

Global assessment of the availability of Condoms & conjugal visits in prisons: Preliminary results of a global prison survey commissioned by the UNODC

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What is the problem?

- On average prison populations are **5** times more likely to have HIV than the general adult population
- People in prison engage in risky sexual behaviours often with multiple partners
- Unsafe sex can transmit sexually transmissible infections such as HIV
- The UNODC, ILO, UNDP, WHO & UNAIDS Comprehensive Package recommends 15 interventions for HIV prevention and treatment in prison, including condoms
- The access people in prison have to condoms and conjugal visits is unknown



What is the purpose of the project?

- To assess the availability of condoms and conjugal visits in prison globally
- To improve our knowledge on the global harm reduction response and the right to health in prison

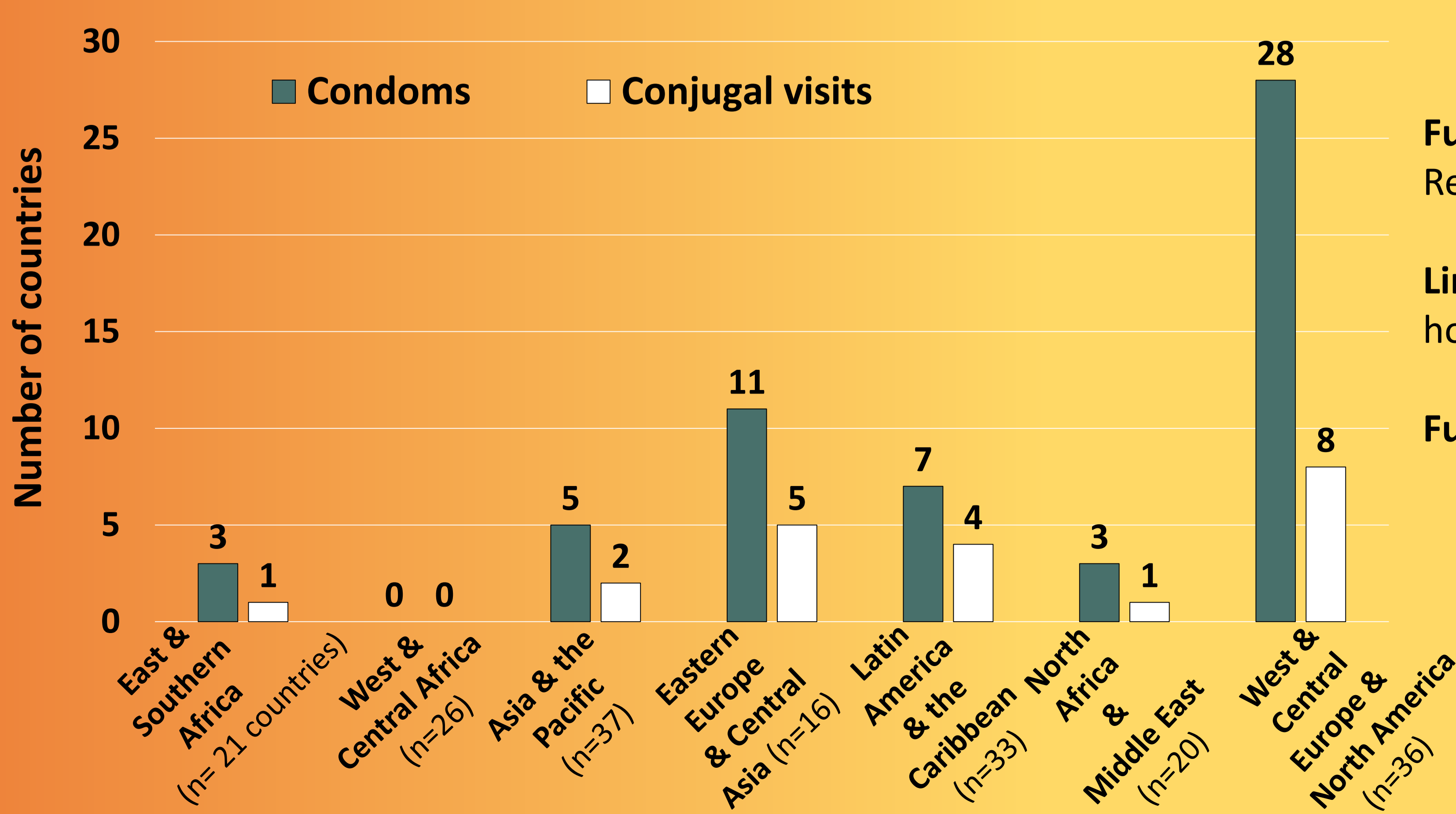
What did we do?

We sent surveys to 189 countries and asked key contacts in regional and country offices of the WHO, UNODC and UNAIDS about the provision of the 15 interventions in the Comprehensive Package including condoms and conjugal visits. We systematically reviewed the literature (2013-2017).

What did we find?

Condoms were **available** in prison in **57** countries and **unavailable** in **32** countries. Conjugal visits were **available** in **21** countries and **unavailable** in **19** countries. Seven countries provided condoms during visits. **13** countries provided condoms and conjugal visits.

Global availability of condoms and conjugal visits



What does it mean?

- Condom provision and conjugal visits were inadequate in many countries in their prison systems
- With sexually active people in prison, condom provision needs to be increased
- Identifying gaps in services can inform policies and support countries to mount an effective, evidence-based response to HIV in prison
- Condom provision is undermined by social, religious and legal barriers
- A lack of supportive policy, budget and capacity also undermine effective harm reduction responses and the right to health in some prison systems

What should be done?

- Condoms and lubricant should be provided for free, be easily accessible and be available during conjugal visits
- Prison authorities should be encouraged to implement or scale-up condom provision
- Health care staff should be responsible for distribution, not correctional staff
- Female prisoners should also have access to condoms and dental dams

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Limitations: Condoms and conjugal visits may be available in some countries however data were not located.

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