

7 HIV and AIDS

The Asia-Pacific region appears to be less affected by HIV and AIDS than other regions of the world. It has more than half the world's population but less than one-fifth of the people living with HIV. However, the trends in some parts of the region are alarming.

The United Nations Millennium Declaration aims to have halted and then begun to reverse the spread of HIV by 2015. Although in Asia and the Pacific the average adult prevalence rate – the percentage of people aged 15-49 infected with HIV – decreased slightly between 2001 and 2007, from 0.28 to 0.25 per cent, the number of people living with HIV may be increasing as a result of overall population rise. By 2007, the total number of people living with HIV across Asia and the Pacific was 5.9 million. In the Pacific, the number nearly tripled. In North and Central Asia it increased one and a half times and in East and North-East Asia it increased by 47 per cent. The increase in South-East Asia was only 15 per cent.

Of those living with HIV, 1.96 million, or one third, are women. This proportion is lower than the global average (49 per cent). Furthermore, it does not vary greatly among subregions: East and North-East Asia (29 per cent), South-East Asia (34 per cent), South and South-West Asia (37 per cent), North and Central Asia (26 per cent) and the Pacific (31 per cent). However, these averages can mask important differences between countries; in Papua New Guinea for example, the majority of people living with HIV are women.

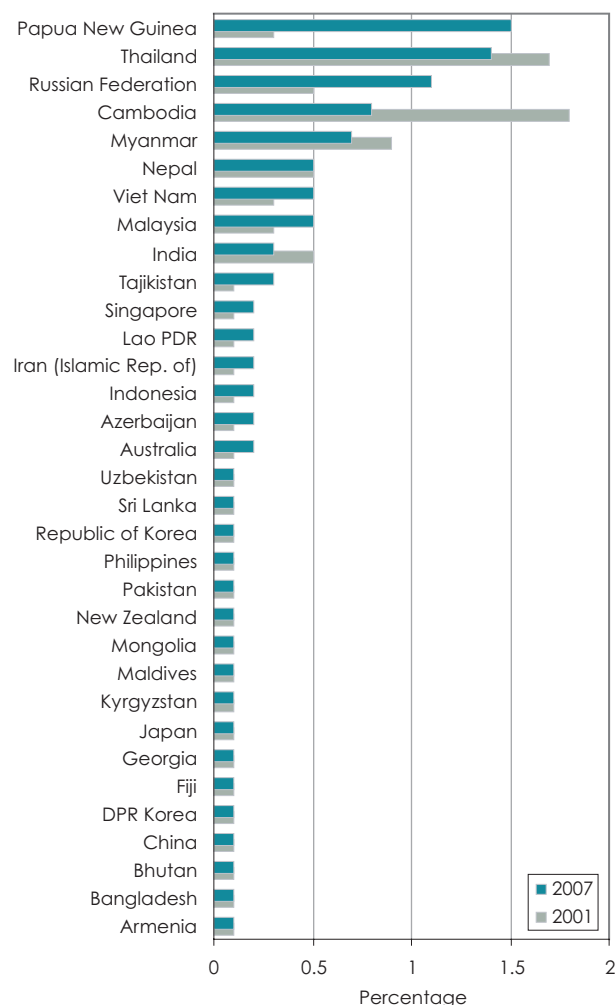
The countries in which HIV prevalence exceeds 1.0 per cent are Papua New Guinea (1.5 per cent), the Russian Federation (1.1 per cent) and Thailand (1.4 per cent). The next highest levels are found in Cambodia (0.8 per cent) and Myanmar (0.7 per cent).

To check for progress towards the MDG target it is important to look at changes in prevalence rates. The worst performance has been in North and Central Asia where between 2001 and

2007 the prevalence doubled and in the Pacific where it nearly tripled – though these two subregions accounted for only 18 per cent of the region's people living with HIV in 2007. In East and North-East Asia and in South-East Asia, over the same period the overall picture remained static, as in both subregions the prevalence remained unchanged – though it should be noted that the prevalence has been increasing in Viet Nam and Indonesia, while coming down in Thailand, Cambodia and Myanmar. In South and South-West

Figure 7.1

HIV prevalence among people aged 15-49 in Asia and the Pacific, 2001 and 2007



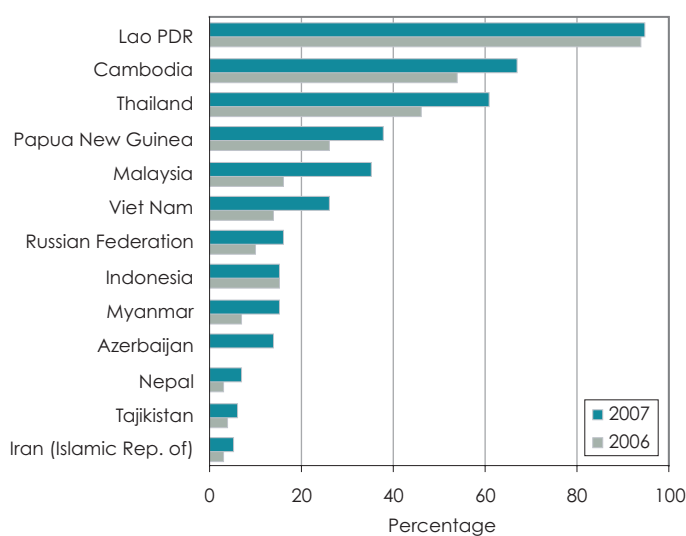
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Asia, the prevalence declined markedly, from 0.40 per cent in 2001 to 0.26 per cent in 2007, and this was over and above the downwards revision in India thanks to the collection of more accurate data.

Some countries in the region are also ensuring better access to antiretroviral therapy (ART). It is encouraging to observe that two countries with high prevalence rates in 2001, Cambodia (1.8 per cent) and Thailand (1.7 per cent) had by 2007 achieved high coverage with ART. Coverage was higher only in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, which has a much lower HIV prevalence. Although the percentage with access to ART is under 40 per cent in all other countries for which there is information, in most of these the percentage increased substantially between 2006 and 2007, implying that the provision of ART is expanding rapidly.

Figure 7.2

Access to antiretroviral drugs by people with advanced HIV in Asia and the Pacific, 2006 and 2007



If transmission of HIV is to be halted it is essential to ensure correct knowledge about prevention. For this purpose the most important group is people aged 15-24 years. It is significant that the percentage of young people who know how to prevent the disease is highest in Cambodia and Thailand, countries which between 2001 and 2007 substantially reduced their HIV prevalence. Elsewhere, however, the dissemination of such

information has been inadequate. Across the region no more than half of young people have comprehensive, correct knowledge on how to avoid the disease.

Although the average HIV prevalence in the ESCAP region may be levelling off, between 2001 and 2007 there was a steady increase in the recorded number of annual AIDS deaths – reaching 188,800. The actual number will be even higher since the 2007 estimate was unavailable for India. Most subregions saw increases. The exception was South-East Asia, where there was a 15 per cent decline – largely as a result of success in Cambodia and Thailand, countries that have not only reduced the prevalence but also achieved some of the region's most effective ART programmes.

An important development in 2008 was the publication of the report of the high-level Commission on AIDS in Asia. The report reviewed and analysed all key information on the epidemic and the response in South, South-East and East-Asia, confirming that the epidemic in those subregions is predominantly driven by transmission among most at risk populations such as sex workers and their clients, injecting drug users and men having sex with men. It concluded by stating that in order for the HIV – related MDG target to be achieved, countries must invest sufficient resources in programmes which offer the right mix of prevention, care and treatment and which help mitigate the impact on the people most at risk along with their partners and families.

The only way to get an accurate measure of HIV prevalence would be to test everyone. In practice estimates are based on surveys among selected population groups – including those which are known to be at risk – and applying these results to the population as a whole. As with any estimate, the results need to be interpreted carefully. As more information becomes available, such estimates are refined. It also must be noted that prevalence rates do not fully reflect recent trends in transmission as they include all people who live with the virus at a given moment. As treatment coverage expands, more people living with HIV survive longer, which can mask possible decreases in the number of new cases – the incidence.

Adults aged 15 and above living with HIV/AIDS, men and women (number)

Adults are defined as men and women aged 15+ years. These estimates include all people with HIV infection at a given time, whether or not they have developed symptoms of AIDS. Data are disaggregated by sex. **Aggregates:** Sum of the individual country values. **Source:** UNAIDS 2008 Report on the global AIDS epidemic (online database, accessed on 7 August 2008).

HIV prevalence rate, aged 15-49 (percentage)

The prevalence of HIV among the population 15-49 years old is the percentage of individuals aged 15-49 living with HIV at a given time. **Aggregates:** Averages are calculated using the population aged 15-49 as weight. **Source:** United Nations Millennium Development Goals Indicators (online database, accessed on 7 August 2008).

Population with advanced HIV with access to ART (percentage)

The percentage of adults and children with advanced HIV infection currently receiving antiretroviral therapy according to nationally approved treatment protocols (or WHO/Joint UN Programme on HIV and AIDS standards) among the estimated number of people with advanced HIV infection. The numerator (the number of people receiving antiretroviral therapy) is derived from national programme reporting systems, aggregated from health facilities or other service delivery sites. The

denominator (the total number of people who need antiretroviral therapy) is generated using a standardized statistical modelling approach. **Aggregates:** None. **Source:** United Nations Millennium Development Goals Indicators (online database, accessed on 18 July 2008).

Population aged 15-24 with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS, women and men (percentage)

Percentage of young men and women aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS is the share of women and men aged 15-24 years who correctly identify the two major ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV (using condoms and limiting sex to one faithful, uninfected partner), who reject the two most common local misconceptions about HIV transmission and who know that a healthy-looking person can transmit HIV. The data are disaggregated by sex. **Aggregates:** None. **Source:** United Nations Millennium Development Goals Indicators (online database, accessed on 7 August 2008).

AIDS deaths (number; per 100,000 population)

The estimated number of adults and children who died due to AIDS. **Aggregates:** Number: Sum of individual country values. Per 100,000 population: Averages are calculated using total population as weight. **Source:** Number: United Nations Millennium Development Goals Indicators; Per 100,000 population: calculated by ESCAP using data from United Nations Millennium Development Goals Indicators (online database, accessed on 7 August 2008).

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7.1 HIV/AIDS prevalence, prevention and treatment

	Adults aged 15 and above living with HIV/AIDS				HIV prevalence rate, aged 15-49		Population with advanced HIV with access to ART		Population aged 15-24 with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS	
	Women		Total		Percentage		Percentage		Women	Men
	Number	Number	Number	Number	2001	2007	2006	2007	Percentage	Percentage
	2001	2007	2001	2007	2001	2007	2006	2007	Latest	Latest
East and North-East Asia	123 600	206 100	484 900	713 600	0.10	0.10				
China	120 000	200 000	470 000	690 000	0.10	0.10	19	19		
DPR Korea					0.10	0.10		0		
Hong Kong, China										
Japan	1 800	2 300	8 100	9 600	0.10	0.10				
Macao, China										
Mongolia		200		1 000	0.10	0.10			35(05)	
Republic of Korea	1 800	3 600	6 800	13 000	0.10	0.10				
South-East Asia	427 000	525 700	1 351 000	1 556 700	0.44	0.44				
Brunei Darussalam										
Cambodia	31 000	20 000	120 000	70 000	1.80	0.80	54	67	50 (05)	45 (05)
Indonesia	10 000	54 000	93 000	270 000	0.10	0.20	15	15	1 (03)	0 (03)
Lao PDR	500	1 300	1 100	5 400	0.10	0.20	94	95		
Malaysia	10 000	21 000	43 000	79 000	0.30	0.50	16	35		
Myanmar	97 000	100 000	290 000	240 000	0.90	0.70	7	15		
Philippines	500	2 200	1 000	8 200	0.10	0.10	24	31	12 (03)	18 (03)
Singapore	1 000	1 200	2 900	4 100	0.10	0.20				
Thailand	240 000	250 000	650 000	600 000	1.70	1.40	46	61	46 (06)	
Timor-Leste										
Viet Nam	37 000	76 000	150 000	280 000	0.30	0.50	14	26	44 (06)	50 (05)
South and South-West Asia	1 038 100	951 500	2 760 500	2 563 200	0.40	0.26				
Afghanistan										
Bangladesh	100	2 000	7 500	12 000	0.10	0.10	3	7	16 (06)	
Bhutan		100		500	0.10	0.10				
India	1 000 000	880 000	2 600 000	2 300 000	0.50	0.30			20 (06)	36 (06)
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	12 000	24 000	45 000	85 000	0.10	0.20	3	5		
Maldives					0.10	0.10				
Nepal	12 000	17 000	55 000	68 000	0.50	0.50	3	7	28 (06)	44 (06)
Pakistan	13 000	27 000	50 000	94 000	0.10	0.10	1	3		
Sri Lanka	1 000	1 400	3 000	3 700	0.10	0.10	10	14		
Turkey										
North and Central Asia	89 100	254 400	401 000	995 600	0.40	0.83				
Armenia	500	1 000	1 800	2 400	0.10	0.10	8	12	23 (05)	15 (05)
Azerbaijan		1 300	500	7 800	0.10	0.20		14	2 (00)	
Georgia	100	1 000	500	2 700	0.10	0.10				
Kazakhstan	1 000	3 300	3 400	12 000			23	23	22 (06)	
Kyrgyzstan	500	1 100	1 000	4 200	0.10	0.10		14	20 (06)	
Russian Federation	86 000	240 000	390 000	940 000	0.50	1.10	10	16		
Tajikistan	500	2 100	2 400	10 000	0.10	0.30	4	6	3 (05)	
Turkmenistan				500					5 (06)	
Uzbekistan	500	4 600	1 400	16 000	0.10	0.10	30	24	31 (06)	7 (02)
Pacific	4 600	22 700	25 000	72 400	0.14	0.44				
Australia	1 000	1 200	14 000	18 000	0.10	0.20				
American Samoa										
Cook Islands										
Fiji					0.10	0.10				
French Polynesia										
Guam										
Kiribati										
Marshall Islands										
Micronesia (F.S.)										
Nauru										
New Caledonia										
New Zealand	200	500	1 200	1 400	0.10	0.10				
Niue										
Northern Mariana Is.										
Palau										
Papua New Guinea	3 400	21 000	9 800	53 000	0.30	1.50	26	38		
Samoa										
Solomon Islands										
Tonga										
Tuvalu										
Vanuatu										
Asia and the Pacific	1 682 400	1 960 400	5 022 400	5 901 500	0.28	0.25				
LLDC	15 500	32 000	66 600	127 800	0.22	0.25				
LDC	140 600	140 400	473 600	395 900	0.40	0.30				
ASEAN	427 000	525 700	1 351 000	1 556 700	0.44	0.44				
ECO	27 500	63 400	103 700	229 500	0.10	0.14				
SAARC	1 026 100	927 500	2 715 500	2 478 200	0.41	0.26				
Central Asia	3 100	14 400	11 000	55 600	0.10	0.14				
Pacific island dev. econ.	3 400	21 000	9 800	53 000	0.27	1.33				
Low-income	195 500	272 100	688 200	852 600	0.27	0.27				
Middle-income	1 481 100	1 679 500	4 301 200	5 002 800	0.29	0.26				
High-income	5 800	8 800	33 000	46 100	0.10	0.11				
Other world regions										
Africa	10 370 300	11 279 200	17 650 000	19 286 100	4.50	3.96				
Europe	242 100	403 800	853 900	1 214 000	0.29	0.37				
Latin America & Carib.	529 700	621 700	1 514 000	1 751 600	0.53	0.56				
North America	193 000	250 000	1 049 000	1 173 000	0.30	0.40				
Other countries/areas	3 100	3 900	5 700	7 900	0.10	0.10				
World	13 020 600	14 519 000	26 095 000	29 334 100	0.87	0.83				

7.2 AIDS deaths

	AIDS deaths			
	Number		Per 100,000 population	
	2001	2007	2001	2007
East and North-East Asia	15 800	40 200	1	3
China	15 000	39 000	1	3
DPR Korea	100	500	0	2
Hong Kong, China				
Japan	100	100	0	0
Macao, China				
Mongolia	100	100	4	4
Republic of Korea	500	500	1	1
South-East Asia	111 100	94 100	21	16
Brunei Darussalam	100	100	29	26
Cambodia	14 000	6 000	107	42
Indonesia	100	8 700	0	4
Lao PDR	100	100	2	2
Malaysia	1 000	3 100	4	12
Myanmar	24 000	24 000	52	49
Philippines	100	500	0	1
Singapore	100	500	2	11
Thailand	66 000	31 000	108	49
Timor-Leste	100	100	12	9
Viet Nam	5 500	20 000	7	23
South and South-West Asia	6 400	16 000	2	3
Afghanistan	100	100	0	0
Bangladesh	100	1 000	0	1
Bhutan	100	100	17	15
India				
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	1 000	4 300	1	6
Maldives	100	100	36	33
Nepal	2 600	4 900	10	17
Pakistan	1 900	5 000	1	3
Sri Lanka	500	500	3	3
Turkey				
North and Central Asia	2 500	37 200	1	19
Armenia	100	500	3	17
Azerbaijan	100	100	1	1
Georgia	100	100	2	2
Kazakhstan				
Kyrgyzstan	100	500	2	9
Russian Federation	1 900	35 000	1	25
Tajikistan	100	500	2	7
Turkmenistan				
Uzbekistan	100	500	0	2
Pacific	800	1 300	3	4
Australia	100	100	1	0
American Samoa				
Cook Islands				
Fiji	100	100	12	12
French Polynesia				
Guam				
Kiribati				
Marshall Islands				
Micronesia (F.S.)				
Nauru				
New Caledonia				
New Zealand	100	100	3	2
Niue				
Northern Mariana Is.				
Palau				
Papua New Guinea	500	1 000	9	16
Samoa				
Solomon Islands				
Tonga				
Tuvalu				
Vanuatu				
Asia and the Pacific	136 600	188 800	5	7
LLDC	3 500	7 400	3	6
LDC	41 200	36 400	16	13
ASEAN	111 000	94 000	21	16
ECO	3 400	11 000	1	4
SAARC	5 400	11 700	2	3
Central Asia	600	2 200	1	4
Pacific island dev. econ.	600	1 100	9	15
Low-income	49 200	64 100	9	11
Middle-income	86 400	123 300	5	6
High-income	1 000	1 400	0	1
Other world regions				
Africa	1 358 800	1 495 400	163	156
Europe	17 500	33 000	3	6
Latin America & Carib.	65 400	79 100	12	14
North America	500	500	2	2
Other countries/areas	600	1 000	6	9
World	1 579 400	1 797 800	34	36