RISKY BUSINESS? HIV KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIOR AMONG AT-RISK MOBILE WORKERS IN TURKEY

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Collaborative Institutions

- World Bank
  Europe and Central Asia Region, Human Development Department Global HIV/AIDS Program

- Hacettepe Training, Research and Service Foundation

- UN HIV/AIDS Joint Programme in Turkey

- Turkish Ministry of Health
Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to determine the HIV knowledge, awareness, and behaviors among four mobile worker groups in Turkey that may have elevated risks for HIV infection and transmission: sailors, truck drivers, construction and tourism workers.
Why Mobile Workers?

- The adult HIV prevalence in Turkey is less than 0.2%

- Transmission routes:
  - Heterosexual sex 57%
  - Homosexual sex 9%
  - Parenteral drug use 4%
# Change in Modes of HIV Transmission for Identified HIV/AIDS Cases in Turkey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modes of Transmission</th>
<th>Mode of Cases between 1985 and 2003</th>
<th>Mode of Cases between 2004 and 2009</th>
<th>Percentage point change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual Sex</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual/Bisexual</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injecting Drug Users</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood transfusions</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTCT</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>-7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Turkey Ministry of Health and HATAM
Why Mobile Workers?

Heterosexual sex

- Transmission with sex workers?

- Several studies have been conducted in Turkey on sex workers

- Little evidence exists on sex workers clients, the demand side of the commercial sex market

- Mobile workers are the clients of sex workers

THIS IS THE FIRST STUDY OF ITS KIND IN TURKEY TO BE CONDUCTED AMONG MOBILE WORKERS
Duration of the Study

➢ November 2009 – December 2010

➢ Field Works: February and March 2010

➢ 1239 mobile workers
Provinces in the Study

Provinces in the study:

- Istanbul
- Izmir
- Antalya
- Trabzon

- High estimated HIV prevalence and the large estimated populations of mobile workers

- Istanbul, Izmir, and Trabzon provinces are connected to Turkey's international highways and are also tourist destinations

- Antalya is a major commercial region and tourist destination that provides international maritime connections

- Due to tourism and transportation work, these four provinces also have large numbers of construction projects
Sectors

- Maritime transportation
- Road transportation
- Construction
- Tourism
Research questions?

1. What HIV-related behaviors are mobile workers involved in?

2. What factors are associated with these HIV-related behaviors?

3. What are the current levels of HIV knowledge and awareness among these workers?
QUANTITATIVE and QUALITATIVE data were collected to answer key research questions
It is important to note two caveats of this study:

1. No biomarker data (e.g., HIV testing) was collected from these workers. So, conclusions regarding HIV prevalence or concentration of the epidemic cannot be made.
Caveats - 2

2. The sample did not include other at-risk groups or the general population. Mobile workers are unlikely to be the sole clients of sex workers, and their proportion of the client pool cannot be determined from this data.

It is difficult to know whether the behaviors are more or less risky in other population groups.
The major contribution of this study:

It characterizes the risk factors within the mobile worker population in Turkey.