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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# HIV at 20

1993-2013

Commemorating two decades of USAID support to the National HIV Response in partnership with the Government of Nepal

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**Front cover page:** USAID's Positive Prevention program has been helping individuals living with HIV to lead a healthy and positive life and preventing HIV transmission to their spouse.

**Back cover page:** Outreach Workers traveling to various locations to reach individuals at risk with HIV and family planning services.

**FHI 360 Nepal**

USAID Cooperative Agreement # AID-367-A-11-00005

USAID/Nepal Country Assistance Objective Intermediate Result 1 & 4

An illustration in a warm, golden-brown color palette. On the left, a woman in a dark, long-sleeved traditional Nepali dress (chulo) and a shawl (jama) is walking down a set of stone steps. She is carrying a large, patterned bag over her shoulder. On the right, another woman in a bright yellow traditional dress with a floral pattern is standing and looking towards the first woman. The background shows a building with several windows, some with white frames. The overall style is that of a stylized, painterly illustration.

# FOREWORD

The Year 2013 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of USAID's longstanding partnership with the Government of Nepal (GoN) to support the National HIV and AIDS response. Two decades of USAID's technical and financial support have pioneered evidence-based interventions that have saved lives and contributed to the health and well-being of People Living with HIV (PLHIV). Over time, USAID-funded projects have provided valuable insights on how best to tailor and successfully implement activities to effectively address the epidemic in Nepal. The foundation laid by USAID and partners has contributed greatly to streamlining and standardizing the country's HIV prevention and care programs; improving the reach of treatment activities; and increasing access to quality services for key affected populations.

The very first USAID project to work in HIV/AIDS in Nepal, the AIDS Control and Prevention Project I, became a model for future HIV interventions and groundbreaking initiatives in the country. Over the past 20 years, USAID-supported projects under the leadership and guidance of the GoN and in collaboration with multiple national, international and local stakeholders, have built a valuable body of operational know-how that has improved the ability of programs to reach key affected populations. USAID's projects have translated new technologies and innovative strategies at the global level to real success in communities across Nepal.

Today, under the umbrella of the Global Health Initiative, USAID remains steadfast in its commitment to achieve an AIDS-free generation by reaching thousands of Nepali people with quality, standardized HIV prevention, care, support, and treatment services. USAID's continuous contributions have made real impacts in both preventing new infections in target populations and working to improve the lives of those already living with HIV and the lives of their families as well.

This Photo Journal is a reflection of the invaluable contributions made by USAID and its partners towards the National HIV Response over the past two decades. The journal showcases the sheer dedication and tireless efforts by our partners to mitigate the effects of HIV and sexually transmitted infections in the society, promote correct and consistent condom use and increase uptake of family planning services among Nepali people. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank those partners who have helped build USAID's legacy of effective HIV/AIDS programs. We also acknowledge the leadership of the GoN in guiding the overall National HIV Response to ensure access to care support and treatment services for individuals at risk of HIV and people living with HIV. Without the GoN, civil society, donors and academia, countless lives would undoubtedly have been lost and Nepal would never have seen the advances in confronting the epidemic that we have witnessed in recent years.

As Nepal commemorates this important anniversary, USAID urges all partners to renew the pledge to remember the lives lost, celebrate the lives saved, and recognize the lives still at risk. As we reflect upon 20 years of support in the fight against HIV and AIDS, USAID stands committed to investing in evidence-based strategies that will help Nepal to achieve an AIDS-free generation.



## 1993 to 2002

**Project:** AIDS Control and Prevention Project (AIDSCAP) I & 2

**Duration:** 1993 to 2002

**Key Achievements:**

- AIDSCAP I was the very first HIV-focused project implemented in Nepal
- Increased the use of condoms among the at-risk populations through behavior change communications and outreach services
- Helped reduce the rate of sexually transmitted HIV infection (STI) in Nepal's Terai region
- Implemented first-ever cross-border HIV/STI prevention outreach activities among truck drivers and sex workers who worked both in India and Nepal
- Established first ever STI clinic in Raxaul (Indo-Nepal border)
- Implemented programs to sensitize law enforcement agencies (police and army) on HIV and STIs



*Pioneering general awareness campaigns*

## 2003 to 2007

**Project:** Implementing AIDS Prevention and Care (IMPACT) Project

**Duration:** 2003 to 2007

**Key Achievements:**

- Contributed to the formulation of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and Nepal's strategic objectives on reduced fertility among Nepali families
- Established the first HIV counseling and testing center in Pokhara
- Supported the establishment of the National Association of People living with HIV/AIDS in Nepal
- Aired the successful cross border radio program *Desh Pardesh* (At Home and Abroad) targeting Nepali migrants in India and their spouse in Nepal. The program had nearly 2.3 million listeners and was ranked as one of the top five radio programs addressing HIV and AIDS-related issues in Nepal (source: Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2006)
- Initiated home based care and support services for people living with HIV



*Reaching out to at-risk population*

**Project:** HIV/AIDS IMPACT Mitigation Through Mobilizing Affected Communities Project

**Duration:** 2001 to 2003

**Key Achievements:**

- The first project that advocated for the need of HIV-related care and support services for people living with HIV (PLHIV)
- Piloted the first home-based care and support service for PLHIV in Nepal
- Helped to establish District, Municipality and Village-level AIDS Coordination Committees

**Project:** Nepal Initiatives Project

**Duration:** 2001 to 2002

**Key Achievements:**

- Conducted multiple research and surveys to assist in the development of National Strategy on HIV/AIDS for Nepal 2002-2006
- Conducted multiple mass media campaigns including 'Unity Against AIDS (*AIDS Biruddha Ekata*)' and 'Let's Start Talking About AIDS Today'
- Used social marketing approaches to generate demand for condoms
- Expanded HIV programs from highways to cities and towns

## 2006 to 2011

**Project:** Advancing Surveillance, Policies, Prevention, Care and Support to Fight HIV/AIDS (ASHA) Project

**Duration:** 2006 to 2011

**Key Achievements:**

- Implemented groundbreaking initiatives such as Positive Prevention (prevention among people living with HIV); Early Infant Diagnosis; and Community-Based Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (CB-PMTCT) – all for the first time in Nepal
- Secured supplies of life saving HIV-related commodities required by the national program through partnerships with other international organizations
- Supported the Government of Nepal to streamline and standardize National HIV programs through the development of policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures and reporting and recording formats
- Supported the Government of Nepal to conduct 21 Integrated Bio-Behavioral Surveillance surveys to understand the country's HIV epidemic and develop appropriate response



USAID's pilot initiative - Community and Home-based Care program

## 2011 to 2016

**ONGOING Project:** Saath-Saath Project (SSP)

**Duration:** 2011 to 2016

**Key Achievements to date:**

- Working to integrate family planning (FP) into existing HIV services
- Facilitating integration of HIV and FP-related services into government health facilities
- Expanded care and support services for PLHIV in 13 districts through implementation of combined Community Home-Based Care (CHBC) and Positive Prevention (prevention activities focused on people living with HIV) programs
- Increasing access to HIV and FP services for migrant workers and their families

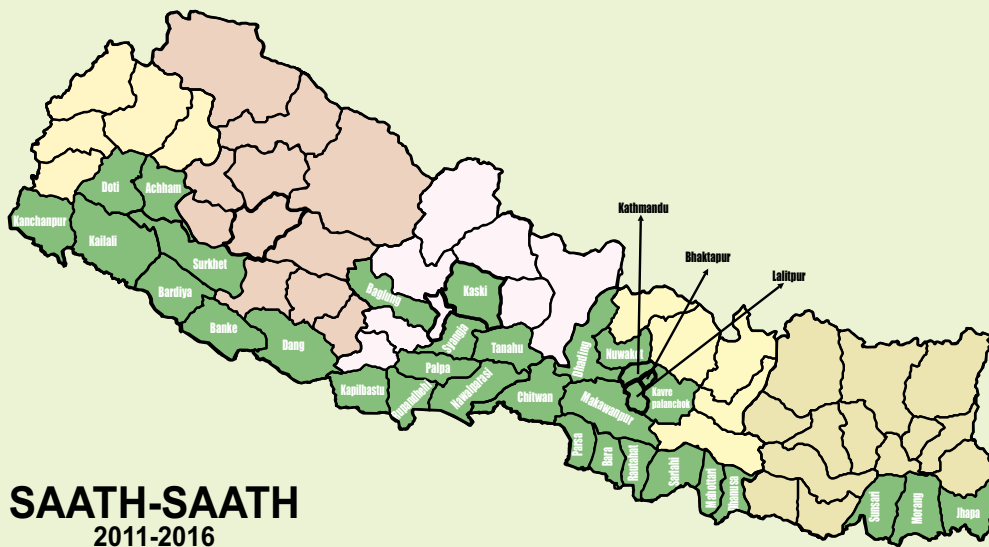
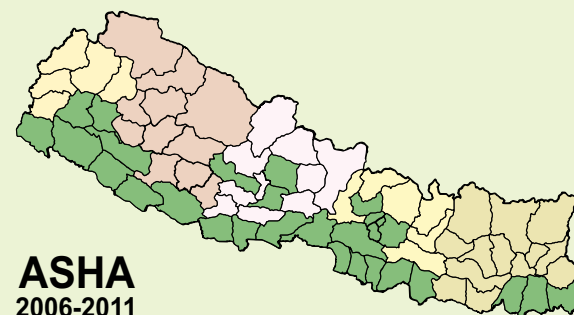
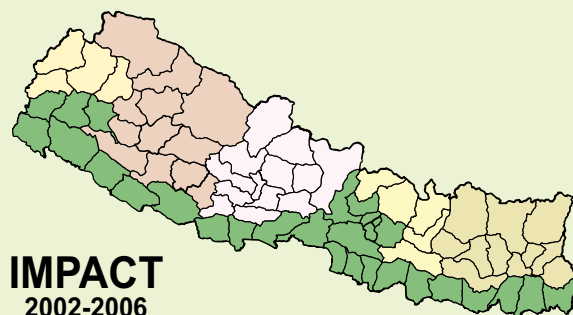
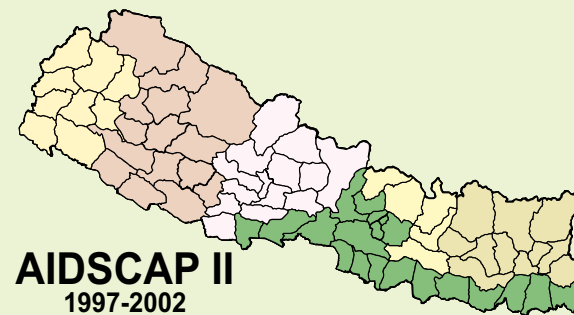
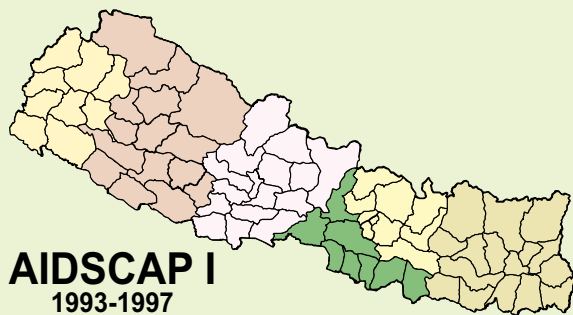


Successful integration of family planning into HIV program

# SNAPSHOT OF USAID-FUNDED HIV/AIDS PROJECTS

In the past two decades, USAID partnered with key government agencies under the Ministry of Health and Population and also collaborated with more than 80 local NGO partners, various INGOs, UN agencies, and donors to ensure streamlined HIV programming. Here's a quick look at USAID projects and their key results.

# GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF MAJOR USAID-FUNDED PROJECTS IN NEPAL



## Legend

- Eastern Region
- Central Region
- Western Region
- Mid Western Region
- Far Western Region
- Districts covered under USAID projects





# PROMOTING CONDOM USE

USAID has expanded access to condoms by making them available in traditional outlets (e.g. pharmacies and small medical shops) and non-traditional sites (e.g. tea stalls and grocery shops). Behavior change interventions focused on condom promotion are carried out under USAID projects. In the last 20 years, USAID has distributed more than **81 million condoms** in Nepal. In addition, USAID supported Nepal Contraceptive Retail Sales to promote condom sales using social marketing approach.



▲ *Dhaaley Dai* was USAID's first national mass media campaign in Nepal that used the slogan "Use a Condom, Drive Away AIDS", which successfully helped raise awareness about the dual protection provided by condoms to both prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and to avoid unwanted pregnancies.

“



“USAID has been a key contributor to Nepal's HIV response, helping strengthen programs at national, regional, and local levels. Today, we can openly talk about HIV and condoms because of USAID's massive campaign to raise awareness on HIV and its mitigation.”

**Mahesh Aryal**

President, Student Awareness Forum (USAID's longstanding local NGO partner)

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## HIV PREVENTION

Outreach Workers conduct sessions to promote awareness on HIV, family planning, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and condom use. Such interactive sessions use a variety of communication materials such as games and audio visuals. They provide free condoms and referrals to nearby government or NGO-managed service sites as needed. USAID projects have reached and provided services like these to more than **one million individuals** in Nepal.

▲ A USAID program Outreach Worker giving useful HIV prevention lessons to a woman working in a dance restaurant.





## USE OF AN “EDUTAINMENT” APPROACH

*Edutainment* is an innovative approach using interpersonal communication and group activities to educate key population on important issues such as safer sexual practices, family planning and to seek health services regularly. This approach uses games, audio-visuals, publications, and interactive sessions during community outreach and at Drop-in centers (safe places allocated for targeted population to visit).



▲ USAID program used the familiar Snakes and Ladders and zigsaw puzzle games and modified it to engage individuals to learn about HIV risks and promote family planning. ▶





## HIV TESTING AND COUNSELING

Trained health workers at USAID-supported clinics provide free and confidential HIV counseling and testing services. These services follow the national standards established by the Government of Nepal. To date, **135,000 people** have received HIV counseling and testing services through such clinics.

▲ A counselor trained in HIV and family planning providing counseling services.



# INTEGRATING FAMILY PLANNING INTO HIV SERVICES

USAID-supported projects have integrated family planning and HIV services and increased access to both services for key populations. This integrated approach effectively promotes family planning methods to provide protection from HIV, Sexually Transmitted Infections and unwanted pregnancies. These services are compliant with the national standards established by the Government of Nepal and are provided free of cost.



▲ A trained counselor at a USAID-supported clinic displays the various family planning options available.



A trained health worker explaining the various male STIs using a flip chart. ▶



## DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

Trained health workers provide Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) management services to those visiting HIV clinics. All individuals who are diagnosed with STIs receive necessary treatment. To date, **169,000 individuals** have been examined for STIs by USAID-supported clinics.





Credit: Thomas Kelly

“

“The Community and Home-Based Care program has given us a new life and hope for the future. If this program ends, thousands of HIV-infected individuals will succumb to an untimely and painful death.”



**Jhupri Devi BK,  
CHBC service recipient,  
Achham District**

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People living with HIV receiving health services at home and at a health facility.

## CARE, SUPPORT AND TREATMENT SERVICES

Once diagnosed with HIV, people living with HIV (PLHIV) need appropriate treatment, care and support services. USAID-supported programs have provided these services at the clinics and even at the doorsteps of PLHIV under Community and Home-Based Care services.



# CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

USAID programs provide support to the Government of Nepal to strengthen existing systems (monitoring and evaluation, surveillance, laboratory and clinical management) for a better HIV response. Capacity building activities also support the civil society to improve overall institutional capabilities.



- ▲ Participants getting trained on HIV and STIs laboratory services organized jointly by the Government of Nepal and USAID-funded project.



A staff member explains HIV prevention outreach activities using a coverage map developed by a local USAID NGO partner.



# BUILDING PROGRAM EFFICIENCY

In order to build program efficiency, USAID-funded projects have used innovative measures such as a micro-planning process (response based on detailed individual information) to increase project reach among female sex workers; data quality assessment to ensure correct and consistent program data; use of standardized reporting and recording tools as per the national standard and geographic information system to monitor program implementation. As a result, these measures have improved the reach of treatment activities and increased access to quality services for key affected populations.





▲ For the first time in Nepal, **Early Infant Diagnosis (EID)** has ensured the timely diagnosis of HIV and initiation of the anti-retroviral therapy and other required care. EID includes the testing of blood samples from infants between the ages of six weeks and 18 months.



▲ The **Community-Based Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (CB-PMTCT)** program was tested to study the feasibility of using existing government health system to deliver PMTCT services to those who need them in remote Acham district. With the success of this pilot effort, the Government of Nepal has been scaling up CB-PMTCT program to other health facilities across the country. CB-PMTCT is now helping prevent HIV transmission to newborns from HIV-positive mothers including promoting the use of government health facilities for delivery services and conducting HIV testing among pregnant women.

## INNOVATIONS AND NEW INITIATIVES

Over the years, USAID introduced various innovative approaches and initiatives to increase access to services and strengthen quality.





▲ The use of **Global Information System** under USAID-funded projects has helped in preparing visual interpretations of its program activities. Such visual data have also aided in strategic planning to increase project scope and reach.



◀ **Merosathi** (My Friend) uses Short Messaging Service (SMS) to sensitize hard-to-reach sex workers on HIV and STIs prevention and family planning services.

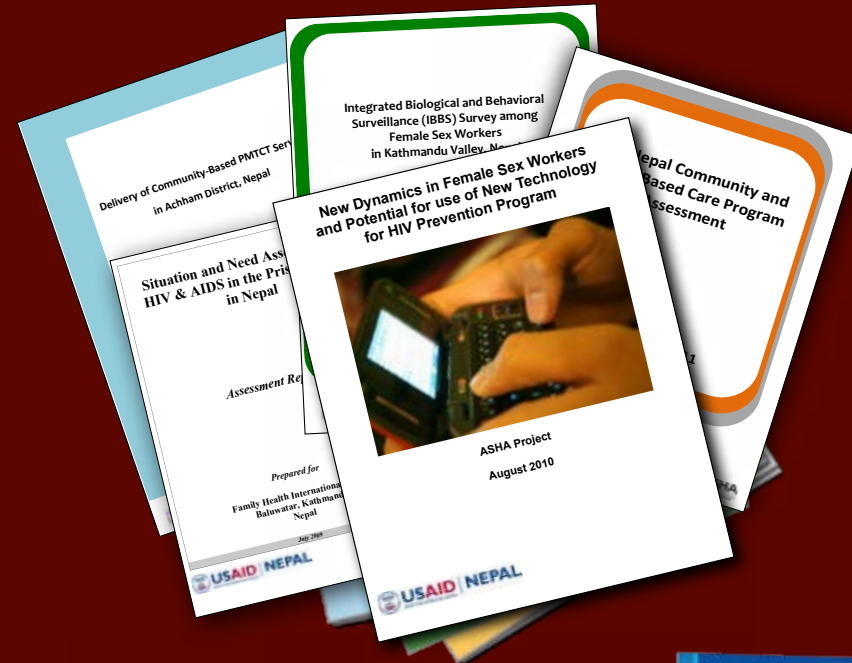


▲ **Medical Waste Management:** USAID-supported projects ensure proper segregation, sterilization and disposal of all medical wastes generated at its clinical sites. This assists in reducing risks of infection for clinical staff and other individuals who might come in contact with such wastes. It also positively contributes to the environment by eliminating the need for incineration.

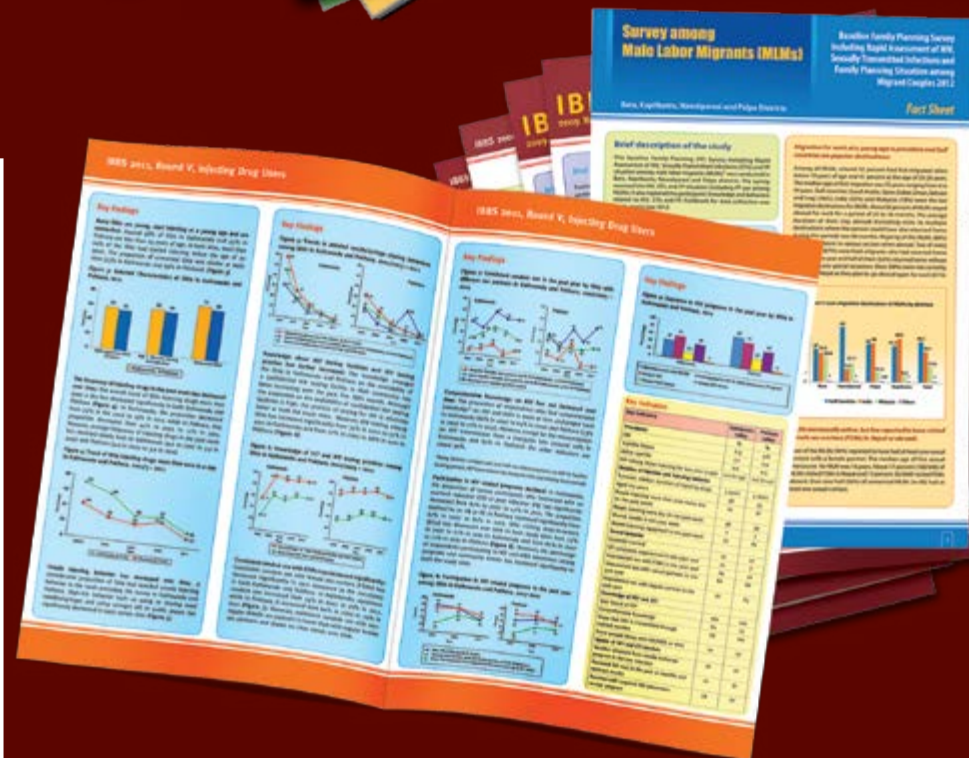
# RESEARCH AND SURVEILLANCE

USAID has been supporting the Government of Nepal to understand the country's HIV epidemic through collection, analysis and use of strategic information and to develop appropriate response. For this purpose, USAID supports the government to conduct Integrated Bio-Behavioral Surveillance (IBBS) surveys, which provide valuable health information for decision makers and stakeholders in Nepal; the estimation of most-at-risk populations and people living with HIV in Nepal; and to strengthen the overall national monitoring and evaluation system.

To date, USAID has directly supported the government to conduct **41 IBBS studies** between 2002 to 2011.



Dissemination of research findings supported by USAID. ▲





# HIV AT A GLANCE

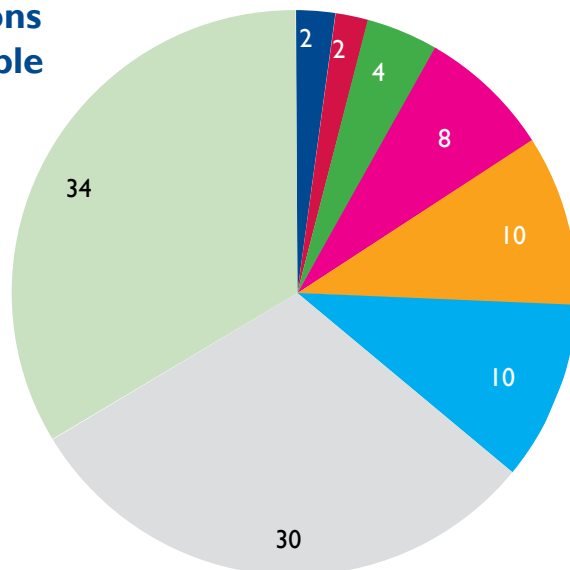
## Facts about HIV epidemic in Nepal

- The first HIV case in Nepal was detected in 1988.
- HIV epidemic has evolved from low to concentrated epidemic meaning HIV prevalence is mostly seen among key populations at higher risk such as:
  - People who inject drugs (PWID),
  - Men who have sex with men (MSM), Transgender (TG)
  - Female sex workers (FSWs),
  - Clients of FSWs and
  - Male labor migrants and their spouses
- Adult (15-49 years) HIV prevalence: 0.28%
- Cumulative number of reported HIV infections (1988 - July 2013): 22,994

Source: National Centre for AIDS and STD Control, 2013.

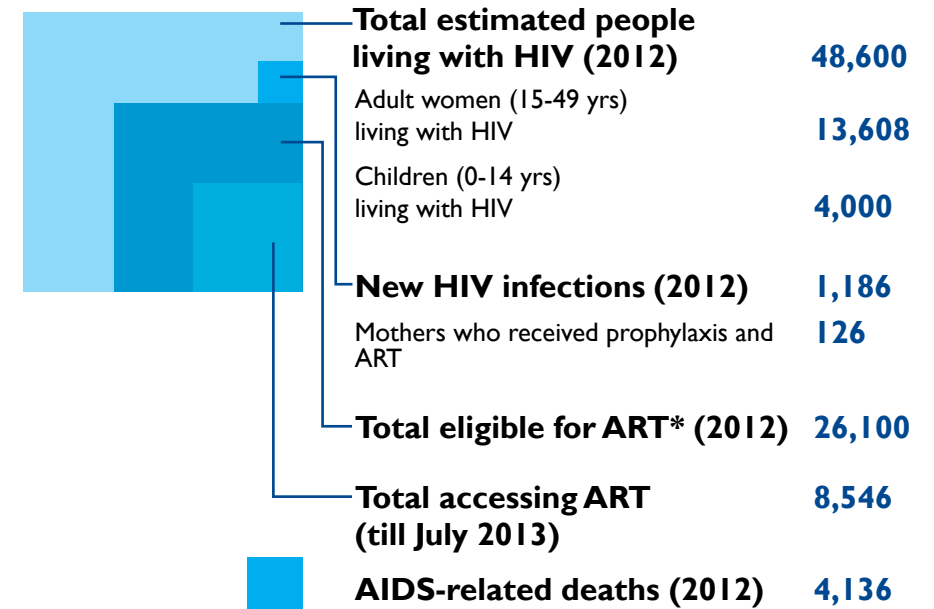
## Share (in %) of key populations in estimated number of people living with HIV in Nepal

- Female sex workers (FSWs)
- Truckers (Clients of FSWs)
- People who inject drugs (PWID)
- Male sex worker (MSW), transgender and clients
- Male labor migrants
- Other MSM who do not sell and/or buy sex
- Remaining low risk women
- Remaining low risk men



Source: National Centre for AIDS and STD Control, 2013.

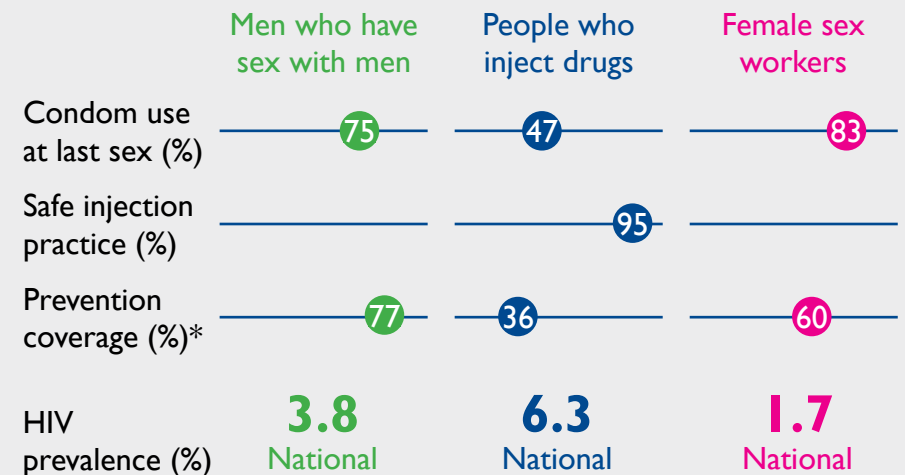
## National HIV Estimates 2013



\*Antiretroviral therapy

Source: National Centre for AIDS and STD Control, 2013.

## Other key indicators



\*Unit for people who inject drugs = needles/syringes distributed per person per year

Source : UNAIDS Report 2013 HIV in Asia and the Pacific



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**20 Years of Partnership Towards an AIDS-free Generation in Nepal**