

Size estimates of most at risk populations

As a core part of surveillance and “knowing your epidemic” countries need information on the size of populations which have behaviours that put them at increased risk for HIV. Behaviours such as injecting drugs with unsafe equipment or unprotected anal sex have increased transmission rates for HIV making them of particular importance to monitoring the HIV epidemic. Measuring the size of these populations is challenging because they are often hidden because of social stigma or illegality of their behaviours.

The size of most at risk populations can be used to design HIV prevention programmes, to allocate resources and services, to understand the trajectory of the country’s HIV epidemic and to assess coverage of response. Two specific tools which require estimates of population sizes include the *Modes of Transmission model*, which allows countries to estimate incidence by different modes of transmission, as well as the *Estimates and Projection Package* for concentrated epidemics, which allows countries to estimate and project HIV prevalence and incidence based on available surveillance data.

UNAIDS and partners have developed a set of guidance and training materials to help countries improve their ability to estimate the sizes of their most at risk populations.

The materials include *Guidelines on Estimating the Size of Most at Risk Populations* developed by the UNAIDS/WHO Working Group on HIV and STI Surveillance. These guidelines provide the basic description of methods to estimate the size of populations including examples.

In addition, UNAIDS and partners developed training materials to help country counterparts use the methods. These include a *Participant’s Manual*. The materials were developed so participants who attend the regional trainings can use the materials to facilitate trainings upon return to their country.

Resources

Modes of Transmission model

<http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/tools/>

Estimates and Projection Package

<http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/tools/estimationandprojectionpackagepp/>

Guidelines on Estimating the Size of Most at Risk Populations

http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2010/guidelines_popnestimationsize_en.pdf

Participant’s Manual

http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2010/manual_participants_popnestimationsize_en.pdf

More information on Network scale-up

<http://nersp.osg.ufl.edu/~ufruss/scale-up.htm>



UCSF site on size estimation and surveillance among most at risk populations
http://globalhealthsciences.ucsf.edu/PPHG/surveillance/surv_modules.html