

# Characteristics, High-Risk Behaviors and Knowledge of STI/HIV/AIDS, and Prevalence of HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis among MSM in Tbilisi, Georgia: 2007

Report on a Behavioral Surveillance Survey with a Biomarker Component for the SHIP Project





Tanadgoma – Center for Information and Counseling on Reproductive Health



Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center



April 2008

The STI/HIV Prevention (SHIP) Project is being implemented in partnership with Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), Tanadgoma and Bemoni Public Union, with close collaboration with the Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center and the Research Institute on Addiction.

This study was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) within the framework of Save the Children's STI/HIV Prevention (SHIP) Project (Cooperative Agreement 114-A-00-02-00095-00). The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views and/or opinions of USAID.

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## Art Work

Art on the cover page and in the report are originals works of art included in the pamphlets, leaflets and brochures used in the Information, Education and Communication component of the SHIP project.

# Acknowledgements

This behavioral and biomarker surveillance survey and report are the culmination of contributions made by numerous individuals, organizations and institutions, from inception and throughout the entire process of planning, fieldwork, data analysis, writing and editing. Each of the contributions has been invaluable. Furthermore, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided the necessary funds that allowed this important study to take place.

The early phases of planning this survey relied heavily upon the professional work and insightful knowledge that Tanadgoma regarding men who have sex with men (MSM) in Georgia. Tanadgoma's work over the years laid the foundation for this study. Building upon this foundation, Dr. Gina Dallabetta, who worked with Family Health International during this time period (and is now with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation), led the SHIP Project through a process that provided a number of insights about surveillance of high-risk behaviors among target populations and inform the research protocols that were used in this study. Gina's advice and guidance has not only been a great learning experience for all involved, but has been crucial in establishing the systematic methodology that is both non-coercive and anonymous.

One of the most demanding aspects of the initiative was the fieldwork. All the staff of Tanadgoma contributed enormous amounts of time in preparation, interviewing, and taking and testing blood specimens. ACT-Research was hired to assist with quality control of data collection processes, database development, data entry and cleaning.

If all were told, the number of authors on the report would fill one page. Many people have read and reread drafts of the report and made worthy contributions; nonetheless, any flaws that remain in the report are solely of the authors.

Translating any document, especially a report written with technical health and statistical expressions, is challenging. Nonetheless, Nino Tsereteli has provided a high-quality version of the report in Georgian, which will make the report accessible to a wide Georgian audience interested in understanding how to improve services for MSM.

Ultimately, the SHIP Project must recognize those who were willing to give of their time, stories, and blood to make this report possible – the MSMs. It is from their willingness to share in this endeavor that a positive, healthy future for all the people of Georgia will be possible.

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## Acronyms

AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome AIDS Center – Infectious Diseases, AIDS & Clinical Immunology Research Center **BSS** – Behavioral Surveillance Survey BSS-1 – Behavioral Surveillance Survey conducted in Oct. 2002. **ELISA** – Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay GEL – Georgian Lari (exchange rate of 2.2GEL=1USD in November 2002; 1.84 GEL =1USD in September 2004; and 1.78 GEL = 1 USD in June 2006) HBV – Hepatitis B Virus HCV – Hepatitis C Virus **HIV** – Human Immunodeficiency Virus **IDP** – Internally Displaced Person IDUs - Injecting Drug Users MSM – Men who have Sex with Men NGO – Non-Government Organization **RDS** – Respondent Driven Sampling RPR – Rapid Plasma Reagent SC – Save the Children SHIP - STI/HIV Prevention SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences STI – Sexually Transmitted Infections **TPHA** – *Treponema pallidum* Hemagglutination Assay **UNAIDS** – United Nations AIDS VCT – Voluntary Counseling and Testing

## Definitions

**Anonymous-linked testing** – testing where no names are taken but results are linked to a number that only the participant knows.

**Bisexual** – having sex with both women and men.

- **Client of a Man having Sex with Man** a person with whom MSM had established sexual contact in exchange of money or something of value.
- Consistent condom use use of condoms every time during sexual relations.
- Heterosexual having sex with a person of the opposite sex.
- **High-risk behavior** any behavior that puts an individual or individuals at increased risk of contracting STIs/HIV or transmitting STIs/HIV to another individual.
- Homosexual having sex with a person of the same sex.

Male sex-worker – a man who engages in sexual contacts in exchange of money.

**Non-regular (occasional) sex partner** – a sex partner for less than one year who is not a spouse, live-in partner or sex worker.

Regular (permanent) sex partner – a spouse, live-in partner or sex partner for one year or more.

**Sharing needles and/or injecting equipment** – reusing needles, syringes or other injecting equipment with other IDUs without properly sterilizing the equipment.



# Overview

This report presents the findings from the behavioral surveillance survey (BSS) conducted in Tbilisi, Georgia, among Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) in 2007. The first BSS study of this group was conducted in 2005 under the Global Fund supported project "HIV/STI Prevention among Commercial Sex Workers, Men who have Sex with Men and their clients". This study serves as a baseline measurement of the prevalence of different risk behaviors of MSM.

The survey presented in this report is the second BSS conducted with this group. Some of its findings are compared with the first BSS, which was a smaller-scale survey.

This BSS used a chain-referral method of respondent driven sampling (RDS). Five (5) MSM, referred to as "seeds", started the snowball sampling process. Within three weeks a total of 140 MSM had been recruited. 13 MSM voluntarily came in from hearing about the survey.

Interviewing was conducted from 26 November to 15 December 2007. Interviews were conducted faceto-face by trained staff from Tanadgoma. The interviews were conducted in Georgian. Questions were asked regarding high-risk behaviors, knowledge of STIs and HIV/AIDS, and use of health services. In addition, each MSM was asked to provide a blood specimen for an anonymous-linked test for syphilis, Hepatitis C (HCV), Hepatitis B (HBV) and HIV.

# Introduction

The trend since 1996 has been an increase in the number of HIV/AIDS cases (see Figure 3). The two major increases were 1999-2000 and 2003-2004. However, in general, STI/HIV data suffer from weak surveillance systems in Georgia, which is likely to have resulted in widespread under-reporting. Moreover, the anecdotal reports of recent increases in the rate of STIs indicate a future potential for HIV to spread more rapidly among a wider population through sexual contact.



As of 9 October 2007 there was a total of 1,406 HIV registered cases; 1074 are males and 332 are females, the vast majority of infected persons is 29 to 40 years of age.<sup>1</sup> The actual number of persons living with HIV in Georgia may be closer to 3,500 persons.<sup>2</sup> IDUs account for 60.7% of the registered HIV cases in Georgia; heterosexual contacts for 32.3% (1/3 of these heterosexual contacts were with known IDUs); homo/bi-sexual contacts for 2.8%; 0.8% were blood recipients; 2.0% was from vertical transmission; and 1.4% was from unknown causes.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center, <u>http://aidscenter.ge/epidsituation\_eng</u>.html.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center, <u>http://aidscenter.ge/epidsituation\_eng</u>.html.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center, <u>http://aidscenter.ge/epidsituation\_eng</u>.html.

# Target Population – Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)

Groups with particularly high levels of risk behavior are likely to continue to drive new infections of HIV in Georgia. MSM are considered to be one of the core groups driving the epidemic of sexually transmitted HIV because of type of sexual contact and exposure to multiple partners. It is essential to collect systematic and repeated behavioral data to identify risk behaviors that may have been neglected or have failed to respond to prevention efforts. Even if "safe sex" (i.e. condom use) is high, it will still be important to track other information such as who is initiating safe sex, how condom use is negotiated and how behaviors might differ with "regular" partners of MSM, than with occasional partners and, for those who practice commercial sex.

Based on the experience of SHIP Partner NGO Tanadgoma, there are the following categories of MSM in Tbilisi:

- 1. *MSM involved in commercial sex.* This category could be divided into three groups according to the socio-economical status of the MSM in it:
  - a) The lowest socio-economic group consists of mainly immigrants to Tbilisi, which are very poor and are involved in commercial sex in order to make up for living. Their sexual preferences may not (and usually are not) of homosexual nature, however, they try to sell their services for money or sometimes just for having a shelter to overnight.
  - b) The second (middle) group of MSM involved in commercial sex is presented by men that mainly have some other income, are involved in commercial homosexual relations for some period of time. They might be (and often are) of bisexual orientation they have female partners as well.
  - c) The third group consists of MSM that target rich and famous clients. They provide their services for several reasons, such as they get partners, they are paid or get some financial/material remuneration, and they try to get familiar with the higher society.
- 2. MSM not involved in commercial sex. Here four groups can be distinguished:
  - a) The very low income group, which is practically not covered by most outreach programs.
  - b) The middle level group. They usually have regular or at least some irregular income. Most of them are either of bisexual orientation or gay.
  - c) So-called "upper-middle" group MSM that are willing to come out and reveal their sexual preferences, still not in front of the broad society, but with some group of people of the same behavior patterns.
  - d) The highest socio-economic groups of MSM belong to or are associated with the artistic circles of society. They might be singers, fashion designers, artists, etc and do not try to hide their sexual preferences. However, due to the Georgian mentality and general attitudes to the homosexuality they do not pronounce this verbally, but prefer to demonstrate this through behavior, the way they dress, etc.

It should be noted that there is some small migration between the two main categories of MSM – "commercial" and "non-commercial" MSM. Also, in the groups b) and c) of the first category – "commercial" MSM the representatives tend to gather in rather small groups that try to stick together and not to communicate with other sub-groups.

This study included MSM from the two major categories (commercial and non-commercial), but representation of each sub-group was dependent upon the respondent-driven sampling process; that is, no special incentives was provided to recruit from any of the specific sub-groups.

Table 1 below presents a summary of findings based on various indicators from the BSS of MSM in 2007. The analyses include a breakdown by the UNAIDS' two age groups (<25 yrs and 25+ yrs) for each indicator, which is presented in the data tables in the appendix; however, due to brevity of presentation a discussion of all age group similarities and/or differences will not be discussed.

Table 1: Summary	y of ke	y indicators	for	MSM	in	Tbilisi.

	Prevalence			
Key Indicators	<25 yrs	25+ yrs	Total	
	(n=57)	(n=83)	(n=140)	
Biomarker				
Reactive syphilis serology	35.1% (20/57)	28.9% (24/83)	31.4% (44/140)	
Henatitis B	12 3% (7/57)	8 4% (7/83)	10% (14/140)	
	14.09/ (9/57)	0.470 (7703) 16 09/ (14/93)	10%(14/140) 15.7%(22/140)	
	14.0% (8/37)	10.9% (14/83)	13.7% (22/140)	
HIV (ELISA with Western Blot confirmation)	3./% (2/54)	3.7% (3/82)	3.7% (5/136)	
Demographic Characteristics				
Median age	20 yrs (57/57)	34 yrs (83/83)	27 yrs (140/140)	
		50.6% Secondary (42/83)	57.1% Secondary (80/140)	
Level of education	66.7% Secondary (38/57)	48.2% Post-secondary (40/83)	55.8% Post-secondary (58/140)	
Marital status	78.9% Never married (45/57)	54.2% Never married (45/83)	67.9% Never married (95/140)	
Alcohol & Drug Lise	(,,	(10,00)	(	
Drink alcohol every day	5 3% (3/57)	4.8% (4/83)	5.0% (7/140)	
Drink alcohol every day	5.3% (3/37)	4.8% (4/83)	3.0% (7/140)	
Used drugs	50.9% (29/57)	31.3% (26/83)	39.3% (55/140)	
Drug used	86.2% Marijuana (25/29) 172% Subutex (5/29)	92.3% Marijuana (24/26) 26.9% Subutex (7/26)	89.1% Marijuana (49/55) 21.8% Subutex (12/55)	
Injected	17.2% (5/29)	30.8% (8/26)	23.6% (13/55)	
Injected with used needle/svringe	0.0% (0/5)	0.0% (0/8)	0.0% (0/13)	
Sexual History & Behavior				
Type sex partners last 12 months:				
Mala accasional partner	75 49/ (42/57)	91 00/ (69/93)	70.2% (111/140)	
	73.4% (43/37)	81.9% (08/83)	79.5% (111/140)	
Male permanent partner	38.6% (22/57)	43.4% (36/83)	41.4% (58/140)	
Female occasional partner	54.4% (31/57)	42.2% (35/83)	47.1% (66/140)	
Female commercial sex worker	29.8% (17/57)	9.6% (8/83)	17.9% (25/140)	
# of male sex partners last 6 months:				
1-5	80.7% (46/57)	61.4% (51/83)	69.3% (97/140)	
6 – 10	10.5% (6/57)	18.1% (15/83)	15.0% (21/140)	
11+	8.8% (5/57)	20.5% (17/83)	15.7% (22/140)	
Ever been involved in group cov	$17 E^{0}$ (10/E7)	20.8% (22/82)	20.7% (42/140)	
Ever been nivoived in group sex	17.3% (10/37)	39.8% (35/83)	30.7% (43/140)	
Provided sex to a man for remuneration	33.3% (19/57)	12.0% (10/83)	20.7% (29/140)	
Condoms and Lubricants				
Condom use at last oral sex	44.7% (17/38)	42.9% (24/56)	43.6% (41/94)	
Condom use at last anal sex	60.4% (29/48)	62.5% (45/72)	61.7% (74/120)	
Condom use at last anal sex with male commercial sex	20.0% (1/5)	66 7% (2/2)	27 5% (2/9)	
worker	20.0% (1/3)	00.778 (2/3)	37.376 (378)	
Always use condom with male sex partners	31.3% (15/48)	37.5% (27/72)	35.0% (42/120)	
Condom used at last sex with female commercial sex worker	82.4% (14/17)	75.0% (6/8)	80.0% (20/25)	
Always use condom with commercial sex partners	29.4% (5/17)	25.0% (2/8)	28.0% (7/25)	
Used condom at last sex with occasional female	57.6% (19/39)	46.0% (23/55)	50.6% (42/83)	
Use lubricants during anal sey with men	26.3% (15/140)	33 7% (28/140)	30.7% (43/140)	
Always use lubricants during anal sex with men	20.3%(13)(140)	17.0% (E/28)	30.776(43)140)	
	33.3% (5/15)	17.9% (5/28)	23.3% (10/43)	
Experiences with violence				
Experienced violence because of sexual orientation	17.5% (10/57)	24.1% (20/83)	21.4% (30/140)	
Type of violence: Physical (beating)	10.5% (6/57)	16.9% (14/83)	14.3% (20/140)	
Verbal (insult)	10.5% (6/57)	13.3% (11/83)	12.1% (17/140)	
Sexual (rape)	5.3% (3/57)	8.4% (7/83)	7.1% (10/140)	
Perpetrator of violence	Stranger (5/10)	Stranger (13/20)	Stranger (18/30)	
Knowledge, opinions, and attitudes towards HIV/AIDS				
Has heard of HIV or the diseased called AIDS	94,7% (54/57)	98.8% (82/83)	97,1% (136/140)	
Close relative or friend infected ill or died of AIDS	15.8% (9/57)	15,7% (13/83)	15.7% (22/140)	
Correctly answer 6 questions about HIV transmission	19.3% (11/57)	27 7% (23/83)	24.3%(24/140)	
Voluntary Counceling and Testing	13.370 (11/37)	21.1/0 (23/03)	27.370 (34/ 140)	
		02 70/ (76/02)	90.7% (422/426)	
voluntary HIV testing is available in the community	85.2% (46/54)	92.7% (76/82)	89.7% (122/136)	
Had voluntary HIV test and received results	16.7% (9/54)	62.2% (51/82)	41.4% (58/140)	
Sexually Transmitted Infections				
Don't know symptoms of STIs	49.1% (26/53)	13.4% (11/82)	27.4% (37/135)	
Experienced genital discharge in past 12 months	21.1% (12/57)	12.0% (10/83)	15.7% (22/140)	
Experienced genital ulcer in past 12 months	5.3% (3/57)	3.6% (3/83)	4.3% (6/140)	
Experienced anal discharge in past 12 months	5.3% (3/57)	1.2% (1/83)	2.9% (4/140)	
Every taken test for STI?	38.6% (22/57)	75,9% (63/83)	60.7% (85/140)	
Do you know the result of the test?	90.9% (20/22)	100% (63/63)	97.6%(83/85)	

# Characteristics

- In this study, MSM ranged from 18 to 64 years of age, with a median age of 27 years.
- Slightly more that seventy percent (73.3%) are between 20 and 39 years of age: 43.6% were 20 to 29 years of age and 29.7% were 30 to 39 years of age.
- Nearly ten percent (7.1%) are 50 years of age or older.



- The majority (67.9%) has never been married; however, 16.4% were currently married, 14.3% were divorced, and 1.4% were widowers.
- Years of education ranged from 4 to 22 yrs of study, for an average (median) of 13 yrs. Two-thirds (66.4%) had completed a secondary education.
- Five percent were internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- Almost two-fifths (40% or 55) of MSMs were born in Tbilisi.
- Those MSM who were not born in Tbilisi (85) have lived in Tbilisi, on average, 15 yrs (sd=10yrs).

# Alcohol & Drug Use

- Nearly one-half (46%) drink alcohol at least once per week, with few (5%) reporting to drink alcohol daily.
- A greater proportion (50.9%) of MSM <25 years of age have used drugs compared to MSM 25 years of age or older (31%).
- Of these MSM who have used drugs, the younger group is almost two times less likely to inject drugs than the older group (17% vs. 31%).



• The difference in the rates of injecting drugs, mentioned above, is that a larger proportion of the youngest age group that used drugs reported using primarily non-injection drugs such as marijuana and sedatives, whereas more of the older age group that used drugs reported using injecting drugs, such as heroin, subutex, and ecstacy.

# **Sexual History & Behavior**

• MSM were asked about six different types of sexual partners in the previous 12 months. As shown in Figure 6, almost two times more have had sex with occasional than with permanent male partners.



## Figure 6: What type of sexual partners did you have during the last 12 months?

- More than one-half (54.4%) of the youngest MSM age group had occasional female sex partners in the previous year, declining slightly to 42.2% for the oldest age group.
- A slightly higher percentage of MSM have female than male commercial sex partners; that is, 30% of the youngest age group had female commercial sex partners vs. 12% having male commercial sex partners. For the oldest age group the difference was not as large (10% vs. 5% respectively).
- The vast majority (81%) of the youngest MSM reported having 1 to 5 male sexual partners in the last six months, declining to 61% of the oldest MSM.
- The prevalence of having 20 or more male sexual partners in the past six months is greater among the oldest than the youngest MSM (10% vs. 2%).

## Oral Sex

- Slightly more than two-thirds of both age groups (67% and 68%) had oral sex with a man in the past six months.
- Of these MSM, when asked if a condom was used the last time they had oral sex with a man, 45% of those <25 yrs and 43% of those 25+ yrs had done so. When asked how frequently a condom was used during the past 6 months with oral sex, almost seventy-percent (68% each) did not consistently (always) use a condom.</li>
- In addition, when asked how many different male partners they had engaged in oral sex with over the last six months, the youngest age group reported, on average, 2 men, increasing to an average of 3 men for the oldest age group.

## Anal Sex

- Condon use increases for anal sex with men. Of the 120 MSM responding (20 did not), 62% of MSM reported using a condom the last time they engaged in anal sex with a man. There was little difference between the two age groups.
- When asked how frequently a condom was used during the past 6 months with anal sex, again almost two-thirds (65% each) did not consistently (always) use a condom.
- Adding to their high-risk behaviors, 12% of the youngest age group and 10% of the oldest age group reported their male sex partners injected drugs.

## **Commercial Sex**

• One-third (32%) of the youngest age group had sex with a commercial sex partner in the previous 12 months compared to only 10% of the oldest age group.

- When asked if the most recent commercial sex partner was male or female, 71% of the youngest age group and 63% of the oldest age group reported this person was a female. Most, 82% of the youngest and 75% of the oldest age groups reported using a condom the last time they had sex with a female commercial sex partner.
- The majority (72%) of MSM do not use a condom consistently (every time) with commercial sex partners.
- A larger proportion (63%) of older MSM age group discusses HIV, AIDS or STIs with a commercial sex partner than younger MSM age group (41%).

# Involvement in Commercial Sex

- One-third (33%) of the younger age group are involved in commercial sex than the older age group (12%).
- Of the younger age group who are involved in commercial sex, 42% are involved two to three times per month with 32% involved once per week or more.
- One-half (50%) of the youngest age group that are involved in commercial sex also have other sources of income (work) other than commercial sex.
- When asked if they consider themselves as "involved in the commercial sex as a business," the vast majority of both age groups say they are not (78% and 89% respectively).
- Of those MSM that had provided sex to a man in exchange for material remuneration, among the youngest age group 78% did not use a condom whereas 78% of the oldest age group did use a condom.

# Group Sex

- About one of every five (18%) of the youngest age group increasing to two of every five (40%) of the oldest age group are involved in group sex.
- Among the youngest MSM age group, most (70%) are involved in male only group sex, whereas among the oldest MSM age group 52% are involved in male only with 39% involved in mixed group sex.
- The rate of condom use during group sex is almost equal among both age groups (60% and 58% respectively).

# Availability, Access & Use of Condoms & Lubricants

- All MSM have heard of a condom and almost all (94%) have used a condom during sex.
- The three main sources of condoms for MSM in Tbilisi are pharmacies (93%), NGO Tanadgoma (45%), and friends (13%).
- The rate of using lubricants during anal sex is low; 26% for the youngest age group and 34% for the oldest age group.
- When asked why they have never used lubricants for anal sex, the most frequent responses are "don't know" (39%), "don't like lubricants" (15%) and "don't need" (14%).
- Among those MSM that use lubricants during anal sex, only a small percentage of both age groups consistently (always) use lubricants (33% and 18% respectively).

# **Experience with Violence**

- Approximately one of every five MSM, 18% of the youngest and 24% of the oldest age groups, have been a victim of violence because of their sexual orientation.
- Among the MSM who have experience violence, in order of frequency the type of violence they have experienced are: 66% have experience physical (beating, cutting), 57% have experienced verbal insults, and 33% have experienced rape.
- A large majority (60%) of these MSM identified the perpetrator as a stranger, with less than 10% mentioning family members and friends.

# Knowledge, Opinions & Attitudes Toward HIV/AIDS

- Nearly all (97%) MSM have heard of HIV and AIDS.
- One of every three (32%) know of a person who is infected with or died from AIDS. Of these, 40% report the person is a relative and 12% report a friend.
- The overwhelming majority of MSM (93%) believe they can protect themselves from the HIV virus by using a condom correctly every time they have sex; however, only 71% believe they can protect themselves from the HIV virus by avoiding anal sex.
- Approximately nine of every ten MSM believes that they can protect themselves from HIV/AIDS by having one uninfected, reliable sexual partner and that a person who looks healthy can be infected with HIV.
- A small percentage of the youngest (19%) and the oldest (28%) age groups could correctly answer six questions about HIV transmission.<sup>4</sup>
- Most MSM, 88%, believe that a person who looks healthy can be infected with HIV.

# **Voluntary Counseling & Testing**

- Among the youngest age group, 85% report it is possible to get a confidential test and find out if they are infected with HIV increasing to 93% among the oldest age group.
- Astonishing only 17% of the youngest MSM have ever had an HIV test; in contrast, 62% of the oldest age group has.
- The few MSM in the youngest age group that have had an HIV test, most (67%) took it in the last year. For the oldest age group, 51% took it in the last year with 25% taking it one or two years ago.
- When an HIV test is taken virtually all MSM returned to find out the result (100% for the youngest and 96% for the oldest age groups).

# **Sexually Transmitted Infections**

- Nearly all (97%) of MSM have heard of diseases transmitted through sexual intercourse or sexually transmitted diseases (STIs).
- When asked to list various symptoms associated with STIs, 49% of the youngest age group could not identify one symptom decreasing to 13% of the oldest age group.
- Of the symptoms identified, the symptoms most frequently identified were genital discharge, not being able to retract the foreskin, and burning pain when urinating.
- When asked if they had experienced a genital discharge in the past 12 months, 21% of the youngest age group had compared to only 12% of the oldest age group.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The 6 questions were: 1) Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by using a condom correctly every time they have sex; 2) Can one get HIV as a result of a mosquito's bite?; 3) Do you believe that one may protect oneself from HIV/AIDS by having one uninfected and reliable sexual partner?; 4) Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by abstaining from sexual intercourse?; 5) Can a person get the HIV virus by sharing a meal with someone who is infected?; and 6) Do you believe that one may be infected with HIV/AIDS by using a needle/syringe already used by someone else?



Most (76%) of the oldest age group has taken tests for STIs; however, most (61%) of the youngest age

group have not. Practically all MSM in both age groups who have taken tests for STIs have returned to find out the

# **Exposure to Mass Communication**

- Sources of information regarding STIs and HIV differ among the two age groups of MSM. In rank order, the main sources for the youngest age group are friends, TV/Radio and social workers. For the oldest age group, the main sources are TV/Radio, social workers, newspapers, and friends.
- In the previous 4 weeks, 89% of the oldest age group watched TV every day decreasing to 54% of the youngest age group.
- Listening to the radio was less prevalent. In same previous 4 weeks only 25% of the youngest age group had listed to the radio daily slightly increasing to 40% for the oldest age group.

# **Biomarker**

result.

- Forty-seven percent (47.1% or 66) of the MSM tested positive on one or more of the four biomarker tests (syphilis, HBV, HCV and HIV).
- Twelve of the MSM tested positive on two and one MSM tested positive on three of the biomarker tests.
- Almost one-third of MSM tested positive for syphilis.
- The prevalence of the hepatitis C virus ranged from 14% in the youngest age group to 17% in the oldest age group. The rates of hepatitis B virus were slightly lower in both age groups (12% and 8% respectively).
- The prevalence of HIV (3.7%) was similar for both age groups.



## Figure 8: Prevalence of Syphilis, HBV, HCV and HIV among MSM.

# Main differences from BSS-1 (2005) to BSS-2 (2007)

Although some data regarding behavior from the BSS 2005 are not comparable to the data of 2007 due to the different terminology and formulation of questions, there still are several important data that can be compared from the BSSs carried out in 2005 and 2007:

## Biomarker

In the first ever BSS conducted in 2005, 27.1% of participants tested positive for syphilis, compared to 31.4% in 2007. In both surveys it makes about one-third of MSM.

As for HIV, 4.3 % were found positive in 2005 and 3.7% - in 2007.

## **Sexual History and Behavior**

In both surveys MSM were asked about types of sexual partners that they have. Six types of sexual partners were identified. Out of them only male commercial sex partner has been identified by almost the same percentage of survey participants (5.1 % in 2005 and 4.8% in 2007). As regards to the other types, percentage of MSM naming them has increased significantly:

- Male occasional partner: 27% in 2005 vs 79.3% in 2007
- Male permanent partner: 14.6% in 2005 vs 41.4% in 2007
- Female occasional partner: 21.2% in 2005 vs 47.1% in 2007
- Female permanent partner: 23.4% in 2005 vs 36.1% in 2007
- Female commercial sex worker: 8.8% in 2005 vs 17.9%

## Availability of VCT services:

VCT availability in the community has been indicated by around 90% in both surveys.

At the same time, percentage of MSM that had voluntary HIV test and received results has increased from 31.4% in 2005 to 41.4% in 2007.

## **Knowledge of STIs:**

In 2007 percentage of MSM not being able to identify the symptoms of STIs has more than doubled - from 11.2% in 2005 to 27.4%5 in 2007.

At the same time, there is increase in the percentage of participants that report having used STI testing services (54.3 in 2005 vs 60.7% in 2007) and having received the results of STI tests (51.4 in 2005 vs 97.6% in 2007).

## Violence:

It is remarkable that percentage of MSM reporting having experienced violence because of sexual orientation has increased from 10% in 2005 to 21.4% in 2007.

## Involvement in commercial sex:

Percentage of MSM that report being involved in commercial sex – "provided sex to a man for remuneration" has doubled since 2005 (11.4% in 2005 vs 20.7% in 2007).

## **Remaining Challenges**

- High HIV prevalence compared to other high risk behavior groups such as IDUs and CSWs, which shows that MSM is the group where concentrated epidemic might be detected very soon.
- Stable prevalence of syphilis, indicating that MSM either don't get proper treatment or are reinfected.

- Prevalence of these infections showing that high risk behavior unsafe sexual practices is extremely common in this group of population. These data are reinforced by condom use data of 2007, where condom use at last sexual intercourses with male partners do not exceed 60%.
- Variety of sexual partners indicated by high percentages of MSM.
- Low use of lubricants with only one third of participants indicating this.
- Low knowledge of STI symptoms.
- Low knowledge of HIV/AIDS (only 24.3% percentage being able to correctly answer 6 questions on HIV).
- Data indicating consistent use of condoms with male sex partners and with commercial sex partners are low (35% and 28% respectively).

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 1. Availability of VCT services has not changed but referrals to this services has increased by 10% during the two years. This provides evidence that such services should be promoted actively among this group, as they don't have barriers to use them.
- 2. Specific tailored materials should be designed and distributed among MSM focusing a) on gaps in their knowledge of STIs and HIV/AIDS; b) on the risks connected with having multiple sexual partners; c) on the safe sex practices and condom/lubricant use promotion.
- 3. Since television was cited as the main source of HIV/AIDS information by MSM, television information campaigns should address educational issues that are appropriate for the general population as well as for high risk behavior groups. Along with TV campaigns, specific and more explicit HIV prevention messages and materials for MSM, their clients and regular partners are best provided at the interpersonal level through outreach workers and peer educators rather than through mass media outlets. The interventions should target the gaps in knowledge and attitudes revealed through the surveys. New, additional strategies and methodologies should be elaborated in order to fill these gaps.
- 4. Interventions for MSM must be extended beyond Tbilisi and Batumi. High-risk sites should be identified and prevention interventions begin.
- 5. Non-coercive, anonymous, ethical and systematic surveillance of MSM (and other high risk groups), both behavioral and of selected biological markers, should be conducted throughout Georgia and repeated on a regular basis to provide early warning of a possible dramatic increase in the prevalence rate. In addition, surveys can provide invaluable information for designing focused interventions as well as for monitoring whether STI/HIV prevention and reduction interventions are working.

# **Appendix of Data Tables**

Study	2007
Dentisia stard in 2007	2007
Participated in 2007	140
Location	Tbilisi
	26 November –
Date of interviews	15 December
	15 December
Location of interview (n)	
At organizations office	100% (140/140)
Recruitment (n)	
RDS method	90.7% (127)
Volunteered	9.3% (13)
Refusal rate	
Total recruited or volunteered	147
Total rejected	7
Total completed	140
Total agreed to blood sample	140

# Table 2: Date of Study, Recruitment and Refusal Rate

Table 3: Demographic characteristics of MSM study participan
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Characteristics	Males
Year	2007
(n)	(n=140)
Age	
Mean Age (years)	30yrs (140)
Median Age (years)	27yrs (140)
Range	18 – 64 yrs
Age Groups	
<20yrs	15.0% (21/140)
20 – 29 yrs	43.6% (61/140)
30 – 39 yrs	29.7% (39/140)
40 – 49 yrs	6.4% (9/140)
50+ yrs	7.1% (10/140)
Marital Status	
Never married	67.9% (95/140)
Married	16.4% (23/140)
Divorced/Separated	14.3% (20/140)
Widow	1.4% (2/140)
Ethnicity	
Georgian	83.4% (118/140)
Armenian	3.6% (5/140)
Russian	3.6% (5/140)
Other	8.6%% (12/140)
Level of Education	
None	0.0% (0/140)
Primary	1.4% (2/140)
Secondary/vocational	66.4% (93/140)
Incomplete higher	32.1% (45/140)
University	0.0% (0/140)
Internally Displaced Person	
Yes	5.0% (7/140)
No	95.5% (133/140)
How long have you lived in Tbilisi?	
Less than 1 year	5.0% (7/140)
1-5 yrs	11.4% (16/140)
6-10yrs	10.7% (15/140)
11+ yrs	72.9% (102/140)
Mean	21yrs
Median	20yrs
Range	<1 yr to 64yrs

N/A – not asked.

		UN Age	Groups
Alcohol & Drug Use	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
In the previous 4 weeks, how frequently did you drink			
alcohol beverages?			
I did not drink (Don't read)	14.3% (20/140)	14.0 % (8/57)	14.5% (12/83)
Every day	5.0% (7/140)	5.3% (3/57)	4.8% (4/83)
At least, once a week	40.7% (57/140)	36.8% (21/57)	43.4% (36/83)
At least, twice a week	21.4% (30/140)	24.6% (14/57)	19.3% (16/83)
Once a month	17.9% (25/140)	19.3% (11/57)	16.9% (14/83)
Don't know	0.7% (1/140)	0.0% (0/57)	1.2% (1/83)
Some people have tried various drugs, have you?			
Yes	39.3% (55/140)	50.9% (29/57)	31.3% (26/83)
No	60.7% (85/140)	49.1% (28/57)	68.7% (57/83)
If yes, drug used.			
Heroin	14.5% (8/55)	10.3% (3/29)	19.2% (5/26)
Opium	5.5% (3/55)	0.0% (0/29)	0.0% (0/26)
Poppy-seed	5.5% (3/55)	3.4% (1/29)	7.7% (2/26)
Subutex	21.8% (12/55)	17.2% (5/29)	26.9% (7/26)
Inhalants	3.6% (2/55)	3.4% (1/29)	3.8% (1/26)
Marijuana	89.1% (49/55)	86.2% (25/29)	92.3% (24/26)
Ecstasy	10.9% (6/55)	3.4% (1/29)	19.2% (5/26)
Cocaine	5.5% (3/55)	0.0% (0/29)	11.5% (3/26)
Sedatives/hypnotics	14.5% (8/55)	13.8% (4/29)	15.4% (4/26)
Morphine	1.8% (1/55)	0.0% (0/29)	3.8% (1/26)
Managua	1.8% (1/55)	0.0% (0/29)	3.8% (1/26)
Hashish	1.8% (1/55)	0.0% (0/29)	3.8% (1/26)
Mean # drugs used:	1.8	1.4	2.2
Injected drug(s)?			
Yes	23.6% (13/55)	17.2% (5/29)	30.8% (8/26)
No	76.4% (42/55)	82.8% (24/29)	69.2% (18/26)
When you injected drugs for the last time, did you use			
syringe or needle used by someone else?			
Yes	0.0% (0/13)	0.0% (0/5)	0.0% (0/8)
No	92.3% (12/13)	80.0% (4/5)	100% (8/8)
Don't remember	7.7% (1/13)	20.0% (1/5)	0.0% (0/8)

## Table 4: Alcohol and Drug Use

## **Table 5: Sexual History**

		UN Age G	Groups
Sexual History	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
What type of sexual partners did you have during the			
last 12 months?			
Male occasional partner	79.3% (111/140)	75.4% (43/57)	81.9% (68/83)
Female occasional partner	47.1% (66/140)	54.4% (31/57)	42.2% (35/83)
Male permanent partner	41.4% (58/140)	38.6% (22/57)	43.4% (36/83)
Female permanent partner/wife	32.9% (46/140)	28.1% (16/57)	36.1% (30/83)
Female commercial sex worker	17.9% (25/140)	29.8% (17/57)	9.6% (8/83)
Male commercial sex worker	7.9% (11/140)	12.3% (7/57)	4.8% (4/83)
How many male sexual partners did you have sexual			
contact during the last 6 months?			
1-5	69.3% (97/140)	80.7% (46/57)	61.4% (51/83)
6 - 10	15.0% (21/140)	10.5% (6/57)	18.1% (15/83)
11 - 15	7.1% (10/140)	5.3% (3/57)	8.4% (7/83)
16 - 20	2.1% (3/140)	1.8% (1/57)	2.4% (2/83)
20 and more	6.4% (9/140)	1.8% (1/57)	9.6% (8/83)
How many other men in Tbilisi do you know of that		(/- /	· (-/ /
have sex with men?			
Range	1 – 5000 (140/140)	1 – 1000 (57/57)	1 – 5000 (83.83)
Median	19 (140/140)	15 (57/57)	20 (83/83)
Mean	134 (140/140)	86 (57/57)	167 (83/83)
In the past six months, have you had oral sex with a			
man?			
Yes	67.1% (94/140)	67.1% (38/57)	67.5% (56/83)
No	32.9% (46/140)	32.9% (19/57)	32.5% (27/83)
About how many different partners you have had oral			
sex with in the past six months.			
Range	1 – 50 (94/94)	1 – 18 (38/38)	1 – 50 (56/56)
Median	3.0 (94/94)	2.0 (38/38)	3.0 (56/56)
Mean	3.5 (94/94)	3.4 (38/38)	3.7 (56/56)
During oral sex, how often do you have active role?			
Always	27.7% (26/94)	34.2% (13/38)	23.2% (13/56)
Often	25.5% (24/94)	13.2% (5/38)	33.9% (19/56)
Sometime	36.2% (34/94)	39.5% (15/38)	33.9% (19/56)
Never	10.6% (10/94)	13.2% (5/38)	8.9% (5/56)
The last time you had oral sex, did you or your partner			
use a condom?			
Yes	43.6% (41/94)	44.7% (17/38)	42.9% (24/56)
No	56.4% (53/94)	55.3% (21/38)	57.1% (32/56)
In general, what frequency did you or your partners			
use a condom with oral sex during the past 6 months?			
Always	31.9% (30/94)	31.6% (12/38)	32.1% (18/56)
Often	9.6% (9/94)	13.2% (5/38)	7.1% (4/56)
Occasionally	24.5% (23/94)	31.6% (12/38)	19.6% (11/56)
Never	34.0% (32/94)	23.7% (9/38)	41.1% (23/56)
How many men have you had anal sex with in the past			
six months where you were the <i>active</i> partner?			
0	17.1% (24/140)	21.1% (12/57)	14.5% (12/83)
1 or more	78.6% (110/140)	75 4% (43/57)	80 7% (67/83)
Median [mean]	2.0 [4.2]	2.0 [2.7]	2.0 [5.2]
Don't know	0.7% (1/140)	0.0% (0/57)	1.2% (1/83)
No response	3.6% (5/140)	3.5% (2/57)	3.6% (3/83)
And how many where you were the passive partner?		5.6,6 (2, 6, 7	2.0,0 (0,00)
	36.4% (51/140)	43,9% (25/57)	31.3% (26/83)
1 or more	60.0% (01/140)	52 6% (20/57)	65 1% (E1/02)
1 OF HIOLE Median [mean]	00.0% (04/140) 20[5]	(/כ/Uč) %0.2C ۱۵ د/ ۵ د	(56/85) 1.20 [0 7] 0 2
Don't know	2.0[5.3] 0.0% (0/140)	2.0 [2.9] 0.0% (0/57)	2.0[7.0] 0.0% (0.02)
	0.0% (0/140)	0.0% (0/57)	0.0% (0/83)

		UN Age Groups	
Sexual History	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
No response	3.6% (5/140)	3.5% (2/57)	3.6% (3/83)
The last time you had anal sex, did you or your partner	(20 missing cases)	(9 missing cases)	(11 missing cases)
use a condom?	(20 missing cases)	(3 missing cases)	(II missing cases)
Yes	61.7% (74/120)	60.4% (29/48)	62.5% (45/72)
No	36.7% (44/120)	37.5% (18/48)	36.1% (26/72)
Don't remember	0.8% (1/120)	0.0% (0/48)	1.4% (1/72)
No response	0.8% (1/120)	2.1% (1/48)	0.0% (0/72)
In general, with what frequency did you or your			
partners use a condom with anal sex during the past 6	(20 missing cases)	(9 missing cases)	(11 missing cases)
months?			
Always	35.0% (42/120)	31.3% (15/48)	37.5% (27/72)
Often	23.3% (28/120)	25.0% (12/48)	22.2% (16/72)
Occasionally	18.3% (22/120)	16.7% (8/48)	19.4% (14/72)
Never	22.5% (27/120)	25.0% (12/48)	20.8% (15/72)
No response	0.8% (1/120)	2.1% (1/48)	0.0% (0/72)
Did any of your partners use injecting drugs?			
Yes	10.7% (15/140)	12.3% (7/57)	9.6% (8/83)
No	54.3% (76/140)	45.6% (26/57)	60.2% (50/83)
Don't know	35.0% (49/140)	42.1% (24/57)	30.1% (25/83)

		UN Age Groups	
Commercial Sex Partners	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
Has had sex with commercial sex partner during past			
12 months.			
Yes	18.5% (26/40)	31.6% (18/57)	9.6% (8/83)
No	81.5% (114/140)	68.4% (39/57)	90.4% (75/83)
Your most recent sex partner whom you exchanged			
money or some other material remuneration for sex.	(1 missing case)	(1 missing case)	
Was it a male or a female partner?			
Male	32.0% (8/25)	29.4% (5/17)	37.5% (3/8)
Female	68.0% (17/25)	70.6% (12/17)	62.5% (5/8)
How many times did you have anal sex with your			
last male commercial partner during the past 30			
days?			
0	50.0% (4/8)	40.0% (2/5)	66.7% (2/3)
1	25.0% (2/8)	40.0% (2/5)	0.0% (0/3)
3	25.0% (2/8)	20.0% (1/5)	33.3% (1/3)
The last time you had anal sex with this partner, was			
a condom used?			
Yes	37.5% (3/8)	20.0% (1/5)	66.7% (2/3)
No	62.5% (5/8)	80.0% (4/5)	33.3% (1/3)
Why didn't you use a condom that time?			
Not available	20.0% (1/5)	25.0% (1/4)	0.0% (0/1)
Don't like them	20.0% (1/5)	25.0% (1/4)	0.0% (0/1)
Didn't think of it	60.0% (3/5)	50.0% (2/4)	100% (1/1)
The last time you had sex with your <i>female</i>			
commercial sex partner (prostitute), was a condom			
used?			
Yes	80.0% (20/25)	82.4% (14/17)	75.0% (6/8)
No	20.0% (5/25)	17.6% (3/17)	25.0% (2/8)
Why didn't you use a condom that time?			
Don't like them	40.0% (2/5)	33.3% (1/3)	50.0% (1/2)
Didn't think it was necessary	40.0% (2/5)	33.3% (1/3)	50.0% (1/2)
Occasional partner	20.0% (1/5)	33.3% (1/3)	0.0% (0/2)
In general, with what frequency did you use a condom			
with all your commercial partner(s) during the past 6			
months?			
Every time	28.0% (7/25)	29.4% (5/17)	25.0% (2/8)
Most times	24.0% (6/25)	23.5% (4/17)	25.0% (2/8)
Occasionally	36.0% (9/25)	41.2% (7/17)	25.0% (2/8)
Never	8.0% (2/25)	5.9% (1/17)	12.5% (1/8)
No response	4.0% (1/25)	0.0% (0/17)	12.5% (1/8)
Have you ever discussed HIV, AIDS or STIs with any of			
your commercial partners?	40.00( (42./25)	44 20/ 17/47	
Yes	48.0% (12/25)	41.2% (7/17)	62.5% (5/8)
NO	52.0% (13/25)	58.8% (10/17)	37.5% (3/8)

## **Table 6: Commercial Sex Partners**

		UN Age Groups	
Involvement in commercial sex	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
Have you provided sex to a man in exchange for material			
remuneration?			
Yes	20.7% (29/140)	33.3% (19/57)	12.0% (10/83)
No	79.3% (111/140)	66.7% (38/57)	88.0% (73/83)
Over the last 6 months, approximately how often have you			
had sex with men in exchange of material remuneration?			
Several times a week	20.7% (6/29)	15.8% (3/19)	30.0% (3/10)
Once a week	13.8% (4/29)	15.8% (3/19)	10.0% (1/10)
2-3 times a month	31.0% (9/29)	42.1% (8/19)	10.0% (1/10)
Once a month	6.9% (2/29)	0.0% (4/19)	20.0% (2/10)
Once in three months or less	17.2% (5/29)	21.1% (0/19)	10.0% (1/10)
Difficult to answer	10.3% (3/29)	5.3% (1/19)	20.0% (2/10)
Monov	02 10/ (27/20)	04 70/ (19/10)	00.0% (0/10)
Food	93.1% (27/29) 2.4% (1/20)	94.7% (18/19)	90.0% (9/10)
Apartment /living place	5.4% (1/29)	0.0% (0/19) 5 2% (1/10)	10.0%(1/10) 10.0%(1/10)
How much money do you get for your services?	0.976 (2/29)	5.570 (1/15)	10.076 (1/10)
Less than 10 Lari	0 0% (0/27)	0 0% (0/19)	0 0% (0/0)
10-20 Lari	18 5% (5/27)	16 7% (3/18)	22 2% (2/9)
20-50 Lari	44 4% (12/27)	38 9% (7/18)	55 6% (5/9)
50 - 100  Lari	18.5% (5/27)	27.8% (5/18)	0.0% (0/9)
More than 100 Lari	0.0% (0/27)	0.0% (0/18)	0.0% (0/9)
Don't want to answer	18.5% (5/27)	16.7% (3/18)	22.2% (2/9)
What is your monthly income from this service?			
Up to 50 Lari	14.8% (4/27)	11.1% (2/18)	22.2% (2/9)
50-100 Lari	7.4% (2/27)	11.1% (2/18)	0.0% (0/9)
100-200 Lari	22.2% (6/27)	22.2% (4/18)	22.2% (2/9)
200-300 Lari	14.8% (4/27)	5.6% (1/18)	33.3% (3/9)
300-500 Lari	7.4% (2/27)	11.1% (2/18)	0.0% (0/9)
500-1000 Lari	3.7% (1/27)	5.6% (1/18)	0.0% (0/9)
Other	7.4% (2/27)	11.1% (2/18)	0.0% (0/9)
Don't want to answer	22.2% (6/27)	22.2% (4/18)	22.2% (2/9)
Do you have any other source of income besides this			
business (commercial sex)?			
Yes	48.1% (13/27)	50.0% (9/18)	44.4% (4/9)
No Desite sectors	44.4% (12/27)	44.4% (8/18)	44.4% (4/9)
Don't want to answer	7.4% (2/27)	5.6% (1/18)	11.1% (1/9)
Do you consider yourself as involved in the sex-business?		22 20( (4/10)	11 10/ (1/0)
Yes	18.5% (5/2/)	22.2% (4/18)	11.1% (1/9)
NO	01.5% (22/27)	//.0% (14/10)	00.9% (0/9)
you have per one working day?			
1	40.0% (2/5)	25.0% (1/4)	100 0 (1/1)
2	20.0% (2/3)	25.0% (1/4)	0.0% (0/1)
3	40.0% (2/5)	50 0% (2/4)	0.0%(0/1) 0.0%(0/1)
What is the reason of your involvement in the sex-husiness?			
Earning money	20.0% (1/5)	0.0% (0/4)	100.0 (1/1)
Like my occupation. Don't want to do anything else	60.0% (3/5)	75.0% (3/4)	0.0%(0/1)
I don't want to work	20.0% (1/5)	25.0% (1/4)	0.0% (0/1)
Last time when you had sex with a male partner for material			
remuneration, did you or your partner use a condom?			
Yes	40.7% (11/27)	22.2% (4/18)	77.8% (7/9)
No	59.3% (16/27)	77.8% (14/18)	22.2% (2/9)
If no, what was the reason for not using condom?			
Not available	18.8% (3/16)	7.1% (1/14)	100.0% (2/2)
Partner objected	12.5% (2/16)	14.3% (2/14)	0.0% (0/2)
Don't like them	43.8% (7/16)	50.0% (7/14)	0.0% (0/2)
Didn't think it was necessary	12.5% (2/16)	14.3% (2/14)	0.0% (0/2)
Didn't think of it	6.3% (1/16)	7.1% (1/14)	0.0% (0/2)
Don't know	6.3% (1/16)	7.1% (1/14)	0.0% (0/2)

# Table 7: Involvement in Commercial Sex

		UN Age Groups	
Sex with Females	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
Have you ever had sexual intercourse with a woman?			
Yes	67.1% (94/140)	68.4% (39/57)	66.3% (55/83)
No	32.9% (46/140)	31.6% (18/57)	33.7% (28/83)
How many women have you had sexual intercourse			
with during the past 6 months?			
1	27.7% (26/94)	25.6% (10/39)	29.1% (16/55)
2-9	44.6% (42/94)	51.3% (20/39)	40.0% (22/55)
10+	19.2% (18/94)	18.0% (7/39)	20.0% (11/55)
Median [mean]	3.0 [6.8]	4.0 [8.0]	3.0 [6.0]
Don't know	1.1% (1/94)	0.0% (0/39)	1.8% (1/55)
No response	7.4% (7/94)	5.1% (2/39)	9.1% (5/55)
How many out of them were non-commercial sex			
partners (not prostitutes)?			
0	11.7% (11/94)	15.4% (6/39)	9.1% (5/55)
1	25.5% (24/94)	20.5% (8/39)	29.1% (16/55)
2-9	42.6% (40/94)	51.3% (20/39)	36.4% (20/55)
10+	12.8% (12/94)	10.3% (4/39)	14.6% (8/55)
Don't know	1.1% (1/94)	0.0% (0/39)	1.8% (1/55)
No response	6.4% (6/94)	2.6% (1/39)	9.1% (5/55)
The last time you had sex with a <i>non-commercial</i>			
female sex partner was a condom used?			
Yes	50.6% (42/83)	57.6% (19/39)	46.0% (23/55)
No	42.2% (35/83)	39.4% (13/39)	44.0% (22/55)
Don't remember	1.2% (1/83)	0.0% (0/39)	2.0% (1/55)
No response	6.0% (5/83)	3.0% (1/39)	8.0% (4/55)
In general, what frequency did you use a condom with			
your female partners in the past 6 months?			
Every time	21.3% (20/94)	17.9% (7/39)	23.6% (13/55)
Most times	20.2% (19/94)	20.5% (8/39)	20.0% (11/55)
Occasionally	25.5% (24/94)	38.5% (15/39)	16.4% (9/55)
Never	20.2% (19/94)	10.3% (4/39)	27.3% (15/55)
No response	12.8% (12/94)	12.8% (5/39)	12.7% (7/55)

## **Table 8: Sex with Females**

# **Table 9: Group Sexual Practices**

		UN Age Groups		
Group sexual practices	Total	<25	25+	
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)	
Have you ever had group sex?				
Yes	30.7% (43/140)	17.5% (10/57)	39.8% (33/83)	
No	69.3% (97/140)	82.5% (47/57)	60.2% (50/83)	
Were those groups only male groups, only female				
groups, or mixed (male and female) groups?				
Only males	55.8% (24/43)	70.0% (7/10)	51.5% (17/33)	
Only females	7.0% (3/43)	0.0% (0/10)	9.1% (3/33)	
Mixed	37.2% (16/43)	30.0% (3/10)	39.4% (13/33)	
At the last time you took part in the group sex, did				
you use a condom?				
Yes	58.1% (25/43)	60.0% (6/10)	57.6% (19/33)	
No	39.5% (17/43)	40.0% (4/10)	39.4% (13/33)	
Don't know	2.3% (1/43)	0.0% (0/10)	3.0% (1/33)	

## Table 10: Use of Condoms and Lubricants

		UN Age	Groups
Use of Condoms and Lubricants	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
Have you ever used a condom during sex?			
Yes	94.3% (132/140)	94.7% (54/57)	94.0% (78/83)
No	5.7% (8/140)	5.3% (3/57)	6.0% (5/83)
If no, have you ever heard of a condom?			
Yes	100% (8/8)	100% (3/3)	100% (5/5)
NO	0.0% (0/8)	0.0% (0/3)	0.0% (0/5)
Do you know of any place or person from which you can obtain condoms?	00 40/ (125 /140)	02.00/ (52/57)	00.00/ (02/02)
No	90.4% (135/140) 2.6% (5/140)	93.0% (53/57) 7.0% (4/57)	98.8% (82/83)
Which places or persons do you know where you can obtain condems?	5.0% (5/140)	7.078 (4/37)	1.276 (1/83)
Pharmacy	93 3%(126/135)	90.6% (48/53)	95 1% (78/82)
NGO "Tanadgoma"	45.2%(61/135)	32.1% (44/53)	53.7% (44/82)
Friend	12.6%(17/135)	18.9% (7/53)	8.5% (7/82)
Shop	5.9% (8/135)	3.8% (6/53)	7.3% (6/82)
Health cabinet	3.7%(5/135)	3.8% (3/53)	3.7% (3/82)
Market	3.0%(4/135)	3.8% (2/53)	2.4% (2/82)
Clinic	3.0%(4/135)	3.8% (2/53)	2.4% (2/82)
Local Org- Inclusive	1.5%(2/135)	0.0% (0/53)	2.4% (2/82)
Bar/guest house/hotel	0.7%(1/135)	0.0% (0/53)	1.2% (1/82)
During the last 12 months, have you been given condoms?			
Yes	72.9% (102/140)	75.4% (43/57)	71.1% (59/83)
NO	27.1% (38/140)	24.6% (14/57)	28.9% (24/83)
Voc	20 7% (42/140)	26.2% (15/140)	22 7% (28/140)
No	62 9% (88/140)	20.3% (13/140) 68.4% (39/140)	59.0% (49/140)
Don't know what it is	6.4% (9/140)	5.3% (3/140)	7.2% (6/140)
Why have you <i>never</i> used a lubricant?		0.072 (07 2.07)	
Don't know	38.6% (34/88)	35.9% (14/39)	40.8% (20/49)
Don't like lubricants	14.8% (13/88)	15.4% (6/39)	14.3% (7/49)
Don't need	13.6% (12/88)	12.8% (5/39)	14.3% (7/49)
No response	13.6% (12/88)	12.8% (5/39)	14.3% (7/49)
I don't care	4.5% (4/88)	7.7% (3/39)	2.0% (1/49)
Can't get it	4.5% (4/88)	5.1% (2/39)	4.1% (2/49)
Don't want	4.5% (4/88)	5.1% (2/39)	4.1% (2/49)
Afraid to use it	2.3% (2/88)	2.6% (1/39)	2.0% (1/49)
Dorthor Usos	1.1% (1/88)	0.0% (0/39)	2.0% (1/49)
Hach't used	1.1% (1/88)	2.6% (1/39)	2.0% (1/49)
How often do you use lubricants?	1.170 (1/00)	2.070 (1/35)	0.070 (0/43)
Every time	23.3% (10/43)	33.3% (5/15)	17.9% (5/28)
Most times	7.0% (3/43)	20.0% (3/15)	0.0% (0/28)
Occasionally	69.8% (30/43)	46.7% (7/15)	82.1% (23/28)
Never	0.0% (0/43)	0.0% (0/15)	0.0% (0/28)
Do you know any place or person where you can obtain lubricants?			
Yes	43.5% (57/131)	33.3% (18/54)	50.6% (39/77)
No	55.0% (72/131)	64.8% (35/54)	48.1% (37/77)
Don't know	1.5% (2/131)	1.9% (1/54)	1.3% (1/77)
Which places or persons do you know where you can obtain lubricants?	70.00/ (45/57)	72 20/ (12/10)	02 10( /22 /20)
Pharmacy	/8.9% (45/57)	/2.2% (13/18)	82.1% (32/39)
Shop	15.8% (9/57)	22.2% (4/18)	12.8% (5/39)
Shop Market	10.5% (0/57)	11.1% (2/18)	10.3% (4/39)
	3.5% (3/57)	0.0% (0/18)	5 1% (2/39)
Bar/guest house/hotel	1.8% (1/57)	0.0%(0/18)	2.6% (1/39)
LGBT	1.8% (1/57)	5.6% (1/18)	0.0% (/39)
Which lubricants do you commonly use?			. ,
No response	35.1% (20/57)	27.8% (5/18)	38.5% (15/39)
Vaseline	17.5% (10/57)	5.6% (1/18)	23.1% (9/39)
Doesn't use	15.8% (9/57)	33.3% (6/18)	7.7% (3/39)
Intimgel	12.3% (7/57)	11.1% (2/18)	12.8% (5/39)
Hand lotion	12.3% (7/57)	0.0% (0/18)	17.9% (7/39)
Don't know	7.0% (4/57)	16.7% (3/18)	2.6% (1/39)
Masculan Debu eil	5.3% (3/57)	5.6% (1/18)	5.1% (2/39)
Baby OII	3.5% (2/57)	0.0% (0/18)	5.1% (2/39)
Special get	1.070 (1/5/)	0.0% (0/18)	2.070 (1/39)

## Table 11: Sexually Transmitted Infections

		UN Age	Groups
Sexually Transmitted Infections	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
Have you ever heard of diseases that can be transmitted through sexual	,	(	(
intercourse?			
Voc	07 10/ (126/140)	04 70/ (54/57)	00 00/ (02/02)
res	97.1% (136/140)	94.7% (54/57)	98.8% (82/83)
No	2.9% (4/140)	5.3% (3/57)	1.2% (1/83)
Can you describe any symptoms of STIs in men?	1 missing case	1 missing case	
Genital discharge	49.6% (67/135)	32.1% (17/53)	61.0% (50/82)
Can't retract foreskin	41.5% (56/135)	32.1% (17/53)	47.6%% (39/82)
Don't know	27.4% (37/135)	49.1% (26/53)	13.4%% (11/82)
Burning nain on urination	25 9% (35/135)	20.8% (11/53)	29 3%% (24/82)
Hackle smell temperature color	7.4% (10/135)	3.8% (2/53)	9.8%% (8/82)
Gonital ulcors (soros	5 0% (8/125)	2.8% (2/52)	7 2%% (6/92)
Genital dicers/soles	5.5% (0/155)	3.070(2/33)	2 70/0/ (2/02)
Swelling in groin area	5.2% (7/135)	7.5% (4/53)	3.7%% (3/82)
Pain	3.0% (4/135)	0.0% (0/53)	4.9%% (4/82)
Ulcers/sores in the anus	0.7% (1/135)	0.0% (0/53)	1.2%% (1/82)
Immune deficiency	0.7% (1/135)	0.0% (0/53)	1.2%% (1/82)
Urination	0.7% (1/135)	1.9% (1/53)	0.0%% (0/82)
Hair problems	0.7% (1/135)	0.0% (0/53)	1.2%% (1/82)
Spots	0.7% (1/135)	1.9% (1/53)	0.0%% (0/82)
Have you had a genital discharge during the past 12 months?			
Yes	15.7% (22/140)	21.1% (12/57)	12.0% (10/83)
No	84 3% (118/140)	78 9% (45/57)	88.0% (73/83)
Have you had a conital ulcar during the pact 12 months?	01.370 (110/110)	10.570 (15/57)	00.070 (75/05/
Noc	1 20/ 10/140		2 (1/ 12/02)
res	4.3% (0/140)	5.3% (3/57)	3.0% (3/83)
NO	95.0% (133/140)	93.0% (53/57)	96.4% (80/83)
Don't know	0.7% (1/140)	1.8% (1/57)	0.0% (0/83)
Have you had an anal ulcer or sore during the past 12 months?			
Yes	0.7% (1/140)	1.8% (1/57)	0.0% (0/83)
No	98.6% (138/140)	98.2% (56/57)	98.8% (82/83)
Don't know	0.7% (1/140)	0.0% (0/57)	1.2% (1/83)
Have you had an anal discharge during the past 12 months?			
Yes	2.9% (4/140)	5.3% (3/57)	1.2% (1/83)
No	96 4% (135/140)	93.0% (53/57)	98.8% (83)
Don't know	0.7% (1/1/0)	1.8% (1/57)	0.0% (0/83)
Have you ever taken tests for STI2	0.770 (1/140)	1.070 (1/ 57 )	0.070 (0783)
	CO 70( /05 /1 40)	20 (0/ (22/57)	75.00/ (02/02)
Yes	60.7% (85/140)	38.6% (22/57)	75.9% (63/83)
No	39.3% (55/140)	61.4% (35/57)	24.1% (20/83)
If yes, when did you take the last test on STIs?			
During the last months	5.9% (5/85)	13.6% (3/22)	3.2% (2/63)
During the last three months	18.8% (16/85)	13.6% (3/22)	20.6% (13/63)
During the last six months	27.1% (23/85)	40.9% (9/22)	22.2% (14/63)
One year ago	24.7% (21/85)	18.2% (4/22)	27.0% (17/63)
1.6 years ago	1.2% (1/85)	4.5% (1/22)	0.0% (0/63)
2 years ago	7.1% (6/85)	0.0% (0/22)	9.5% (6/63)
3 or more years ago	14.1% (12/85)	4.5% (1/22)	17.5% (11/63)
Don't remember	1 2% (1/85)	4 5% (1/22)	0.0% (0/63)
Why did you go for torting?	1.270 (1703)	4.570 (1/22)	0.070 (07 05)
For prophylovia	74 10/ /62/05)	62 69( (14/22)	77.00/ (40/62)
	74.1% (03/85)	03.0% (14/22)	77.8% (49/63)
After discovering symptoms	18.8% (16/85)	31.8% (7/22)	14.3% (9/63)
Sexual partner had an STI	1.2% (1/85)	0.0% (0/22)	1.6% (1/63)
Other	5.9% (5/85)	4.5% (1/22)	6.4% (4/63)
I don't want to know about the test results but do you know them?			
Yes	97.6%(83/85)	90.9% (20/22)	100% (63/63)
No	2.4% (2/85)	9.1% (2/22)	0.0% (0/63)
The last time you had genital or anal release, or ulcer/boil, what did you do?			
Consulted or received a treatment at the state-owned health clinic or hospital?	68.4% (13/19)	62.5% (5/8)	72.7% (8/11)
Consulted or received a treatment at a private health clinic or hospital?	15.8% (3/19)	12 5% (1/8)	18 2% (2/11)
Consulted or received a treatment at a drugstore?	15 8% (2/10)	0.0% (0/9)	27 3% (2/11)
Consulted or received a treatment from a traditional healer or a wise received	13.070 (3/13)		0.00/ (0/11)
Applied celf treatment?	0.0% (0/19)		
Applied self-treatment?	42.1% (8/19)	37.5% (3/8)	45.5% (5/11)
Told your sexual partner about your symptoms or S11?	/3./% (14/19)	/5.0% (6/8)	/2./% (8/11)
Stopped having sex when the symptoms appeared?	73.7% (14/19)	62.5% (5/8)	81.8% (9/11)
Did you use the condoms during the symptom period?	57.9% (11/19)	50.0% (4/8)	63.6% (7/11)

Table 12: Knowledge,	<b>Opinions, and Attitudes</b>	Towards HIV/AIDS

		UN Age	Groups
Knowledge, opinions, and attitudes towards HIV/AIDS	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
Have you ever heard of HIV or the disease called AIDS?	07.1% (126/140)	04 70/ (54/57)	00.00/ (02/02)
No	97.1% (136/140) 2 9% (6/140)	94.7% (54/57) 5 3% (3/57)	98.8% (82/83)
Do you know any person who has been infected, ill with, or has died of AIDS?	2.370 (0/ 110/	3.370 (37377)	1.2/0 (1/03)
Yes	31.6% (43/140)	27.8% (15/57)	34.1% (28/83)
No	67.6% (92/140)	72.2% (39/57)	64.6% (53/83)
Don't know	0.7% (1/140)	0.0% (0/57)	1.2% (1/83)
Do you have a close relative or friend who is HIV infected or has died of AIDS?			
Yes, a relative	39.5% (17/43)	40.0% (6/15)	39.3% (11/28)
Yes, a friend	11.6% (5/43)	20.0% (3/15)	7.1% (2/28)
NO No response	48.8% (21/43)	46.7% (7/15)	50.0% (14/28) 3.6% (1/28)
Please give me your opinion regarding the following:	2.376 (1/43)	0.0% (0/13)	3.076 (1/28)
Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by using a condom correctly			
every time they have sex? ( <b>Yes answer</b> )	93.4% (127/136)	90.7% (49/54)	95.1% (78/82)
Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by avoiding anal sex? (Yes answer)	71.3% (97/136)	59.3% (32/54)	79.3% (65/82)
Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by using a condom correctly every time they have anal sex? ( <i>Yes answer</i> )	91.9% (125/136)	88.9% (48/54)	93.9% (77/82)
Can one get HIV as a result of a mosquito's bite? (No answer)	47.1% (64/136)	50.0% (27/54)	45.1% (37/82)
Do you believe that one may protect oneself from HIV/AIDS by having one	. (- , ,		- (- /- /
uninfected and reliable sexual partner? ( <b>Yes answer</b> )	87.5% (119/136)	87.0% (47/54)	87.8% (72/82)
Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by abstaining from sexual intercourse? ( <i>Yes answer</i> )	72.8% (99/136)	70.4% (38/54)	74.4% (61/82)
Do you believe that one can get HIV/AIDS by taking food or drink that contains someone else's saliva? or Can a person get the HIV virus by sharing a meal with someone who is infected? ( <i>No answer</i> )	58.8% (80/136)	53.7% (29/54)	62.2% (51/82)
Do you believe that one may be infected with HIV/AIDS by using a needle/syringe already used by someone else? ( <i>Yes answer</i> )	99.3% (135/136)	100% (54/54)	98.8% (81/82)
Do you believe that a person who looks healthy can be infected with HIV, which causes AIDS? ( <i>Yes answer</i> )	88.2% (120/136)	81.5% (44/54)	92.7% (76/82)
Can a pregnant woman infected with HIV or AIDS transmit the virus to her unborn child? ( <i>Yes answer</i> )	88.2 %(120/136)	79.6% (43/54)	93.9% (77/82)
What can a pregnant woman do to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV to			
her unborn child?			
Don't know	59.2% (71/120)	60.5% (26/43)	58.4% (45/77)
Take medication (antiretroviral)	23.3% (28/120)	25.6% (11/43)	22.1% (17/77)
No breastfeeding	5.0% (0/120)	9.3% (4/43)	2.6% (2/77)
Other	14.2% (17/120)	9.3% (4/43)	16.9% (13/77)
Can a woman with HIV or AIDS transmit the virus to her newborn child through		5.570 (1715)	10.5% (15/77)
breastfeeding? (Yes answer)	70.8% (85/120)	76.7% (33/43)	67.5% (52/77)
Is it possible in your community for someone to get a confidential test to find			
out if they are infected with HIV?			
Yes	89.7% (122/136)	85.2% (46/54)	92.7% (76/82)
NO Den/t lineau	6.6% (9/136)	13.0% (7/54)	2.4% (2/82)
Don't know	3.7% (5/136)	1.9% (1/54)	4.9% (4/82)
Vos	44 1% (60/136)	16 7% (9/54)	62 2% (51/82)
No	55.9% (76/136)	83.3% (45/54)	37.8% (31/82)
When did you take the last HIV test?			
Sometime last year	53.3% (32/60)	66.7% (6/9)	51.0% (26/51)
Between 1-2 years ago	26.7% (16/60)	33.3% (3/9)	25.5% (13/51)
Between 2-4 years ago	15.0% (9/60)	0.0% (0/9)	17.6% (9/51)
More than 4 years ago	5.0% (3/60)	0.0% (0/9)	5.9% (3/51)
Voluntarily undergo the HIV test or were you required to have the test?	03 20% (EE/ED)	80 00/ 10 /01	Q1 10/ (10/E1)
Required	53.3% (30/00) 6.7% (4/60)	00.9% (8/9) 11.1% (1/9)	54.1% (48/51) 5.9% (2/51)
Please do not tell me the result, but did you find out the result of your test?	0.770 (4700)		2.270 (37.51)
Yes	96.7% (58/60)	100% (9/9)	96.1% (49/51)
No	3.3% (2/60)	0.0% (0/9)	3.9% (2/51)
Would you like to have meal with a person who is diseased with HIV or AIDS? (Yes answer)	64.0% (87/136)	57.4% (31/54)	68.3% (56/82)

	UN Age Gro		Groups
Knowledge, opinions, and attitudes towards HIV/AIDS	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
If your relative man were infected with HIV would you like to take care of him at	69.9% (95/136)	61.1% (33/54)	75.6% (62/82)
your place? ( <i>Yes answer</i> )			
If a student is infected with HIV, but not diseased may he be permitted to	75.0% (102/136)	70.4% (38/54)	78.0% (64/82)
continue studying? (Yes answer)	/ 510/0 (202/ 200/	7011/0 (00/01/	/ 010//0 (0 1/ 01)
If your relative woman were infected with HIV would you like to take care of her	68 1% (93/136)	61 1% (33/54)	73 2% (60/)
at your place? ( <i>Yes answer</i> )	00.470 (00/100)	01.178 (55/54)	73.270 (007)
If a teacher is infected, but not diseased with HIV may he be permitted to	64.0% (87/126)	61 1% (22/54)	65 0% (54/92)
continue teaching at school?	04.0% (87/130)	01.170 (33/34)	03.9% (34/82)
If acquainted with you food salesman is infected with HIV, will you buy food	15 6% (62/126)	28 0% (21/54)	50.0% (41/92)
from him/her?	45.0% (02/150)	38.370 (21/34)	50.0% (41/82)
If the member of your family were infected with HIV would you like it to keep	82 4% (112/136)	77 8% (42/54)	85 4% (70/82)
this in secret?	02.470 (112/130)	,,, (+2/54)	03.470 (70/02)

## Table 13: Experiences with Violence

		UN Age	Groups
Experiences with violence	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
Have you ever been a victim of violence because of your sexual orientation or			
sexual relations?			
Yes	21.4% (30/140)	17.5% (10/57)	24.1% (20/83)
No	77.9% (109/140)	80.7% (46/57)	75.9% (63/83)
No response	0.7% (1/140)	1.8% (1/57)	0.0% (0/83)
What kind of violence have you experienced?			
Physical (beating, cutting, etc)	66.7% (20/30)	60.0% (6/10)	70.0% (14/20)
Verbal (verbal insult)	56.7% (17/30)	60.0% (6/10)	55.0% (11/20)
Sexual (rape)	33.3% (10/30)	30.0% (3/10)	35.0% (7/20)
Don't want to answer	3.3% (1/30)	0.0% (0/10)	5.0% (1/20)
Who was violent to you?			
Stranger	60.0% (18/30)	50.0% (5/10)	65.0% (13/20)
Family member	6.7% (2/30)	20.0% (2/10)	0.0% (0/20)
Friend	6.7% (2/30)	10.0% (1/10)	5.0% (1/20)
Teacher	6.7% (2/30)	10.0% (1/10)	5.0% (1/20)
No response	6.7% (2/30)	0.0% (0/10)	5.0% (1/20)
Relative	3.3% (1/30)	0.0% (0/10)	5.0% (1/20)
Coworker	3.3% (1/30)	10.0% (1/10)	0.0% (0/20)
Sexual Partner	3.3% (1/30)	0.0% (0/10)	5.0% (1/20)
Classmates	3.3% (1/30)	0.0% (0/10)	5.0% (1/20)
Neighbors	3.3% (1/30)	0.0% (0/10)	5.0% (1/20)
Acquaintance	3.3% (1/30)	0.0% (0/10)	5.0% (1/20)

## **Table 14: Exposure to Interventions**

		UN Age Groups	
Exposure to Interventions	Total	<25	25+
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)
Please tell me all the sources you get information about STI/HIV?			
TV/Radio	62.9% (88/140)	56.1% (32/57)	67.5% (56/83)
Friends	40.7% (57/140)	47.4% (27/57)	36.1% (30/83)
Social workers	37.1% (52/140)	29.8% (17/57)	42.2% (35/83)
Newspapers	27.9% (39/140)	14.0% (8/57)	37.4% (31/83)
Booklets	10.0% (14/140)	7.0% (4/57)	12.1% (10/83)
Other	6.4% (9/140)	10.5% (6/57)	3.6% (3/83)
Healthy Cabinet	5.0% (7/140)	3.5% (2/57)	6.0% (5/83)
Family members	1.0% (1/140)	1.8% (1/57)	0.0% (0/83)
Do you know of ways to protect yourself from STI/HIV?			
Condom use	94.3% (132/140)	96.5% (55/57)	92.8% (77/140)
Avoiding sexual contacts	21.4% (30/140)	14.0% (8/57)	26.5% (22/140)
Contact with one devoted partner	16.4% (23/140)	14.0% (8/57)	18.1% (15/140)
Safe forms of sexual contact (masturbation, non-penetrative contact)	3.6% (5/140)	3.5% (2/57)	3.6% (3/140)
Don't know	3.6% (5/140)	3.5% (2/57)	3.6% (3/140)

## Table 15: Exposure to Mass Communication

	UN Age Grou		ge Groups	
Mass communications	Total	<25	25+	
	(n=140)	(n=57)	(n=83)	
Within the last 4 weeks how frequently did you listen to radio?				
Everyday	33.6% (47/140)	24.6% (14/57)	39.8% (33/83)	
At least than once a week	16.4% (23/140)	26.3% (15/57)	9.6% (8/83)	
Less than once a week	12.1% (17/140)	15.8% (9/57)	9.6% (8/83)	
Never listened within the last 4 weeks	37.1% (52/140)	33.3% (19/57)	39.8% (33/83)	
No response	0.7% (1/140)	0.0% (0/57)	1.2% (1/83)	
Within the last 4 weeks how frequently did you watch TV?				
Everyday	75.0% (105/140)	54.4% (31/57)	89.2% (74/83)	
At least than once a week	13.6% (19/140)	26.3% (15/57)	4.8% (4/83)	
Less than once a week	5.0% (7/140)	8.8% (5/57)	2.4% (2/83)	
Never listened within the last 4 weeks	6.4% (9/140)	10.5% (3/57)	3.6% (3/83)	

# Methodology

A Behavioral Surveillance Survey (BSS) among MSM in Tbilisi was conducted November/December in 2007 by the SHIP Project. This BSS was approved by, and conducted in cooperation with, the Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center (AIDS Center), which has been designated by the government as the primary HIV/AIDS research and treatment institution in Georgia. The survey protocol and instruments were approved by the Ethical Committee of HIV/AIDS Patients Support Foundation.

# **Ethical Issues**

The survey investigators were cognizant of the fact that individuals participating in this study were at some risk for social harm should they be identified as part of the target group. These surveys were designed to provide maximum protection for the participants, yet at the same time provide individual and community benefits. The following ethical issues were taken into consideration:

- Participation in these surveys was voluntary. Participants were free to withdraw at any time and were informed that refusal or withdrawal would not affect services they would normally receive.
- No names were recorded. All documentation is anonymous, linked only by a study number.
- The staff engaged in the study was trained in discussing sensitive issues and protecting participants' confidentiality and human rights.
- All individuals identified with a sexually transmitted infection were offered counseling and referred to the Healthy Cabinet clinic or to the AIDS Center for treatment.
- Recruitment of initial "seed" participants was done only by SHIP partner Tanadgoma who has been working with the target group. Subsequent recruitment of participants was done by participants themselves.

# **Respondent Driven Sampling**

Attempting to survey MSM with traditional survey methods is problematic, since this is a "hidden population" and no sampling frame exists for it.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, it is imperative to adhere to strict confidentiality and ensure anonymity. At the same time, to achieve valid and reliable results for the SHIP Project's activities, the methodology had to, as much as possible, provide an unbiased (random) and representative sample.

Currently, one of the most accepted methodologies to achieve a relatively unbiased sample with no sampling frame, while allowing for anonymity, is Respondent-Driven Sampling (RDS).<sup>6</sup> RDS is based on the principle that members of a hidden population are best able to access their own peers, and if incentives are provided, they will recruit a diverse set of individuals.<sup>7</sup> It utilizes a chain-referral method that produces a relatively independent sample of the initial subjects from which sampling begins. The method is modified with the introduction of an incentive system of secondary rewards for recruiting others into the study. Thus, as a result of the successive waves of recruitment, it does not matter whether the initial sample is randomly drawn.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> A sample frame is based on knowing the size, boundaries and distribution of the statistical universe.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "Respondent-driven sampling: A new approach to the study of hidden populations." <u>Social Problems</u>, Volume 44, Number 2, (May) 1997. Douglas D. Heckathorn.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> "Extensions of Respondent-Driven Sampling: A New Approach to the Study of Injecting Drug Users Aged 18-25." <u>AIDS and</u> <u>Behavior</u>, Vol.6, No.1, March 2002.







## **Data collection**

- In BSS the SHIP Partner Tanadgoma recruited 5 known MSM to serve as the "seeds." Tanadgoma selected "seed" MSM from different social groups, as well as different age groups;
- (2) Interviews were conducted at Tanadgoma office, in two separate rooms. When entering TG office, respondents were greeted by a field coordinator that informed them about the survey objectives, explained to them all the details, took informed consent, gave incentives, registered every step of the survey, etc.
- (2) The seeds were interviewed and then offered a financial incentive to recruit their MSM peers to take the same interview they had just completed. The incentive for participation was 15 GEL<sup>8</sup>.
- (3) Each MSM recruited was offered an incentive of 10 GEL to recruit up to two other MSM. Participants were rewarded both for completing the interview and for recruiting his peers into the research. These incentives provided a mechanism that created an expanding system of chain-referrals in which subjects recruited more participants, who recruited still more participants, and so forth, forming successive waves of recruitment. Each MSM was limited to two recruits in order to ensure that a broad array of subjects would have an opportunity to recruit, thereby preventing the emergence of semi-professional recruiters, and to preclude turf battles over recruitment rights;
- (4) To ensure that authentic MSM were recruited and not just individuals wanting some money, a verification procedure was followed in the survey. The verification procedure, conducted by experienced social workers, included a preliminary informal discussion regarding MSM places of gathering, their usual practices, etc. If the interviewer was satisfied with the recruit's responses, the interview proceeded;
- (5) Subject duplication was overcome by using a subject identification database recording the subject's gender, age, ethnicity, and physical characteristics, such as height, weight, scars, tattoos, and some biometric measures;
- (6) One of the 5 "seeds" accomplished seven waves of recruitment, one "seed" accomplished six waves, another one 4 waves. The remaining recruits were brought by other participants than "seeds" and accomplished two or three waves of recruitment.<sup>9</sup> In addition, 13 MSM voluntarily came in from hearing about the survey.
- (7) Sampling ended when the minimum target sample size of 140 MSM was achieved.

Interviewing occurred from 26 November to 15 December 2007. From these initial seed-MSM, a total of 134 MSM were recruited, and, due to "word of mouth," an additional 13 MSM came in independently. However, of the 147 MSM that were recruited, 7 were not interviewed because they could not demonstrate adequately that they were MSM (as discussed in point 4 above).

In addition, a tracking system was established during the surveys using only identification numbers that provided a way to link the recruiting MSM with the MSM he had recruited. For example, each MSM was given a coupon with their identification number in sequence,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The exchange rate at the time of the BSS study was 1.62GEL to 1 USD. Thus, each IDU received the equivalent of \$9.25 USD.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> A "wave" consists of a succession of recruited participants. For example, wave-1 consists of participants referred by the "seed." Wave-2 consists of participants recruited by the first-wave participants, and so forth.

according to when they were interviewed. Any additional MSM that were recruited by an MSM already interviewed (up to two) were required to accompany their recruiter to the interview site. Identification numbers were given to these recruited MSM, and these identification numbers were then linked to the recruiter's identification number.

This linking of MSM recruiter and the recruited MSM provided additional information on how well the RDS methodology encouraged MSM to recruit other MSM who are dissimilar to them either in age or social group. Theoretically, as the number of waves of recruitment increases, the more diverse the MSM will be from the initial "seeds" recruiters and thus, the more "representative" the sample. Heckathorn, the leading expert in RDS methodology, states that the number of waves necessary to achieve a diverse set of individuals is approximately six.<sup>10</sup>

The survey instrument used in this BSS was based on two instruments: a behavior questionnaire for MSM provided in the manual, *Behavioral Surveillance Surveys: Guidelines for Repeated Behavioral Surveys in Populations at Risk for HIV*, published by Family Health International (FHI), *"FOR USE WITH MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN (MSM)*" and Tanadgomacreated instrument for the BSS among MSM carried out in 2005 (funded by the Global Fund). The questionnaire was adopted after reviewing, pre-testing and making modifications to fit the Georgian context. Next, the questionnaire was pre-tested during in-depth interviews with MSM. A final version of a questionnaire was also translated into English.

Interviewing of MSM was conducted in Georgian and took, on average, 40 minutes to complete. In addition to answering the questionnaire, MSM were asked to voluntarily provide a blood sample, on site, immediately following the interview. The sample was tested for syphilis serology, HIV infection, HCV and HBV. None of the respondents refused to provide a blood sample for testing.

The blood test in the study was anonymous-linked. Each MSM that volunteered to provide a blood specimen was given an identification number, the same as on the questionnaire completed, which was recorded on the blood tube and the questionnaire. In addition, the MSM was given a card with his identification number and with the organization's telephone number and address.

Blood specimens were sent to the Laboratory of Serology and Virology of the AIDS Center in Tbilisi for testing and the results were reported back to the organization (see biomarker section below for more details). The MSM were asked to return with their identification card in order to receive their results.

All MSM were identified using RDS (see Table 2 in Appendix).

# **Biomarker Testing**

The biomarker component of the three studies involved the analysis of blood specimens at the Laboratory of Serology and Virology of the AIDS Center in Tbilisi.

**HIV testing**: HIV antibody testing was performed using a three-level enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) testing strategy. If a sample was reactive in the first ELISA (Genescreen Plus HIV Ag-AB, Bio-rad) test, the sample was retested two more times using another kit of ELISA. Samples were considered HIV antibody positive if they were reactive in at least two out of three tests. Any sample non-reactive to the first test was considered as HIV-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> "Respondent-driven sampling: A new approach to the study of hidden populations." <u>Social Problems</u>, Volume 44, Number 2, (May) 1997. Douglas D. Heckathorn.

antibody negative. HIV-antibody positive samples were tested with Western Blot (HIV blot, Genelabs) as the confirmatory test for HIV.

*Syphilis testing*: Serum samples were tested also for syphilis. Screening was performed using rapid plasma regain (RPR, Biosystem) test. Positive samples were retested using Treponema pallidum hemagglutination assay (TPHA, Biosystem). Syphilis IgG test (Orgenics) was used for confirmation of syphilis-antibody positive samples.

**HCV testing:** Screening for HCV antibodies was performed using 3<sup>rd</sup> generation ELISA (ORTHO<sup>®</sup> HCV 3.0). Positive samples (serum) were investigated further. For confirmation purpose Western Blot assay was used (HCV BLOT 3.0 Western Blot Assay – Genelabs<sup>®</sup> Diagnostics).

**HBV testing:** HBsAg ELISA (HBsAg II Step [Orgenics]) was used for screening. Positive serum samples were investigated further. For this reason HBsAg Confirmation test (Orgenics) was used. This test in parallel with standard immunoenzymatic method for the detection of HBsAg employs a neutralizing polyclonal antibody, able to block any specific reactivity if present in the sample.

# **Data Entry and Analysis**

Tanadgoma contracted the ACT Research, located in Tbilisi, to develop the BSS databases using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 11) software program. At the completion of the interviewing process, ACT Research created a database matching the questionnaire that included variable names, variable descriptions and value labels. The database was submitted to SC'S Georgian country office data analysis.

SC's Monitoring & Evaluation Advisor, Larry Dershem, analyzed the data. Percentages, means and medians were calculated to assess prevalence of high-risk behavior among IDUs.

MSM Questionnaire (English)	
Questionnaire ID Number:	
Questionnaire is Coded as:	
Questionnaire is Word Processed by:	

#### STI/HIV/AIDS Behavior Surveillance Study (BSS)

Men who have Sex with Men

Tbilisi 2007

#### Organization: Tanadgoma

Interviewer: Please specify the location of the interview and the respondent's ID code.

# Operational definition of respondent: Men who have had manual, oral, or anal sex with another man in the past six months.

**Introduction:** "My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. An American and a Georgian organizations implement a joint project titled "HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections Prevention in Georgia". The project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This survey is aimed at exploring the existing situation. The questionnaire has been designed by our counterparts from the US. Has anybody taken an interview over the last five weeks for this study?

**Interviewer:** If somebody has already taken an interview from the person you are talking to over the BSS period, don't take another one. Tell him, that you cannot re-interview him. Thank the person and finish conversation. If nobody has taken an interview from the person in question, continue as follows:

Confidentiality and consent: "I'm going to ask you some very personal questions that some people

find difficult to answer. Your answers are completely confidential. Your name will not be written on

this form, and will never be used in connection with any of the information you tell me. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer, and you may end this interview at any time you want to. However, your honest answers to these questions will help us better understand what people think, say and do about certain kinds of behaviors. We would greatly appreciate your help in responding to this survey. The survey will take about XX minutes to ask the questions. Would you be willing to participate?"

#### Interviewer's Code: \_\_\_\_

#### (Interviewer's signature certifying that the respondent has verbally agreed to the interview)

	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3
Date			
Interviewer			
Result			

Result Codes: Completed - 1; Partially Completed - 2; Previously Interviewed - 3; Refusal - 4; Other - 5

Q1.Date and time of interview: /\_\_\_\_/date/\_\_\_/hour/\_\_\_/minute/

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### BEHAVIORAL SURVEILLANCE SURVEY (BSS) WITH BIOMARKER COMPONENT FOR MSM

#### Section A: Background characteristics

#### REMEMBER THAT ONLY MALES ARE TO BE INTERVIEWED WITH THIS INSTRUMENT.

#### A1. How old are you?

/\_\_\_\_/ (please specify an exact age) No response 99

A2. Ple	ase specif	y the date o	f birth? <i>(C</i>	ompare wit	h A1 if needed)
	/	_//		_/	
	Day Day/tilu	Wonth	Year		
	Don't kn	IOW	88		
	No resp	onse	99		
A3. Wh	at is the h	nighest level	of educat	ion you hav	e achieved? (Read out)
	No educ	ation			0 <b>Go to A5</b>
	Primary	(4 grades)			1
	Seconda	ary (5-11 gra	des) (gene	ral or	
		vocational	school)		2
	Incompl	ete higher			3
	Higher				4
	No resp	onse			99
A4. Ho	w manv v	ears did vou	study in t	otal?	
	/	/ (please sne	cifv the n	imber of co	mpleted vears)
	, No resp	onse 99	ing the ne		
A5. Ho	w long ha	ve you lived	in Tbilisi?		
	Number	of years			[]]
	Record (	00 if less tha	n 1 year		
	Don't kr	NOW			88
	No resp	onse			99
A6. Are	vou an lí	DP?			
,	Yes		1		
	No		2		
	No resp	onse	- 99		
47 \A/b	at is your	nationality	) (Circle on		
A7. WN	Georgia	nationality			
	Bussian		1 2		
	Armonic	20	2		
	low	211	1		
	Jew Azeri		4 5		
	Ukrainia	n	6		
	Kurdich		7		
	Occetion	า	, ג		
	Ahkhaz		Q O		
	Greek		5 10		
	Other Ir	lease snerifi	/)		
	Mixed		′′ <u> </u>	·	
	Don't kr	าดพ	88		
	No resp	onse	99		
	1-				
A8. Wh	at is your	marital stat	us? (Read	out)	
	Married			1	
	Divorce	d/Separated	forever	2	
	Widowe	er		3	
	Has nev	er been mar	ried	4	
	Other (p	olease indica	te)		
	No resp	onse		99	

Section B: Drug and Alcohol Use

B1. In the previous 4 weeks, how frequently did you drink alcohol beverages during the last month? (*Read the options, only one answer*) Tell me, did you drink everyday, once or twice a week, once or twice in two weeks, or once or twice a month?

Every day	1
At least, once a week	2
At least, twice a week	3
Once a month	4
Don't know	88
No response	99
l did not drink ( <b>Don't read</b> )	0

B2. Some people have tried various drugs. If you have done this, which one have you tried? (Interviewer, read the list. For each drug use relevant option).

B3. Ask for the mentioned drugs - Please tell me, how did you take this drug: did you inject, smoke, inhale, drink, breath in or how? (Don't help; multiple answer)

	B2	B3						
Mult ans.	Drugs	Inhale/ Breath in	Inject	Smoke	Drink/ Swallow	Other	Don't know	No response
1	Heroin _ (inhale, inject)	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
2	<b>Opium</b> (swallow, inject)	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
3	Poppy-seed _ (inject)	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
4	Subutex _ (drink, inject)	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
5	Inhalants (e.g. glue) _ (breath in)	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
6	Marijuana _ (smoke)	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
7	Ecstasy _ (drink)	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
8	Cocaine _ (inhale, inject)	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
9	Sedatives/hypnotics _ (drink, inject)	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
10	Other <b>(Specify)</b>	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
11	Has not tasted							
88	Don't know							
99	No response							

#### Interviewer: If the respondent has tried injecting drugs, then ask:

B4. Please try to remember, when you injected drugs for the last time, did you use syringe or needle used by someone else?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't remember	3
No response	99

## Section C: Sexual history: numbers and types of partners

Do you have homosexual relations? (Explain: By homosexual relations I mean that you have sexual contact C1. - either oral or anal or both with men.)

> Yes 1 2 STOP the interview No

#### C2. What type of sexual partners did you have during the last 12 months? (Read out. Multiple answers possible.)

No response	99
No sexual partner during the last 12 months	7 STOP the interview
Male commercial sex worker	6
Female commercial sex worker	5
Female occasional partner	4
Female permanent partner/wife	3
Male occasional partner	2
Male permanent partner	1

C3. I would now like to ask you several questions about different kinds of sex with men. With how many male sexual partners did you have sexual contacts during the last 6 months? 1 STOP the interview

1-5	2
6-10	3
10-15	4
16-20	5
20 and more	6
Don't know/don't remember	88
No response	99

**C4.** In the past six months, have you had oral sex with a man? (Explain: By oral sexual contact I mean that penis of one person penetrates mouth of another person.)

Yes	1
No	2 Go to C9
No response	99 <b>Go to C9</b>

C5. Think about how many different partners you have had oral sex with in the past six months. (Please take time to think about your answer to this question so that we can get the most accurate information possible. Remember this information is strictly confidential.)

NUMBER IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS	[]_]
Don't know	98
No response	99

**C6.** During the oral sex, how often do you have active role? (Explain: By active role I mean that your penis penetrates mouth of your partners.) (*Read out.*)

1
2
3
4
99

C7. The last time you had oral sex, did you or your partner use a condom?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't remember	3
No response	99

C8. In general, with what frequency did you or your partners use a condom with oral sex during the past 6 months?

Always	1
Often	2
Occasionally	3
Never	4
Don't know	88
No response	99

**C9.** Now please think about how many different men you have had anal sex with. (Explain: By anal sex I mean that penis of one person penetrates anus of another person.) I would like to know both the number where you have been the active partner and the number where you have been the passive partner.

(Read out: Please take time to think about your answer to this question so that we can get the most accurate information possible. Remember this information is strictly confidential.)

**C9a.** How many men have you had anal sex with in the past six months where you were the active partner? **(Explain:** By active partner I mean that your penis penetrated anus of your partner.)

Number where insertive	[]]
Don't know	88
No response	99

**C9b. And how many where you were the passive partner? (Explain:** By passive partner I mean that your partner's penis penetrated your anus.)

[]_]
88

No response	99
IF NONE	Go to C12

#### C10. The last time you had anal sex, did you or your partner use a condom?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't remember	3
No response	99

C11. In general, with what frequency did you or your partners use a condom with anal sex during the past 6 months?

Always	1
Often	2
Occasionally	3
Never	4
Don't know	88
No response	99

## C12. Did any of your partners use injecting drugs?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	88
No response	99

#### Section D: Sexual history: commercial partners

#### Interviewer: Check question C2

HAS SEX WITH COMMERCIAL PARTNER DURING PAST 12 MONTHS .... [\_\_\_] Continue DID NOT HAVE SEX WITH COMMERCIAL PARTNER DURING PAST 12 MONTHS [\_\_] Go to Section E

D1. Think about your most recent sex partner whom you exchanged money or some other material remuneration for sex. Was it a male or a female partner?

Male1Female2 Go to D5No response99

D2. How many times did you have anal sex with your last male commercial partner during the past 30 days?

Number of times|\_\_\_\_\_|Don't know88No response99

#### D3. The last time you had anal sex with this partner, was a condom used?

Yes	1 Go to D5
No	2
Don't remember	3 Go to D5
No response	99

D4. Why didn't you use a condom that time? (Circle all answers mentioned)

Not available	1
Too expensive	2
Partner objected	3
Don't like them	4
Didn't think it was necessary	5
Didn't think of it	6
Other	
Don't know	88
No response	99

D5. The last time you had sex with your female commercial sex partner (a prostitute), was a condom used?

Yes	1 Go to D7
No	2
Don't remember	3 Go to D7
No response	99

## D6. Why didn't you use a condom that time?

(Circle all answers mentioned)	
Not available	1
Too expensive	2
Partner objected	3
Don't like them	4
Used other contraceptive	5
Didn't think it was necessary	6
Didn't think of it	7
Other	
Don't know	88
No response	99

# D7. In general, with what frequency did you use a condom with all your commercial partner(s) during the past 6 months?

Every time	1
Most times	2
Occasionally	3
Never	4
Don't know	88
No response	99

## D8. Have you ever discussed HIV, AIDS or STIs with any of your commercial partners?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	88
No response	99

## Section E: Involvement in Commercial Sex

**E1.** Have you sex with men in exchange of material remuneration? (Explain: By material remuneration I mean either money or some goods, or paying for your flat, etc.)

Yes	1
No	2 Go to section F
Don't want to answer	3 Go to section F

# E2. Over the last 6 months, approximately how often have you had sex with men in exchange of material remuneration?

Everyday	1
Several times a week	2
Once a week	3
2-3 times a month	4
Once a month	5
Once in three months or less	6
Difficult to answer	7

E 3. Please specify, what kind of material remuneration do you usually get for your service? (Multiple answer possible)

1
2
3

## Interviewer: if the respondent does not take money for his service, go to E7.

E4. How much money do you get	for your servi	ces? (Read the liste	d responses)
Less than 10 Lari	1		
10-20 Lari	2		
20-50 Lari	3		
50 – 100 Lari	4		
More than 100 Lari	5		
Other ( <i>Specif</i>	<b>y</b> )		
Don't want to answer	7		
E5. What is your monthly income	from this serv	vice?	
Up to 50 Lari	1		
50-100 Lari	2		
100-200 Lari	3		
200-300 Lari	4		
300-500 Lari	5		
500-1000 Lari	6		
1000 and more	7		
Other	8		
Don't want to answer	9		
E6. Do you have any other source	of income be	sides this business	(commercial sex)?
Yes	1		
No	2		
Don't want to answer	3		
E7. Do you consider yourself as in	volved in the	sex-business?	
Yes 1			
No 2 <b>Go to E10</b>			
F8. If yes, over the last 6 months	about how m	any clients do you ł	have her one working day?
(the num	ber)		
F9 What is the reason of your inv	olvement in t	he sex-husiness? ( <i>F</i>	)on't read: help if needed)
Earning money	olvenient in t	1	
Llike my occupation and		-	
don't want to do any	thing else	2	
I cannot do anything else	ching cloc	2	
Other	_(Specify)	5	
F10 Last time when you had say	with a male	aartnar far mataria	I remuneration did you or your partner use a
condom?	with a male		i remuneration, did you or your partner use a
Voc	1 Go to costi	on E	
No			
No rosponso	2		
No response	99		
E11. If no, what was the reason for	or not using co	ondom?	
Not available		1	
Too expensive		2	
Partner objected		3	
Don't like them		4	
Didn't think it was necess	ary	5	
Didn't think of it		6	
Other			

88

99

Don't know

No response

This section goes for those who said they have sex with female partners – check question C2.

F1. Now I have some questions related to your sexual experiences with females. Have you ever had sexual intercourse with a woman?

Yes	1
No	2 Go to section G
Don't know	88
No response	99

 F2. How many women have you had sexual intercourse with during the past 6 months?

 NUMBER OF FEMALE PARNERS IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS

 Don't know

 88

 No response
 99

# No response

#### F2. How many out of them were non-commercial sex partners? NUMBER OF NON-COMMERCIAL FEMALE PARNERS IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS [ ] ]

NOWBER OF NON-COMMERCIAL FEMALE FARMERS IN THE FAST O MONTHS [	II
Don't know	88
No response	99

If the answer is 0, Go to section G

#### F3. Think about the last time you had sex with a non-commercial female sex partner. Was a condom used?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't remember	3
No response	99

## F4. In general, what frequency did you use a condom with your female partners in the past 6 months?

Every time	1
Most times	2
Occasionally	3
Never	4
Don't know	88
No response	99

### Section G: Group sexual practices

### G1. Have you ever had group sex?

Yes	1
No	2 Go to section H
No response	99

## G2. Were those groups only male groups, only female groups or mixed (male and female) groups?

Only males	1
Only females	2
Mixed	3
No response	99

#### G3. At the last time you took part in the group sex, did you use a condom?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	88
No response	99

#### Section H: Condoms, lubricants

H1. Have you ever used a condom during sex?

(Show picture or sample of one.) (The respondent may not have used a condom with partners in sections C, D, E, F, but may have used a condom at some other time in the past.)

Yes	1 Go to H3
No	2
Don't know	88
No response	99

## H2. Have you ever heard of a condom?

(Show picture or sample of one. Explain: I mean a rubber object that a man puts on his penis before sex.)

Yes	1
No	2 Go to H5
Don't know	88 Go to H5
No response	99

#### H3. Do you know of any place or person from which you can obtain condoms?

Yes	1
No	2 Go to H5
No response	99

# H4. Which places or persons do you know where you can obtain condoms? . . . (Don't read, circle each mentioned answer.) Any others?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
88
99

#### H5. During the last 12 months, have you been given condoms?

Yes	1
No	2
No response	99

H6. Now I would like to ask you some questions about the use of lubricants during sexual intercourse with men. (Explain: I mean some dope pr grease that is used during sexual intercourse to make it less painful.) Do you use lubricants during anal intercourse with men?

NO ANAL SEX WITH MEN 1 Go to section I

Yes	2 Go to H8
No	3
Don't know what it is	4 Go to section I
Don't know	88
No response	99

## H7.Why have you never used a lubricant? (Don't read, circle each mentioned answer.)

Partner objects	1	Go to H9
Afraid to use it	2	Go to H9
Too expensive	3	Go to H9
Can't get it	4	Go to H9
Don't like lubricants	5	Go to H9
Other		Go to H9
Don't know	88	Go to H9
No response	99	Go to H9

## H8. How often do you use lubricants? Do you use lubricants...(Read out)

Every time	1
Most times	2
Occasionally	3
Never	4
Don't know	88
No response	99

#### H9. Do you know any place or person where you can obtain lubricants?

Yes	1
No	2 Go to section I
Don't know	88
No response	99

H10. Which places or persons do you know where you can obtain lubricants? (Don't read, circle each mentioned answer.)

Shop	1
Pharmacy	2
Market	3
Clinic	4
Bar/guest house/hotel	5
Peer educator	6
"Tanadgoma"	7
Friend	8
Other	
Don't know	88
No response	99

## H11. Which lubricants do you commonly use? (Don't read, circle each mentioned answer.)

"Intimgel"	1
Vaseline	2
Hand lotion	3
Vaginal gel	4
Baby oil	5
Butter	6
Cooking oil	7
Other	
Don't know	88
No response	99

## **Section I: Sexually Transmitted Infections**

I1. Have you ever heard of diseases that can be transmitted through sexual intercourse (venereal diseases)?

Yes	1	
No	2	Go to I3
Don't know	88	
No response	99	

## I2. Can you describe any symptoms of STIs in men? ..... Any others?

#### (Circle all mentioned responses. More than one answer is possible. Do <u>NOT</u> read out the symptoms)

Genital discharge	1
Burning pain on urination	2
Genital ulcers/sores	3
Swelling in groin area	4
Can't retract foreskin	5
Ulcers/sores in the anus	6
Other	

	No response			99	
I3. Have	you had a genita	l discharge durir	ng the past	12 months (1 ye	ear)?
	Yes	1			
	No	2			
	Don't know	88			
	No response	99			
I4. Have	e <b>you had a genita</b> Yes	l ulcer during th	e past 12 n	nonths (1 year)?	
	No	2			
	Don't know	88			
	No response	99			
	you had an analu	ulcer or sore du	ing the na	st 12 months (1)	vear)2
IS. Have	Yoc		ing the pa		year):
	res	1			
		2			
	Don't know	88			
	No response	99			
I6. Have	you had an anal o	discharge during	; the past 1	2 months (1 yea	ır)?
	Yes	1			
	No	2			
	Don't know	88			
	No response	99			
I7. Have	e you ever taken to	ests for STIs?			
Y	es				
N N	10	2 GO tO 111			
N	lo response	3 Go to section	J		
18. If yes	s, when did you ta	ke the last test	on STIs?		
Ċ	)ne year ago		1		
C	Ouring the last six r	months	2		
D	)uring the last thre	e months	3		
- Г	Juring the last more	nths	4		
с Г	)on't remember		5		
2	Other		5		
Ν	lo response		99		
10 14					
19. Why	did you go for tes	ting? ( <i>Wuitiple</i> )	answer pos	ssible)	
F	or prophylaxis			1	
А	fter discovering sy	ymptoms	2		
S	exual partner had	an STI		3	
I	was asked to			4	
C	)ther ( <b>Specify</b> )		-		
110. I do	n't want to know	about the test r	esults but	do you know the	em?
Y	es	1 Go to section	J		
Ν	lo	2			
Ν	lo response	99			
111. lf y	ou did not make t	he test, what is	the reasor	n for that? (Multi	iple answer possible)
C	on't know where	to get tested			1
C	on't need it – I kn	ow I am healthy			2
F	lave never though	t about testing			3
А	fraid of the result	, I prefer not to l	know		4
lt	t is very expensive				5
F	eel shy before the	personnel			6
C	on't want to mee	t some acquaint	ances		

when I go for testing	7
Don't want someone to know my test results	
(even medical personnel)	8
Don't trust doctors	9
Other ( <i>Specify</i> )	

Note: Module J should be filled only for those respondent who have suffered STI symptoms over the last 12 months. (Compare with 13, 14, 15 and 16). Otherwise go to Module K.

#### Section J: STI Treatment seeking behaviors

J1. What did you do when you had genital or anal release, or ulcer/boil last time? (Read out the options. Circle one for each question)

Questions	Yes	No	NR
1. Consulted or received a treatment at the state-owned health clinic or hospital?	1	2	9
2. Consulted or received a treatment at a private health clinic or hospital?	1	2	9
3. Consulted or received a treatment at a drugstore?	1	2	9
4. Consulted or received a treatment from a traditional healer or a wise man?	1	2	9
5. Applied self-treatment?	1	2	9
6. Told your sexual partner about your symptoms or STI?	1	2	9
7. Stopped having sex when the symptoms appeared?	1	2	9
8. Did you use the condoms during the symptom period?	1	2	9
9. Other	1	2	99

#### Section K: Knowledge, opinions, and attitudes towards HIV/AIDS

**K1.** Have you ever heard of HIV or the disease called AIDS? (*Explain:* HIV is a human immunodeficiency virus which causes AIDS. *Make sure that the respondent understood what HIV is. You may use additional definitions too.*)

Yes	1	
No	2	Go to section L
No response	99	

K2a. I don't want their name, but do you know any person who has been infected, ill with, or has died of AIDS?

Yes	1
No	2 Go to K3
Don't know	88 Go to K3
No response	99 Go to K3

K2b. I don't want their name, but do you have a close relative or friend who is infected with HIV or has died of AIDS?

Yes, a relative	1
Yes, a friend	2
No	3
No response	99

## K3. Please give me your opinion regarding the following:

(Please read out all options and circle the relevant answer.)

Assertions	Yes	No	DK	NR
1. Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by using a condom	1	2	8	9
correctly every time they have sex?				
2. Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by avoiding anal sex?	1	2	8	9
3. Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by using a condom	1	2	8	9
correctly every time they have anal sex?				
4. Can one get HIV as a result of a mosquito's bite?	1	2	8	9
5. Do you believe that one may protect oneself from HIV/AIDS by having	1	2	8	9

one uninfected and reliable sexual partner?				
6. Can people protect themselves from the HIV virus by abstaining from	1	2	8	9
sexual intercourse?				
7. Do you believe that one can get HIV/AIDS by taking food or drink that	1	2	8	9
contains someone else's saliva? or Can a person get the HIV virus by sharing				
a meal with someone who is infected?				
8. Do you believe that one may be infected with HIV/AIDS by using a	1	2	8	9
needle/syringe already used by someone else?				
9. Do you believe that a person who looks healthy can be infected with HIV,	1	2	8	9
which causes AIDS?				

## K4. Can a pregnant woman infected with HIV or AIDS transmit the virus to her unborn child?

Yes	1
No	2 Go to K7
Don't know	88 Go to K7
No response	99

# K5. What can a pregnant woman do to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV to her unborn child? (Do not read list. Circle all that are mentioned.)

Take medication (antiretrovi	rals)	1
Cesarean section		2
No breastfeeding		3
Other	(write down)	
Don't know		88
No response		99

#### K6. Can a woman with HIV or AIDS transmit the virus to her newborn child through breastfeeding?

3
)

K7. Is it possible in your community for someone to get a confidential test to find out if they are infected with HIV? By confidential, I mean that no one will know the result if you don't want them to know it.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	88
No response	99

#### K8. I don't want to know the result, but have you ever had an HIV test?

Yes	1
No	2 Go to K12
No response	9

## K9. When did you take the last HIV test?

Some time last year	1
Between 1-2 years ago	2
Between 2-4 years ago	3
More than 4 years ago	4
Don't know	88
No response	99

## K10. Did you voluntarily undergo the HIV test, or were you required to have the test?

Voluntary	1
Required	2
No response	99

## K11. Please do not tell me the result, but did you find out the result of your test?

Yes	1
No	2

No response

# 99

## K12. Now please tell me: (Read out the list and circle one answer for each question)

	Yes	No	DK	NR
1. Would you like to have meal with a person who is diseased with HIV or AIDS?	1	2	8	9
2. If your relative man were infected with HIV would you like to take care of him	1	2	8	9
at your place?				
3. If a student is infected with HIV, but not diseased may he be permitted to	1	2	8	9
continue studying?				
4. If your relative woman were infected with HIV would you like to take care of	1	2	8	9
her at your place?				
5. If a teacher is infected, but not diseased with HIV may he be permitted to	1	2	8	9
continue teaching at school?				
6. If acquainted with you food salesman is infected with HIV, will you buy food	1	2	8	9
from him/her?				
7. If the member of your family were infected with HIV would you like it to keep	1	2	8	9
this in secret?				

## **Section L: Violence**

### L1. Have you ever been a victim of violence because of your sexual orientation or sexual relations?

Yes	1
No	2 Go to section M
No response	99

## L2. What kind of violence have you experienced? (Multiple answer possible)

Physical (beating, cutting, etc)	1
Verbal (verbal insult)	2
Sexual (rape)	3
Several kinds at the same time	4
Don't want to answer	5
No response	99

## L3. Who was violent to you?

Stranger	1
Family member	2
Friend	3
Relative	4
Coworker	5
Other	_(specify)
No response	99

### Section M: Exposure to Interventions

# M1. Could you remember, where from do you get information about STI/HIV? (Don't read) Could you remember some other source of information? (Multiple answer)

TV/Radio	1	
Newspapers	2	
Friends	3	
Clients	4	
Family members	5	
Social workers	6	
Other		
No response	99	
I have never heard anything	g about STI/HIV 00	Go to section N

M2. Do you know of ways to protect yourself from STI/HIV? I have in mind those means that provide the protection from HIV. What else do you recall? Which else?

(Don't read, circle all the answers given by the respondent)	
Condom use	1
Avoiding sexual contacts	2
Contact with one devoted partner	3
Safe forms of sexual contact (masturbation, non-penetrative contact)	4
Don't know	88
No response	99

**Section N: Communications** 

### N1. Within the last 4 weeks how frequently did you listen to radio?

(Interviewer, read the options to the respondent. One response is quite acceptable. Mark the responses in the table below.)

## N2. Within the last 4 weeks how frequently did you watch TV?

(Interviewer, read the options to the respondent. One response is quite acceptable. Mark the responses in the table below.)

	N1. Radio	N2. TV
Everyday	1	1
At least than once a week	2	2
Less than once a week	3	3
Never listened within the last 4 weeks	4	4
Don't know	5	5
No response	6	6

Q2. How many other men in Tbilisi do you know of that have sex with men? \_\_\_\_\_

Q3. That is the end of our questionnaire. You have been very helpful. After generalization and statistical analysis of the present study our organization will plan projects that will be beneficial for all. If in several months I need to take another interview from you, would you make yourself available?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know (we'll see)	8

Interviewer, thank the respondent for cooperation and say good-bye. After the interview make sure you have taken down the respondent's identification data so that the same person is used in the following panels of the study.

Q4. During the interview the respondent was:

Interested	1
Calm	2
Indifferent	3
Agitated	4
Uninterested	5

Time when interview was concluded\_\_\_\_\_\_ The questionnaire is kept till completion of the project.

Quality control on the interview was carried out by
Position
Organization