acts of care (Torres, 2025), leading to the co-creation of narratives that bring LGBT community experiences to life in multimedia (Salazar & Sarria, 2024). However, in the area of sexual health, these narratives have primarily focused on combating stigma and demanding access to antiretroviral therapy (Velasquez, 2021), which opens up topics related to the promotion and prevention of STIs (sexually transmitted infections).

In Chile, reports indicate that confirmed HIV cases ranged between 6,720 and 4,446, respectively the decrease in positive cases, compared to previous years, could be due, among other causes, to the interruption of rapid HIV testing, a field strategy impossible to implement due to the pandemic. This is compounded by the difficulty in providing timely diagnoses and in-person care at health centers, confirming a 50% drop in ELISA tests compared to 2019. Those most affected are men who have sex with men, young people, and adults between 15 and 49 years of age (MINSAL, 2019, Universidad de Chile, 2022).

Consequently, it is clear that a catastrophe like the pandemic hinders the usual development of health promotion and prevention activities, especially regarding sexually transmitted infections (STIs). This underscores the importance of creating new strategies to support sex education, particularly in rural areas (Berglas et al., 2023). In this regard, it has been shown that young people, in particular, use online resources to obtain information on sexual health, in addition to the important role of healthcare professionals (Roth et al., 2024). However, the COVID-19 pandemic taught us a lesson for other types of catastrophes that impede mobility and in-person interaction (wars, states of siege, natural disasters, etc.), leading to recommendations for the use of digital media to promote the sexual and reproductive health of women and adolescents (PAHO, 2020). Nevertheless, given the lack of recommendations for the LGBTQ+ community and the context of physical distancing, the sexual lives of LGBTQ+ people were affected, leading them to use social technologies to maintain contact and a sense of community (Holloway et al., 2021).

In this context, the co-creation of audiovisual material emerges as a collective alternative (Cárdenas et al., 2025). Likewise, the initiatives of youth organizations stand out, as they have developed innovative projects on inclusive sex education, especially outside the school environment, offering safe and meaningful spaces for LGBT+ youth (Gegenfurtner & Gebhardt, 2017).

In light of the above, it is interesting to work on the promotion and prevention of sexual health with LGBTQ+ community groups, especially in southern Chile, given its high rurality (INE, 2018) and the difficulties in accessing information about the situation. The key to this work lies in the contact between organizations and health institutions through various participatory methods. These involve the active participation of the group itself in its health processes, promoting peer care (Vergara et al., 2020), a relevant aspect from the intersectional and territorial perspective of the study.

**Digital campaigns are often designed from biomedical approaches with little methodological systematization that integrates LGBTQ+ communities, failing to address their specific social and cultural realities**

For this work, it is necessary to consider the use of telematic channels, which have improved information capabilities, benefiting the health of LGBTQ+ people (Drydakis, 2022). Therefore, their use is presented as an alternative for delivering information to groups seeking health prevention. Furthermore, the use of digital tools promotes more dynamic learning and fosters an ambassador model in which participants become disseminators of the knowledge they acquire. In this way, ICTs aim to improve access to and assimilation of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) content (Ponce, 2022).

Given this scenario, the use of remote technologies in LGBTQ+ groups is relevant for promoting CSE and reaching the majority of the group, adapting to the whirlwind of sociological and cultural changes that has characterized the prolonged state of alert in the face of catastrophes. Therefore, the question was posed: How does a participatory approach contribute to the interdisciplinary co-creation of relevant digital content for HIV and STI prevention for LGBTQ+ communities in southern Chile? Consequently, this study focused on the co-construction of digital multimedia campaigns for HIV and STI prevention through social networks, proposing a strategic alliance between academia and LGBTQ+ groups in the southern macrozone of Chile.

## Methodology

This qualitative study systematizes experiences based on Participatory Action Research (PAR), which integrates local knowledge, lived experiences, and academic knowledge as a methodological approach for the co-creation of audiovisual campaigns on sexual health. From this perspective, a participatory methodology is defined as an active approach that fosters interaction among movements and groups, contributing their knowledge and experiences to the development of activities (MINSAL, 2019). Following this approach, video capsules on sexual education (CSE) were designed through: 1) mapping LGBTQ+ groups in southern Chile; and 2) a transdisciplinary participatory workshop. The purposive sample consisted of activists and academics from two collectives and one university located in the southern region of Chile: Los Lagos and Los Ríos. Participants were recruited through a key informant who received a letter from the research team via email. The letter was received by each president of LGBTQ+ collectives in southern Chile. Inclusion criteria were: 1) students and researchers whose work relates to gender and/or HIV/AIDS health and communication issues; and 2) activists from the southern Chilean organizations «Valdiversa» and «Mogalet», focused on promoting and defending LGBTQ+ rights. Minors were excluded for ethical reasons. Selection was based on the order in which notifications were received by email, with a one-month waiting period to fill all available spots. The research team consisted of one communications researcher, one clinical microbiology researcher, and one gender and sexual health researcher. This team was joined by two journalism students with experience in social media and a scientific illustrator. Three activists from LGBTQ+ collectives also joined the team.

**Table 1.** Participatory methodological strategy steps

Step	Description
1	Collection of prior information from the research team.
2	Search for local LGBTQ+ groups and like-minded student researchers.
3	Invitation letter to presidents of LGBTQ+ collectives and participants.

## Step Description

- 4 Participatory table in online sessions.
- 5 Mapping of LGBTQ+ collectives through an online survey.
- 6 Thematic script.
- 7 Voiceover script.
- 8 Preparation of capsules.
- 9 Design of digital and printed poster.
- 10 Territorial dissemination strategy and social media.

Methodologically, 10 online sessions were conducted where the group shared their perspectives on the parameters that the audiovisual capsules should follow to promote inclusion and diversity among the groups, identifying two phases of work. In the first phase, brainstorming and a participatory survey were used as techniques. This was carried out during the first 6 working sessions, based on the research question. A synthesis of the final information was then presented to the group with an exploratory survey on STI myths, which was disseminated to their respective LGBT organizations through the social media networks of the participating organizations, after obtaining digital informed consent. (Figure 1). The survey analyzed eleven popular myths about HIV and STIs among the Chilean population. These myths were developed in participatory roundtables with the research group, which received a total of 74 online responses. Participants were asked to select the phrases they had heard most frequently, and the most voted responses determined which myths should be debunked in the audiovisual capsules. Some of the most frequent myths were: 1) HIV only affects the gay population (53.3%), 2) Lesbians are not at risk of contracting HIV (40%) and 3) Trans men do not transmit HIV (6.7%). This survey was exploratory and non-probabilistic in nature. Its design allowed for the identification of common perceptions about myths surrounding HIV and STIs, the results of which were used

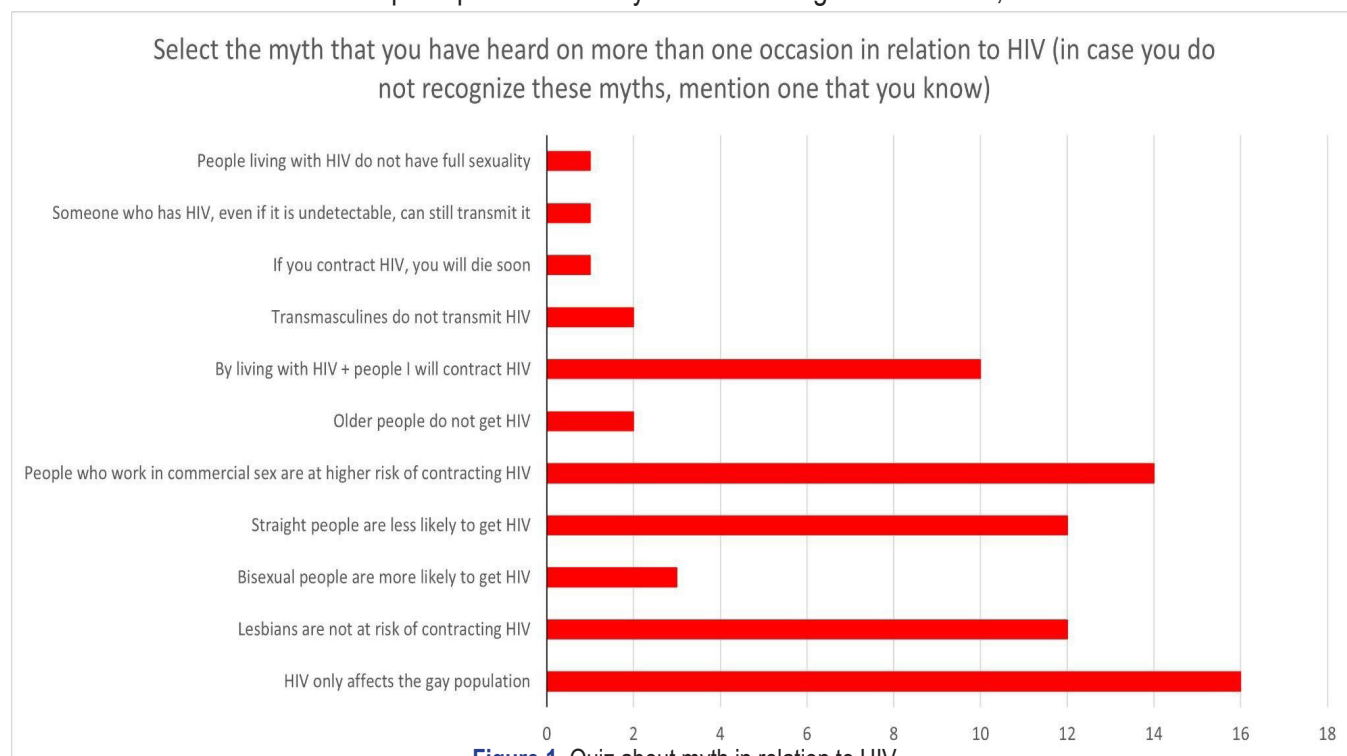


Figure 1. Quiz about myth in relation to HIV

In the second phase, corresponding to the transdisciplinary participatory roundtable, the technique of transdisciplinary participatory workshops for script co-construction was employed. The first workshop was led by fourth-year journalism students from the research group, who had experience in social media management and audiovisual creation. They designed two thematic script proposals based on information from two previous works by the research team: the fanzine «Let's Talk About Sexuality, Let's Talk About Responsibility» and the «Guide to Sexual and Affective Health.» These proposals were enriched with feedback from the entire team for subsequent implementation. Computers, mobile phones, voice-over applications, and editing programs such as Adobe Premiere Pro, Photoshop, and Canva Pro were used for the production process (Figure 2). However, the remaining three participatory sessions focused on the co-construction of the script with the entire research group and activists, based on previous drafts. The participatory workshops consisted of transdisciplinary roundtables, 40-minute online sessions held every two weeks via Zoom, given the pandemic context, over a six-month period, in order to analyze the information related to the treatments.



The analysis was conducted as a reflective thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022) using open coding of emerging content to identify central themes for the narrative design of the script, including: 1) dynamics of meaning-making, 2) tensions among actors, 3) strategies for knowledge translation, and 4) mechanisms for validating the script. In effect, a triangulation is established between what was designed by the researchers, community actors, and the survey during a consensus-building session held over three 40-minute online sessions via the Zoom platform. The final script is established, and its content is validated by three principal investigators from the group.

Therefore, the participatory methodology was fundamental for the groups to create the audiovisual product in a respectful and collective space. Likewise, a relationship between creative and theoretical practice was established, as well as feedback on the proposed work.

In summary, the participatory methodology invited us to bring to light aspects that are taboo in society regarding sexual diversity and gender, to create visual clips that debunk myths about STIs and HIV, and to gain

new perspectives and insights through collaborative work with LGTBIQ+ groups.

## Results

Four methodological components were identified in the script design: 1) Accessible narratives with a non-heteronormative approach; 2) Inclusive language; 3) Content validation; and 4) A community-based approach combining animation and real people. Two short videos on STIs were designed, including images specially created by a scientific illustrator from the research group.

The audiovisual videos included a mix of real-life stories from activists, animated segments, and explanatory audio from experts, all resulting from the research group's thematic-reflective analysis. The Reel format is aimed at a young adult audience, between 14 and 35 years old, who use social media (Instagram). From this perspective, it is important to note that the information provided in the videos is for everyone, regardless of sexual orientation.

The first video focused on HIV, emphasizing myths and sexual health care, as well as local networks for seeking medical attention. The second video included topics related to STIs, including infections such as syphilis and chlamydia. Both videos integrate other aspects of sexual health care, addressing diverse sexual practices during the pandemic, with a special focus on pleasure.

As a result, the first video, «HIV Prevention,» which is 3 minutes and 19 seconds long, is composed of four parts. First, selected myths were addressed. Second, national and international HIV statistics were presented, along with information on the increase in AIDS cases in Chile between 2010 and 2017. Third, the importance of antiretroviral treatments, which can improve the quality of life for people living with HIV, and PrEP, a preventive medication for people at higher risk of acquiring the virus, was discussed. Finally, different methods for preventing HIV were presented, including not only the correct use of condoms or latex barriers, and highlighting the importance of HIV testing and the open and taboo-free cleaning of sex toys. It should be noted that the video featured the participation of activist 1 from Valdiversa and the voice of activist 1 Mogaletth.

**The campaign's presence on social networks and geo-social allowed for a direct connection with the community, fostering a safe digital space for reflection and sexual health education**

The audiovisual video «STI Prevention» lasts 3 minutes and 43 seconds, and through the voice of an activist, a fictional story based on real cases of people suffering from syphilis is narrated. In this way, the physical symptoms and emotional consequences experienced by a patient with this sexually transmitted infection are detailed. In the following minutes, the video presents the exact national figure of people currently suffering from syphilis, according to the Chilean Ministry of Health. Secondly, recommendations are offered to prevent the spread of STIs, and this time the voice of an expert narrates illustrations of hygiene tools and different safe contraceptive methods to prevent sexually transmitted infections. Both videos include sign language to reach the entire population.

For dissemination purposes, the short videos were uploaded in Reel format to the Universidad Austral de Chile (UACH) account @issr\_educa\_uach, which aims to provide educational content to the community in the area of Sexual and Reproductive Health. Currently, the videos on «STI Prevention» have 311 views and those on «HIV Prevention» have 407 views.

In addition, a poster with QR codes linking to the videos was designed and distributed in key areas of the region and at the University. Posters were also provided to various organizations focused on promoting diversity and gender equality for distribution by the Municipality of Valdivia in more than 28 municipal districts during 2023, as part of a local partnership in southern Chile.

## Discussion

The results of this research revealed that virtual platforms and social media can be an alternative for promoting and preventing sexual health issues, especially for communities that have difficulty accessing information, whether as a result of the pandemic or as part of efforts to improve access to information (Roth, Nellhaus, Ruley, Hess,

Lamichhane, & Yoost, 2024) (MINSAL, 2019). The findings demonstrate that the active participation of LGBTQ+ communities helps overcome traditional limitations in sex education, particularly in contexts where heteronormative approaches predominate and where those designing the materials exhibit bias, highlighting the importance of situated experience in the design of audiovisual materials.

In general terms, while audiovisual media have become established for STI prevention campaigns, this study demonstrates the role of communities and participatory methods in including LGBTQ+ groups, taking into account the territorial relevance of the issue, given the successful experience of previous work that included a local group (Vergara, Mardones, and Burgos, 2020). Furthermore, it reveals the importance of interdisciplinary groups that have emerged as an alternative given the lack of professional training in health promotion and prevention approaches, which do not usually encompass all sexual practices and the life course (Vergara & Gasch-Gallén, 2021).

In relation to the above, this study offers a critical perspective, similarity to other studies (Universidad de Chile, 2022), questioning methodologies designed for LGBTQ+ groups that do not incorporate their own histories or mention transgender or intersex people, whose inclusion in the co-creation of educational materials is vital (Salazar y Sarria, 2024).

Regarding this last point, a limitation of this study stems from the lack of representation of intersex, queer, and other groups due to their non-participation. Despite this, the methodological success lies in the inclusion of local activists through a transdisciplinary collaboration with academia, incorporating a view of pleasure as part of sexual health care in diverse affective sexual practices. This represents a contribution to the design of audiovisual campaigns in Chile related to STIs, since they generally do not include all these elements.

Regarding epidemiological data on HIV and STIs, these figures present a challenge from the perspective of comprehensive sexuality education, which focuses on preventative measures that consider the importance of all sexual practices, not just those considered heteronormative, given recent studies on STIs, for example, among women who have sex with women (Obón-Azuara et al., 2022). At the community level, it has also been recommended to include a gender perspective in community actions involving the design of images free of gender stereotypes (Artazcoz et al., 2018), a topic considered in this study.

While it is true that the pandemic reduced access to health services and increased the volume of information circulating through online devices and social networks, the content is not always verified or validated. This lack of validation can affect the accuracy and relevance of the information for the target audience. Therefore, a critical evaluation by educators is necessary to assess the benefits or discard what is not beneficial (Vergara et al., 2020). In this context, the method presented in this study offers an alternative approach to co-creation. It involves collaboration between institutions and social organizations through a participatory method that includes experts from an inter- and transdisciplinary perspective. This approach takes into account the practical experience of organizations, online technologies, and territorial representation to ensure that the information is relevant and valid for the target audience. Furthermore, social media-based interventions have been shown to significantly contribute to closing existing gaps in sex education by fostering participation (Porter et al., 2024).

A systematic alternative is offered with a type of analysis that opens the door to new research evaluating its effectiveness and reach, active participation, and message retention among LGBTQ+ populations or other specific communities (Reyna et al., 2024). Furthermore, this study considers previous general recommendations but, at the same time,

provides guidelines for developing unified audiovisual material for all people based on their sexual practices, thus broadening the message's reach beyond the LGBTQ+ community.

## Conclusions

Participatory methodology is fundamental for the design of materials for the prevention and promotion of sexual health and contributes as a methodological approach to the co-creation of digital content for HIV and STI prevention. A transdisciplinary and territorial approach among its participants is essential. In this context, the participatory and territorial approach highlighted in this study encourages the implementation of sexual health prevention and promotion activities, especially in the area of sex education. This approach should include a non-heteronormative view of sexual practices, linked to pleasure, to provide guidelines for future health campaigns. The methodology employed, which includes the participation of real people, validated by the community, and the actions of institutions, with experts and LGBTQ+ activists, represents a commitment to future sexual health promotion and prevention activities. These activities transform hierarchical knowledge and strengthen the value of contextualized practices, extending alliances that imply a local commitment to territorial dissemination.

Within its limitations, this study reveals that the LGBTQ+ community is primarily composed of young adults, and there was no participation from intersex individuals. Consequently, the representation of older adults and other LGBTI groups in the development of the audiovisual material was insufficient. In this context, future research should consider the entire life course and generate mechanisms for representation by co-creating audiovisual material tailored to diverse needs. Furthermore, this study did not focus on the effectiveness of the audiovisual capsules themselves, but rather on the co-creation of said material, with the capsules being the final product. Therefore, further research is suggested to evaluate their effectiveness and to deepen studies on digital literacy with this type of co-creation design.

Finally, regarding the implications for healthcare practice, this study provides guidelines for new research and interventions capable of including the full diversity of social actors in the region through systematic participatory methods for health promotion and prevention using digital content. It also offers opportunities to expand the development of educational materials for disasters that prevent in-person instruction, eliminating geographical barriers.

## Authors' contributions

The authors also participated in the preparation of the manuscript and approved the final version submitted.

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## Data availability statement

The data presented in this study may be requested from the corresponding author.

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare they have no conflicts of interest

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