HIV prevalence among the population aged 15-49 years

Rationale for use

HIV and AIDS has become a major public health problem in many countries and monitoring the course of the epidemic and impact of interventions is crucial. Both the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV and AIDS (UNGAS) have set goals of reducing HIV prevalence.

Definition

Percent of people with HIV infection among all people aged 15-49 years.

Associated terms

For surveillance purposes, HIV infection is diagnosed through the HIV testing, according to, the HIV surveillance testing strategies recommended by WHO/UNAIDS HIV/AIDS/STI surveillance working group.

Data sources

HIV surveillance: Generalized epidemics, antenatal clinic attendees as primary sources of information. In concentrated and low level epidemics (where HIV prevalence in the pregnant women is below 1%), surveillance among populations with high risk behaviors, e.g. injecting drug users, men who have sex with men and sex workers, should be the focus of surveillance.

Household surveys: Inclusion of HIV testing is being increasingly adopted by countries e.g. Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), AIDS Indicator Surveys (AIS).

Methods of estimation

HIV prevalence data from HIV sentinel surveillance systems, which may include national population surveys with HIV testing, are used to estimate HIV prevalence using standardized tools and methods of estimation developed by UNAIDS and WHO in collaboration with the UNAIDS Reference Group on Estimation, Modelling and Projections. Tools for estimating the level of HIV infection are different for generalized epidemics, and concentrated or low level epidemic.

Disaggregation

By sex, location (urban/rural, major regions/provinces),

References


Database


- UNAIDS/WHO Global HIV/AIDS Online Database: (http://www.who.int/globalatlas/default.asp)

Comments

The main indicator proposed for monitoring progress towards achieving the international goals is HIV prevalence among young people aged 15-24 years which is a better proxy for monitoring HIV incidence than prevalence among ages 15-49 years. Although countries are moving towards collecting better data on young people, mainly by capturing data on young pregnant women attending antenatal clinics or national population based surveys, comparable data availability is still limited.