



The Socio-Economic Impact of HIV at the Household Level in Asia:

A REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

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Critically, attention must be drawn to the hard work of the national research teams in Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia and Viet Nam which collected the data, provided data analysis and wrote the individual country reports that this sex-disaggregated regional analysis is based on.

Foreword

Discussion regarding the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV in Asia and the Pacific is too often grounded in ideologies, as well as too often based on weak or biased analysis of available data. However, we do know that HIV among women and girls has seemingly reached a plateau of approximately 35% of all people living with HIV or AIDS for the region as a whole; with some countries experiencing significant percentages of their new cases among women whose only risk factor is being the spouse or girlfriend of a man who engages in high-risk behavior (injecting drug use and/or multiple concurrent sexual partnerships without correct and consistent condom use with sex workers and/or with other men).

Equally revealing is the disproportionate social and economic impacts of the epidemic on women and girls. This manifests in the form of a range of socio-economic burdens on women and girls within HIV-affected households and their constrained access to services. The socio-economic impact studies conducted by UNDP between 2005 and 2010 in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, India and Viet Nam provide considerable empirical evidence that opens a window into the actual and relevant HIV challenges that women and girls face.

Until now, the attempts to measure the specific impact of HIV on women and girls, and use this information to formulate policies and programmes for impact mitigation, have been very limited in Asia and the Pacific. To address this gap, the HIV, Health and Development Practice Team of UNDP's Asia Pacific Regional Centre has undertaken a regional analysis of the socio-economic impact of HIV on women and girls at the household level using the sex-disaggregated data from the national studies. This report presents in detail the findings and recommendations of this analysis.

The report outlines the specific impacts that women and girls face on a daily basis that range from employment and household burden to discrimination and access to treatment. By comparing across countries in the region, and across HIV-affected and non-affected households, the analysis provides unique insights into the dynamics of the epidemic and improved understanding of the specific impact HIV has on women and girls. It highlights the many differences between countries in the region, but also the numerous similarities, and therefore how they might learn from one another.

I hope the findings and recommendations of this report will help governments and other stakeholders in strengthening policies and programmes to address the disproportionate social and economic impact of HIV on women and girls in our region.



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Contents

List of Figures and Tables	vii
Acronyms and Abbreviations	viii
Executive Summary	1
1. Introduction	3
1.1. Background	4
1.2. Overview of HIV in Asia	4
1.3. Overview of HIV and Women in Cambodia	5
1.4. Overview of HIV and Women in China	6
1.5. Overview of HIV and Women in India	6
1.6. Overview of HIV and Women in Indonesia	6
1.7. Overview of HIV and Women in Viet Nam	6
2. Methodology and Data	7
2.1. Sample Population	8
2.2. Data Analysis	8
2.3. Relative and Absolute Differences	9
2.4. Limitations	9
3. Key Findings	10
3.1. Profile of Sample Households	11
3.2. Profile of People Living with HIV	12
3.3. Employment	14
3.3.1. Changes in Employment for Adults	14
3.3.2. Child Labour	15
3.4. Household Living Conditions and Assets	16
3.5. Debt	17
3.6. Education	17
3.6.1. School Attendance	17
3.7. Drop-out Rates and Absenteeism	18
3.8. Health Utilisation	18
3.9. ART Utilisation	20
3.10. Transmission and Diagnosis	21
3.11. Food Support	22
3.12. Stigma and Discrimination	22
3.13. Pregnancy and Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission	27
3.14. Widows	28
3.15. Intimate Partner Transmission	28
3.16. Knowledge and Awareness	29
4. Policy Conclusions	30
5. References	33
Annex 1: Overviews of the Data and Methodologies of the Studies	36
Cambodia	36
China	37
India	38
Indonesia	39
Viet Nam	40

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