

Understanding HIV risks among adolescent girls and young women in poor informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya

Benedict Orindi¹, Abdhalah Ziraba¹, Joyce Mumah¹, Sheru Muuo¹, Jane Osindo¹, Pauline Njoroge¹, Marilyn Ronoh¹, Sian Floyd², Isolde Birdthistle² and Caroline Kabiru¹

¹ African Population and Health Research Center

² London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

borindi@aphrc.org

Background

- Most new HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa occur among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) [1].
- There are gaps in data and understanding with regard to HIV risks among AGYW in the context of urban poverty.
- We describe the risk factors and mediators for sexual risk behaviours among AGYW in two slum settlement areas in Nairobi, to help understand the context of AGYW risk prior to DREAMS program investments in these areas.

Methods

- We analysed data from the Transitions to Adulthood survey of 1390 AGYW aged 12-23 years in Korogocho and Viwandani (Figure 1) in 2009.
- The outcomes of interest were: (i) knowledge of HIV status, indicating whether one ever tested for HIV and received last test results; (ii) condom use during the last sexual intercourse; (iii) number of sex partners in past 12 months; (iv) age difference with last sexual partner; (v) age at first sex; and (vi) high risk sexual behavior, which was measured as a composite of the above measures. It was obtained by summing up the measures such that the higher the score the higher the risky sexual behaviour. Those who never had sex were coded 0 (i.e., were included in the low risk group).
- Mediators: Whether one belongs to any social group or club; peer influence; relationship with parents/guardians; and whether the AGYW does any unpaid voluntary work in the community
- We estimated the proportions reporting these outcomes and mediators; and conducted multivariable regression models for each outcome to identify socio-demographic factors associated with it.

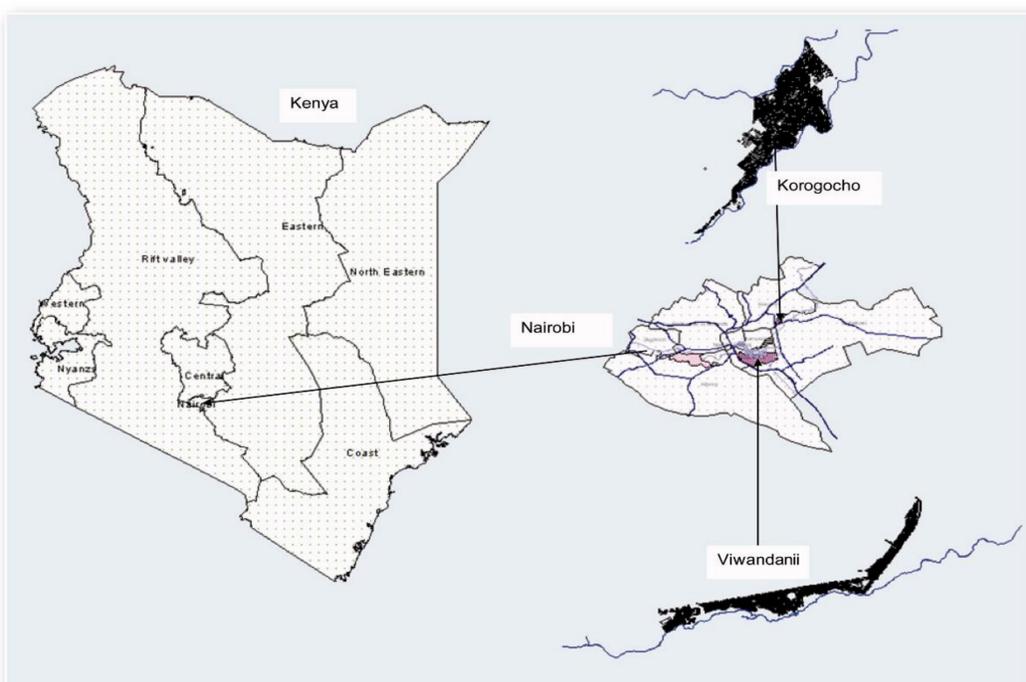


Figure 1. Study area: Viwandani and Korogocho slums in Nairobi

Results

- 723 AGYW (52%; 95% CI 49-54%) knew their HIV status, but this varied greatly across the age groups, with knowledge increasing with age from 15% among the youngest to 84% among the oldest AGYW.
- 576 (41%; 95%CI 39-44%) AGYW ever had sex. This proportion increased with age.
- Median (interquartile range) at sex debut was 16 (15-18) years.

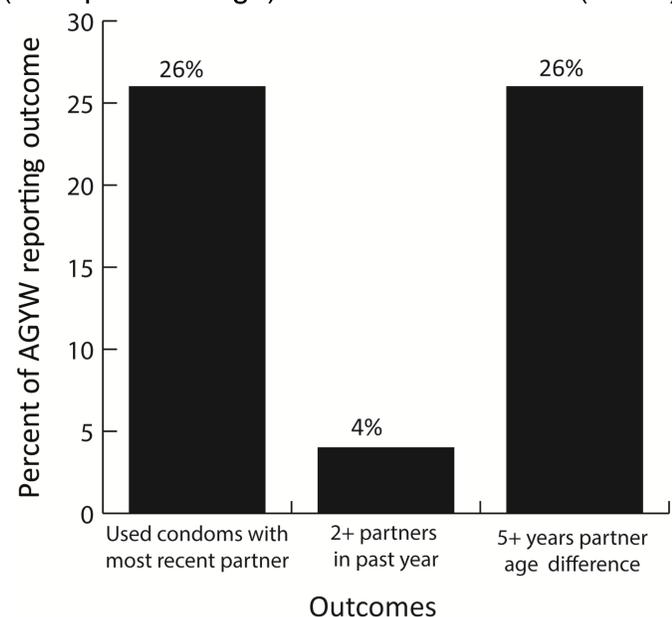


Figure 2. Percent of 576 AGYW sexually active who reported various outcomes

- Few AGYW had multiple partners or partners of much older age
- AGYW in the older age-groups, resided in Korogocho, currently married, not currently in school, Luo, and whose friends used alcohol and drugs, had trouble at school or with police, or ran away from home had on average higher risky sexual behaviour.
- Compared to AGYW living with single parents, those living with both parents had lower risky sexual behavior. Those living alone or with friends, with spouse or with other (unspecified) persons had higher risk behaviour
- Being a Muslim and belonging to a social group (e.g. drama group, anti-AIDS, girl guides) was associated with lower risk behaviour.

Discussion and conclusion

- Our study highlights possible high risk sexual behaviours for HIV infection among AGYW in Nairobi slums: low condom use and early sexual debut.
- Multifaceted approaches addressing the educational and social determinants of AGYW vulnerability, that also reach the people with whom AGYW live and interact, are needed to reduce sexual risk behaviours and promote uptake of social support and HIV prevention services.

References

1. UNAIDS. Prevention gap report. 2016

Acknowledgements