

Correlates of HIV infection among Tanzanian young adults aged 15-24 years: evidence from the Tanzania HIV Impact Survey 2016-2017

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Background

Despite targeted prevention interventions, young adults aged 15-24 years in Tanzania experience disproportionate risk for HIV acquisition. While most prevention programs target adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), less is known about factors affecting young adults as the HIV epidemic continues to shift over time. This analysis examines correlates of HIV+ status among young people in Tanzania.

Methods

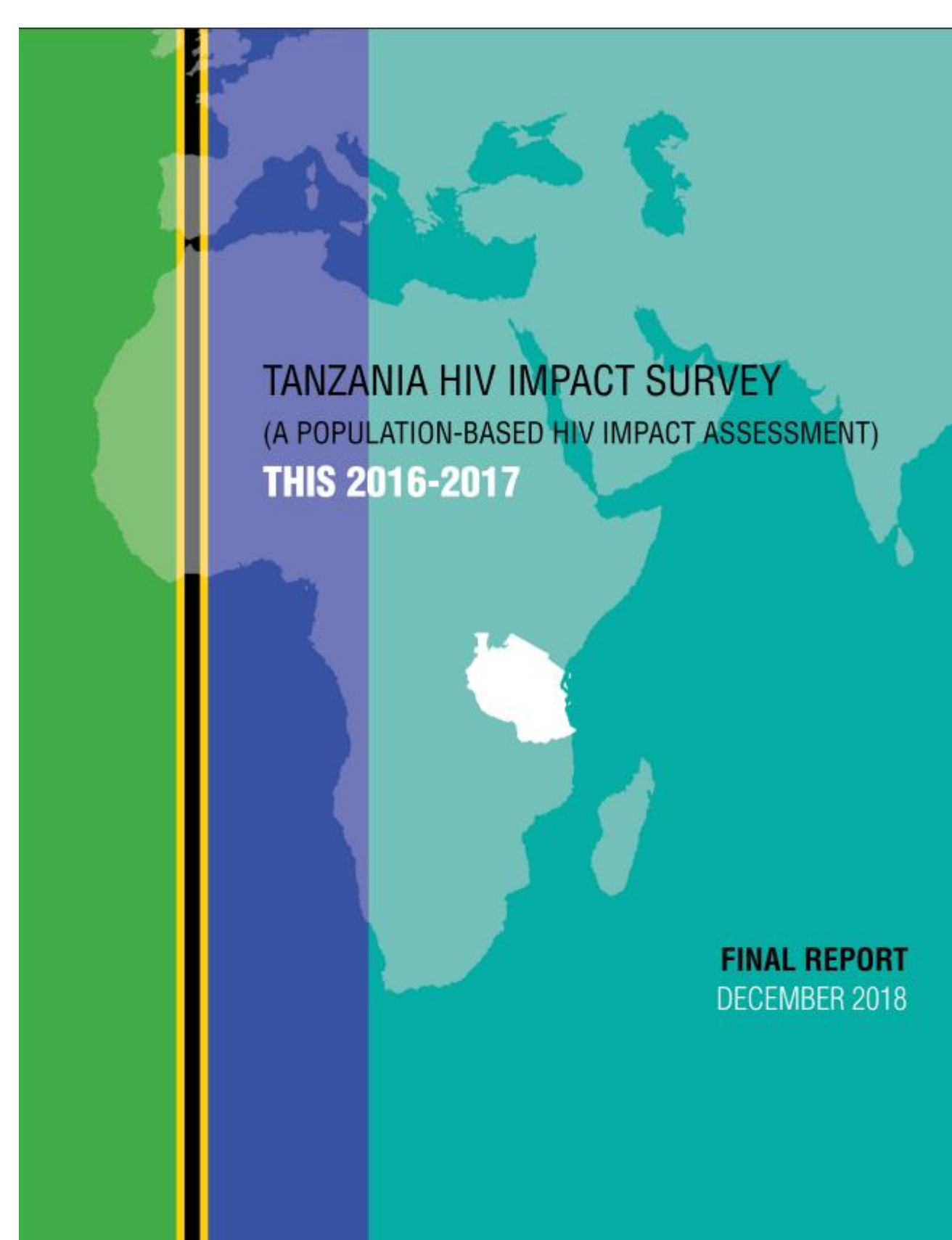
This assessment used nationally-representative data from 10,364 participants aged 15-24 years in the Tanzania HIV Impact Survey 2016-2017. HIV status was the primary outcome of interest in this assessment. Firstly, HIV status is described in the sample of young people. Secondly, log-binomial regression models were used to assess social, demographic, and sexual behavior correlates of HIV positive status among young adults. Sampling weights to account for study design and non-response, and Jackknife variance estimation were included during the analysis. We estimated prevalence ratios (PR) with their corresponding 95% confidence intervals (95%CI).

Results

Among 10,364 participants aged 15-24 who were tested for HIV, HIV prevalence was 1.38% (CI: 1.14-1.66) with females (2.12%CI: 1.75-2.58) and males (0.63%CI: 0.40-0.99). From multivariable analysis, young adults aged 20-24 years were three times more likely to acquire HIV than those aged 15-19 years (aPR: 3.03 95%CI 1.78-5.16). Those with no education had increased likelihood of HIV+ status compared to those who had secondary or higher education (aPR: 2.41 95%CI: 1.39-4.19). Furthermore, respondents who reported engaging in sex for money were three times more likely to have acquired HIV than their peers who did not engage in transaction sex (aPR: 3.06 95%CI: 1.65-5.66).

Conclusion

Our findings showed varied vulnerability of young people to HIV acquisition. HIV risk was markedly increased among the older age group, those with no education, and those engaging in transactional sex. While some global efforts are on-going to reduce HIV acquisition among adolescents and young adults including UNAIDS 2025 road map, continuously finding innovative ways to reach and engage young people on combination prevention methods remains an important tool in the HIV epidemic response in Tanzania.



HIV risk was markedly increased among the youth aged 20-24, those with no education, and those engaging in transactional sex. Engaging young people through combination preventions remains an important tool for Tanzania's HIV epidemic response.



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