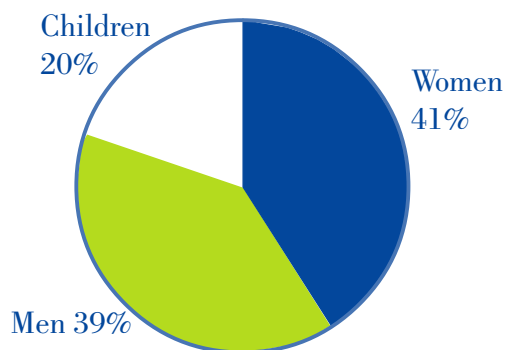
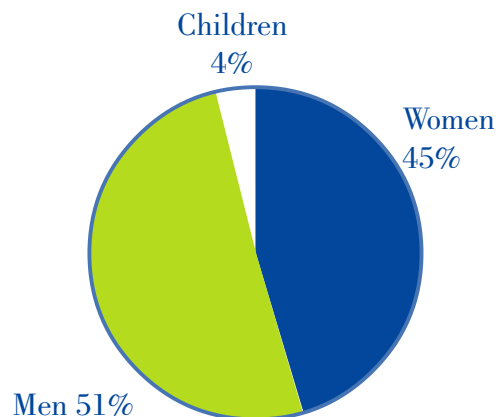


The impact of HIV/AIDS on the world's women, men, and children*

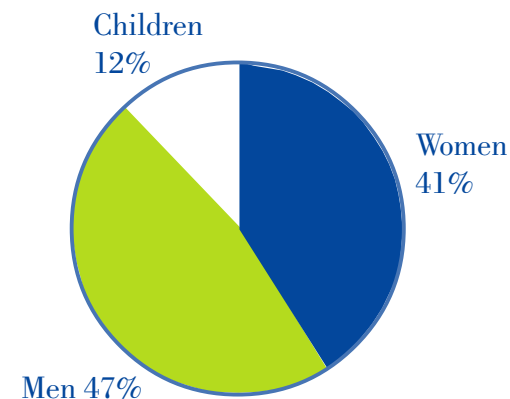
Deaths due to AIDS as of 2000
(total 21.8 million)



People living with HIV/AIDS in
2000 (total 36.1 million)



People newly infected in 2000
(total 5.3 million)



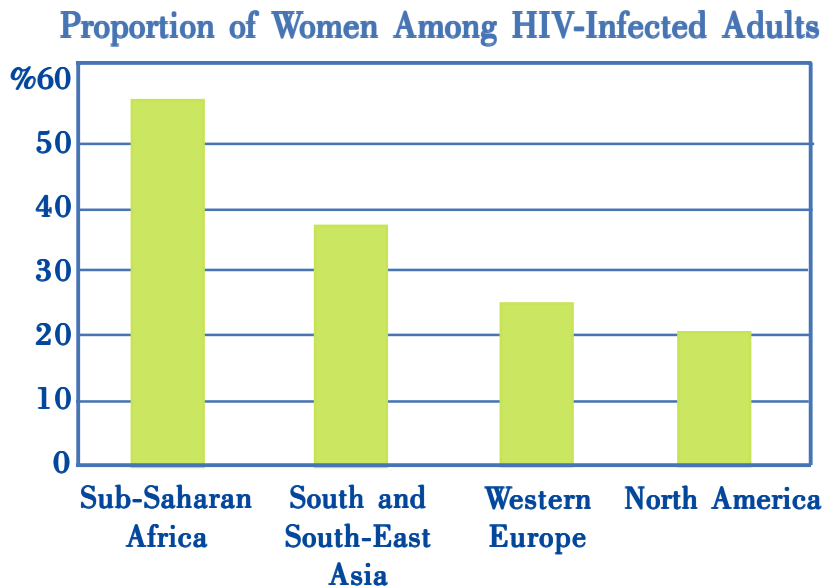
* aged 15 and younger

Additional information:

In 1990, there were an estimated 10 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide. More than half that many became infected in 2000 alone. On average, 15,000 people are newly infected with HIV every day. Currently, women are becoming infected at a faster rate than are men.

Source: UNAIDS, *AIDS Epidemic Update: December 2000*. Geneva: UNAIDS, 2000.

The rate of HIV/AIDS among women is rapidly increasing



41%
1997

→

47%
2000

Worldwide, women represent an increasingly larger percentage of adults (15 years and older) who are infected with HIV.

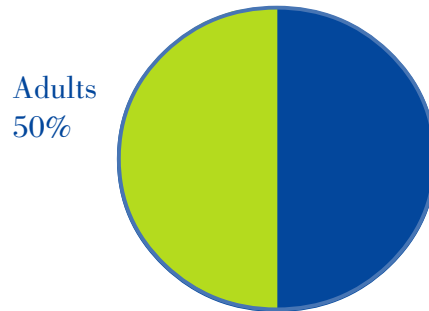
Additional information:

Most HIV+ women have become infected with the virus through heterosexual intercourse. While popular perceptions of HIV/AIDS often depict it as an illness of “promiscuous” people, many HIV+ women acquired the virus from their sole sexual partner, their husbands. In most parts of the world, women and girls face particular risk of HIV infection because of the interplay between their economic positions and social status. This interplay often limits their ability to make choices about their health and health care.

Sources: UNAIDS. *AIDS Epidemic Update: December 2000*. Geneva: UNAIDS, 2000 (bar graph). Expert Group Meeting on the HIV/AIDS Pandemic and its Gender Implications. *Introduction*. Windhoek, Namibia: The Division for the Advancement of Women, November, 2000.

HIV/AIDS has a profound effect on young people, especially young women

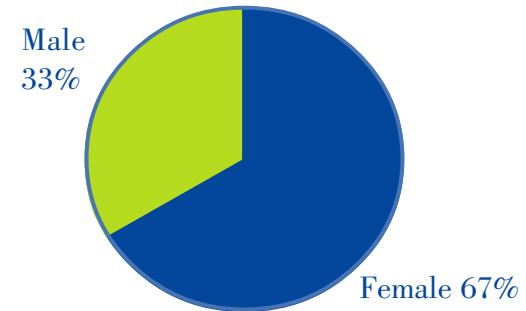
HIV infections thus far



Young people
(less than 25
years of age)
50%



HIV infection among young people



Male
33%

Female 67%

Approximately 50% of all infections thus far have occurred in people younger than age 25.

Studies indicate that among newly infected 15-24 year olds in developing countries, females outnumber males two to one.

Additional information:

Every minute six people under the age of 25 become HIV+. Young girls are especially vulnerable to HIV because their immature genital tracts are more likely to tear during sexual activity, creating a higher risk of HIV transmission during unprotected sex. In addition, young women tend to have older, more experienced sexual partners. Such partners may have more control over the relationship, which may make it difficult for young women to insist on having protected sex.

Source: WHO. *Women and AIDS: Agenda for Action*. Geneva: WHO, 1995. Weiss, E. et al., *Vulnerability and Opportunity: Adolescents and HIV/AIDS in the Developing World*. Washington, D.C.: International Center for Research on Women, 1996.

The poverty cycle of HIV/AIDS

Economic inequality and social disempowerment prevent poor women from controlling the timing and safety of sexual intercourse.¹

When the primary breadwinner becomes ill with AIDS, household income falters, causing hardship and the need for child labour.

Labour migration puts young women at risk of sexual exploitation and creates unequal ratios of men and women, increasing the possibility of HIV transmission through shared partners or sex work.²



The impact of HIV/AIDS could cut the wealth of some less developed countries by as much as 20%, deepening existing poverty and drying up resources needed to fight the pandemic.⁴

Street youth who have to worry about day-to-day survival place higher priority on hunger and safety from violence than long-term safety from HIV/AIDS.³

In countries where women cannot own or inherit land, the wife and children of a man who has died from AIDS may lose access to their source of livelihood.

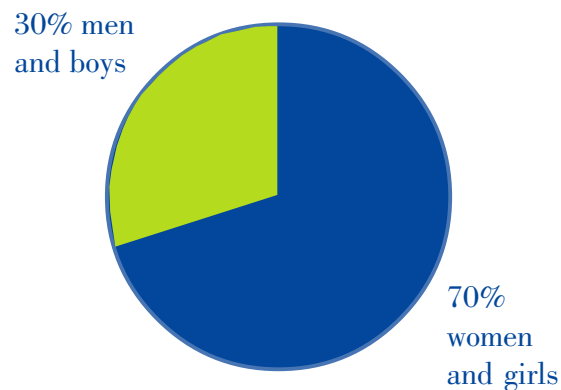
Additional information:

HIV/AIDS tends to affect the most impoverished. At the same time, HIV/AIDS can lead to poverty within affected families, communities, and even nations. Conditions of poverty and economic inequality foster the spread of HIV/AIDS, and it is the poorer regions of the world that bear the brunt of the pandemic.

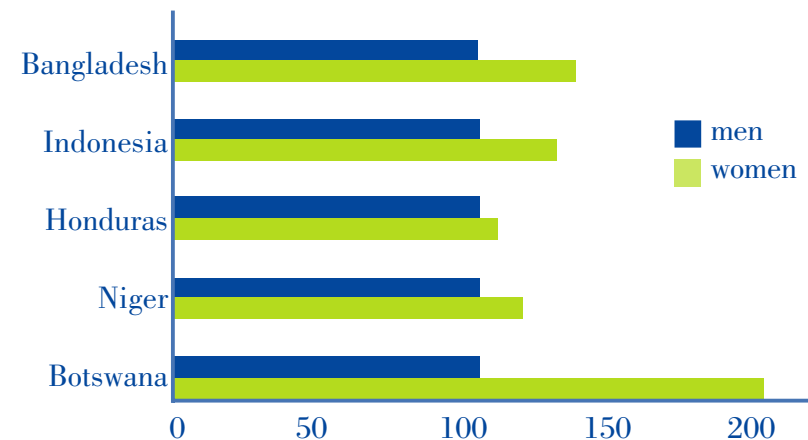
Sources: ¹Weiss, E., Whelan, D., and Gupta, G. *Vulnerability and Opportunity: Adolescents and HIV/AIDS in the developing world*. Washington, D.C.: International Center for Research on Women, 1996. ²UNAIDS. *Gender and HIV/AIDS: Taking stock of research and programmes*. Geneva: UNAIDS, 1999. ³Rivers, K. and Aggleton, P. *Adolescent Sexuality, gender and the HIV epidemic*. London: Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, n.d. ⁴BBC. AIDS tops African agenda. *BBC Online*. British Broadcasting Corporation, 12 August 2000.

Women, who represent the large majority of the world's poorest, are disproportionately affected by the poverty cycle of HIV/AIDS

70% of the 1.2 billion people living in poverty worldwide are female



Ratio of women to men in poorest quintile

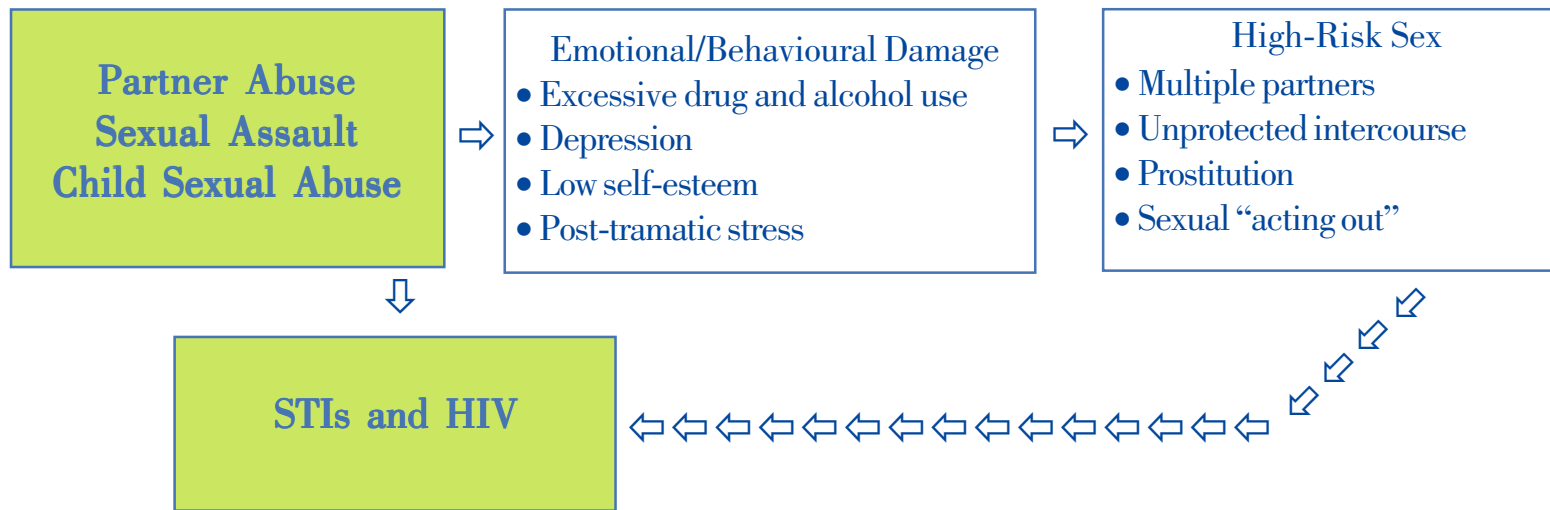


Additional information:

Poor women are particularly at risk of HIV/AIDS because economic inequality and social disempowerment may influence their abilities to control the timing and safety of sexual intercourse.

Sources: UN. *The World's Women 1995*. New York: United Nations, 1995. (bar graph) WHO. *Gender, Health and Poverty (Fact Sheet #251)*. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2000. (pie chart)

Violence against women: possible direct and indirect pathways to STIs and HIV



Additional information:

Gender-based violence is rooted in the historically unequal power relations (social, economic, cultural, and political) between males and females. Gender-based violence takes many forms, and can include physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. The most pervasive form of gender-based violence is violence committed against a woman by her intimate partner. Studies show that up to 50% of all women worldwide report being physically abused by an intimate partner.

Source: Adapted from Heise, L., Ellsberg, M., and Gottemoelle, M. Ending Violence Against Women. *Population Reports*, December 1999, Series L(11).

Why is a female controlled method of protection so important?

Biological Vulnerability: Women's and girls' vulnerability to HIV infection is four times greater than that of men and boys. This is due in part to the fact that the vagina has four times the exposed area as the penis, creating more possible pathways for HIV transmission. Due to this increased vulnerability, women and girls have a greater need to protect themselves from HIV.

Power Imbalance: Due to many social and economic power imbalances, women may not have the power to insist that their sexual partner wear a condom. Additionally, women and girls who engage in sex as a means of income may not be able to negotiate safe sex at all. Although female condoms may not eliminate the need for sexual negotiation, they are worn by women and may be controlled by women.

Additional information:

Female controlled methods of preventing STIs/HIV and unwanted pregnancy are an important step in giving women and girls the power to control their own reproductive health. Such methods include the female condom and microbicides. The female condom is made of polyurethane plastic and can be inserted into the vagina hours before or at the time of sexual intercourse. Microbicides, currently under development, are substances that when inserted into the vagina or rectum may help prevent sexual transmission of HIV by killing or inactivating the virus.

The need for prevention is greatest among traditionally disempowered groups



Women in many cultures have little control over the timing and context of intercourse, putting them at risk for HIV infection from their husbands and partners.



Injection drug use is illegal in many countries, making it difficult for users to seek information on HIV/AIDS or obtain prevention supplies (such as sterile syringes).



Men who have sex with men face discrimination and marginalisation in both developing and industrialised nations, and have little access to care and prevention services.

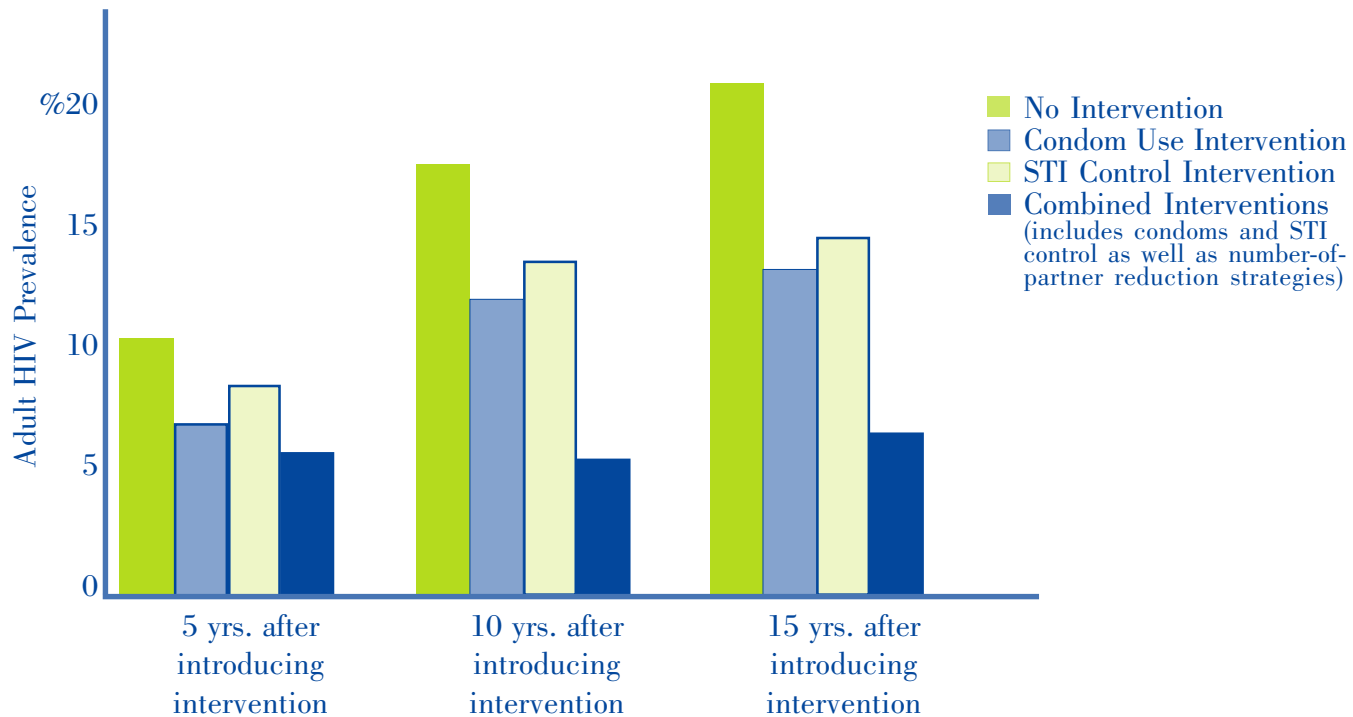


Lack of information and social pressures add to the vulnerability of youth. Girls are especially vulnerable to coerced sex, and may be forced to exchange sexual favours for money, food or shelter.

Additional information:

The strategies and methods used in the international effort to slow or stop the spread of HIV/AIDS have changed over the history of the pandemic. Early efforts often tried to apply scientific theories of behaviour change to different programmes that served people in different places without taking into account the social and economic factors that contributed to the spread of AIDS. Newer prevention programmes have achieved greater success by choosing strategies that combine scientific theory with an awareness of the real-life conditions that women, men and children confront in their everyday lives.

The Effects of HIV/AIDS interventions



Based on simulation modeling of typical high prevalence urban areas.
Note: Prevalence rates are projected to rise over time.

Additional information:

Interventions with combined strategies are more likely to be successful than any one intervention alone.

Source: Adapted from The Futures Group International. *AIM Presentation*. Glastonbury, CT: The Futures Group International.