

HIV RELATED STIGMA & DISCRIMINATION IN CAMBODIA SUMMARY OF RECENT FINDINGS 2011

This fact sheet highlights the key data of HIV-related stigma and discrimination in Cambodia, obtained from the Stigma Index¹, the Socioeconomic Impact Study² and the MARYP Survey³, all of which were conducted in 2010. This fact sheet is intended to be used as a tool to advocate to policy makers and programme planners.

Stigma & Discrimination faced by Women¹

- ✚ **39%** of all physical harassment/threats experienced by WLHIV had been due to their HIV status.
- ✚ **89%** of all physical assaults on WLHIV had been perpetrated by those living in the same household.
- ✚ WLHIV were about twice as likely to suffer from psychological pressure from their spouse/partner (**45%**) or be subjected to gossip (**31%**).

HIV-related Discriminatory Behaviour¹

- ✚ **12%** of PLHIV were discriminated against by other PLHIV.
- ✚ PLHIV were most often discriminated by neighbors (**23%**); friends (**13%**); co-workers (**11%**); spouse & family members (**7%**).
- ✚ **78%** of PLHIV thought that the major reason why they are stigmatized & discriminated against is the fear that others have of getting infected with HIV, which is associated with a lack of understanding of how HIV is transmitted.

Self-Stigma in PLHIV¹

Feelings of:	Women (%)	Men (%)
guilt	73	75
low self-esteem	51	41
self-blame	37	65
suicide	20	6

- ✚ Self-stigma involved denying oneself to have children (**58%**); deciding not to get married (**42%**); withdrawing from career & education (**30%**); & avoiding medical attention (**20%**).

Access to Health & Treatment Services

- ✚ Even if most PLHIV were currently on treatment:
 - **23%** do not have free & available access to ART¹.
 - **14%** do not have free & available access to OIT¹.
- ✚ **18%** of PLHIV had been hospitalized in the previous year (v **6%** among non-PLHIV)².

Sexual & Reproduction Health to PLHIV¹

- ✚ **10%** of PLHIV had been denied access to family planning and SRH services.
- ✚ **79%** of PLHIV had been advised by health staff not to have any children.
- ✚ **19%** of PLHIV had been strongly advised by health staff to use permanent sterilization.
- ✚ **14%** of WLHIV who were pregnant in the past year had been strongly advised to terminate their pregnancy by a health professional.

Testing & Confidentiality

- ✚ Only **69%** of PLHIV received their HIV diagnosis from VCCT².
- ✚ The main reason for HIV testing¹:
 - WLHIV – spouse/partner/family member became ill or had died (**41%**).
 - MLHIV – development of HIV-related symptoms (**47%**).
- ✚ Health care professionals had disclosed the HIV status of almost **6%** of PLHIV without consent¹.

Poverty, Employment & Education

- ✎ Average monthly income of PLHIV was **US\$49**; more than **40%** of PLHIV live on less than US\$1/day¹.
- ✎ HIV-HHs were **25%** more likely to loan from high interest money-lender & be in debt².
- ✎ Food insecurity:
 - **51%** of HIV-HH members did not have enough food to eat at some stage during the previous year².
 - **58%** HIV-HHs are dependent on food support (vs **4%** in non-HIV-HH)².
- ✎ Loss of income & employment after HIV diagnosis:
 - **48%** of PLHIV had lost their employment or source of income¹ & more than **50%** decrease in income for those who remained employed^{1,2}.
 - **71%** of all HIV-related loss of employment or source of income was due to ill health.
 - **25%** of PLHIV have caregivers, most of whom are family members who had to leave paid jobs².
- ✎ Children in HIV-HHs are 2 times more likely to miss school².

Access to Legal Services¹

- ✎ **67%** of PLHIV who had their rights violated had attempted to access legal assistance BUT...
 - only **6%** knew about any legal services or human rights organizations to approach for help.

Abbreviations:

ART:	Antiretroviral treatment
HIV-HH:	HIV-household
MARYP:	Most-at-risk young people
MLHIV:	Men living with HIV
PMTCT:	Prevention of mother-to-child transmission

Most-at-Risk Young People (10-24 years old)³

- ✎ Only **55%** of MARYP were currently attending school (F= **54%**, M= **55%**).
- ✎ MARYP were engaged in overlapping risk behaviors such as using drugs, drinking alcohol & having sex without a condom:
 - *Sexually active*: F=**23%**, M=**41%**; **83%** of sexually active male paid for sex with women in the past year.
 - *Sexually active but had never received a condom*: F=**32%**, M=**11%**.
 - *Condom use between sweethearts*: F=**31%**, M=**58%**.
 - *Drink alcohol*: F=**70%**, M=**91%**.
 - *Illicit drug use* (mostly *Yama*): F=**4%**, M=**15%**; more than **14%** of males injected drugs.
- ✎ **37%** of females & **20%** of males had not received any HIV/AIDS information in the previous three months.
- ✎ HIV testing of MARYP in the past year was very low (F=**21%**, M=**17%**).
- ✎ MARYP who reported STI in the past year but did not seek any treatment: F=**43%**, M=**30%**.
- ✎ **33%** of pregnant females had induced-abortions, **88%** of which were self-induced or were performed in private clinics by non-medical staff members.
- ✎ MARYP found health services, especially SRH services, to be youth-unfriendly & disrespectful.

Abbreviations:

PLHIV:	People living with HIV
SRH:	Sexual & reproductive health
STI:	Sexually-transmitted infection
VCCT:	Voluntary confidential counseling & testing
WLHIV:	Women living with HIV

References:

1. Cambodian People Living with HIV Network (2010). People living with HIV Stigma Index.
2. National AIDS Authority (2010). Report on the Socioeconomic Impact of HIV at the Household level in Cambodia.
3. Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (2010). Most-at-risk Young People Survey, Cambodia.