EPIDEMIC ANALYSIS OF HIV PREVALENCE AMONG MEN AND WOMEN WHO USE DRUGS IN GOMBE STATE

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Background:
Since its inception in 2009 in Nigeria, the Integrated Biological and Behavioural Surveillance survey (IBBSS) has been used as a community-based survey to assess HIV/STI prevalence, risk behavior and intervention coverage of Key Populations in Nigeria. The IBBSS 2018, puts the prevalence of HIV among People Who Use Drugs at 10.9%. However, the prevalence is not segregated to show prevalence between the sexes (Male and female) among people who use drugs.

Methods:
The sample consisted of 8,819 persons who use drugs in Gombe state Nigeria receiving HIV testing services under the Global Fund HIV grant over a period of three years (October 2019 – February 2023). The tests were conducted during community outreaches, in drug user hotspots in Gombe state.

Results: In November and December 2019, 483 males and 123 females were tested. 10 males and 11 females were positive. In 2020 (January – November), 1456 males and 395 females were tested. 25 males and 30 females tested positive. In 2022 (May – December), 3,919 males and 1,223 females were tested. Positivity was 44 males and 192 females. In January and February 2023, 888 males and 332 females were tested. 7 males and 37 females tested positive.

The result shows an average prevalence of HIV among men and women as 1% and 11% respectively. The results did not however vary from the 2018 IBBSS National prevalence of 10.9% prevalence for people who use drugs.

Conclusion: The tracking of HIV prevalence by sex is an essential step towards effective prevention and control of not just HIV but other STIs. Sex-specific tracking allows for a better understanding of the prevalence and incidence of HIV and STIs in different populations, as well as the identification of high-risk sub-groups and effective interventions to reduce transmission rates.