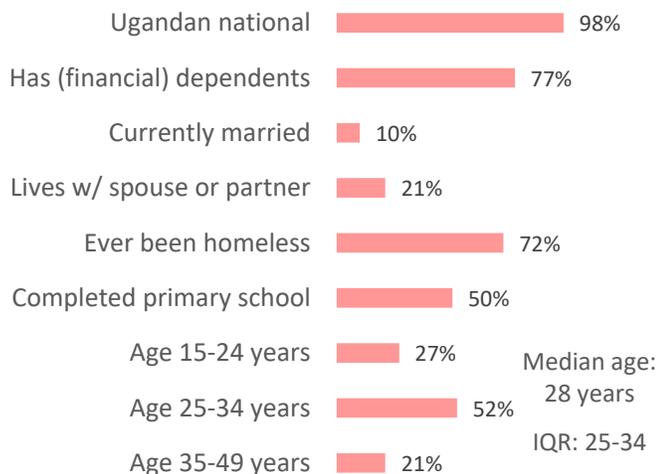


Crane 3 Survey Summary – Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children in Mbale, Uganda 2023



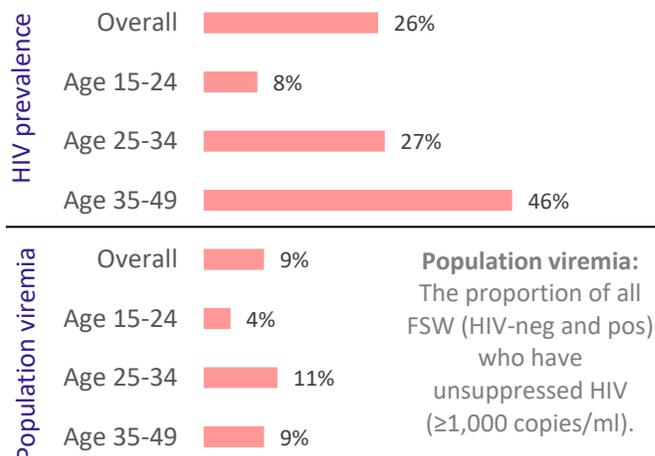
Survey methods. This respondent-driven sampling survey took place from September 2022 to February 2023 using a single survey office in Mbale, Uganda. Participants were female, sold sex to men in Mbale, Uganda, in the past six months and were aged 18-49 years (female sex workers, FSW) or 15-17 years (sexually exploited children, SEC). SEC were referred to social protection services. Data were collected through audio computer-assisted self-interviews; blood was tested for HIV, viral load, and active syphilis; cervicovaginal swabs were tested for human papilloma virus (HPV). Sample size was 759 participants; estimates are weighted unless stated otherwise. *Note: Interquartile range (IQR) refers to the middle half of those who responded.*

Demographics



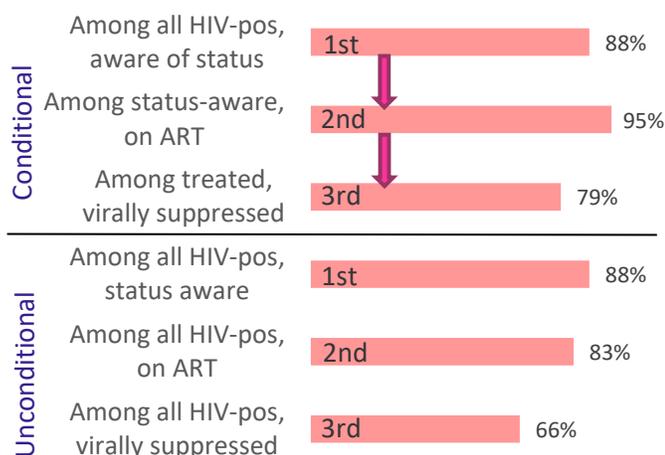
The median age of FSW/SEC was 28 years; about one-quarter were 15-24 years old and about one fifth lived with a partner or spouse. Nearly three in four had ever been homeless and most had financial dependents.

HIV Prevalence and Population HIV viremia Prevalence



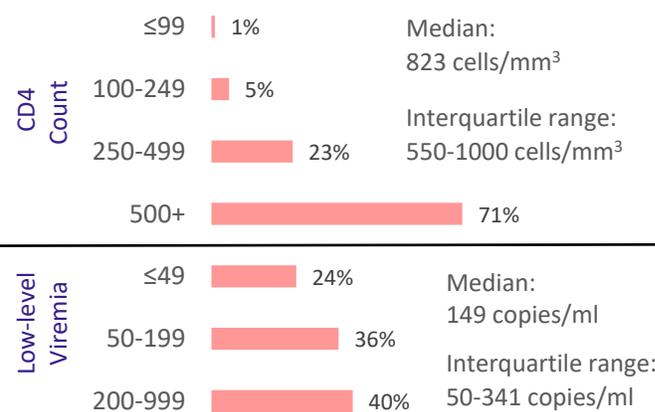
One-quarter of FSW/SEC were living with HIV. HIV prevalence increased with age, peaking with 35-49-year-olds. Due to treatment, the prevalence of population viremia was substantially lower in all age groups.

95-95-95 Targets



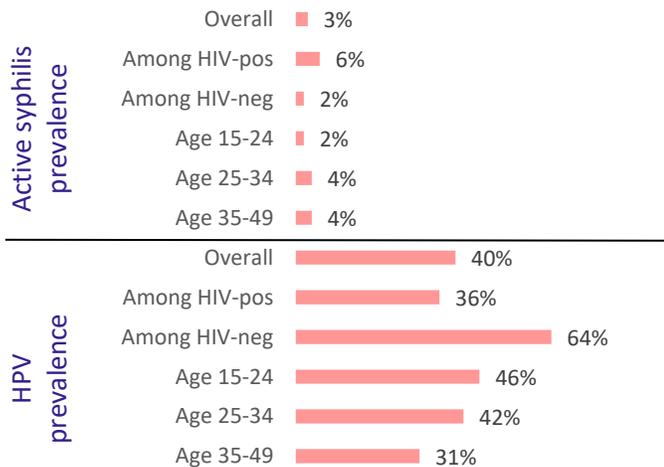
HIV status awareness and treatment uptake were based on self-report with adjustment for viral suppression. About nine out of ten FSW/SEC living with HIV knew about their positive status and more than three in five of all FSW/SEC living with HIV were virally suppressed.

CD4 Count & Low-level Viremia Distribution



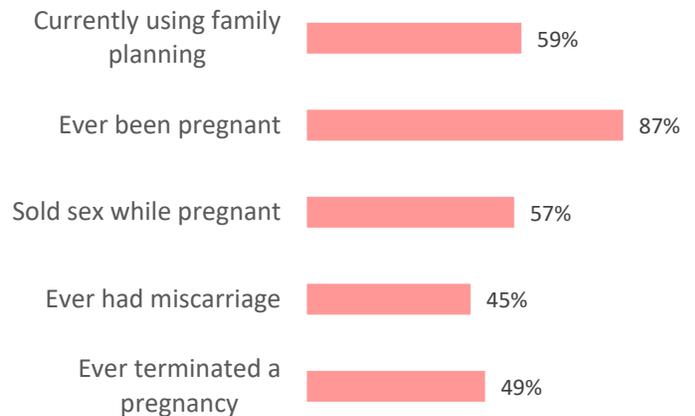
FSW/SEC living with HIV had their CD4+ cells measured. Seven in ten had CD4 counts of 500 cells/mm³ or more, suggesting good immune status. Among virally suppressed FSW/SEC (< 1000 copies/ml), about three in twenty had viral loads less than 50 copies.

Active Syphilis & HPV Prevalence



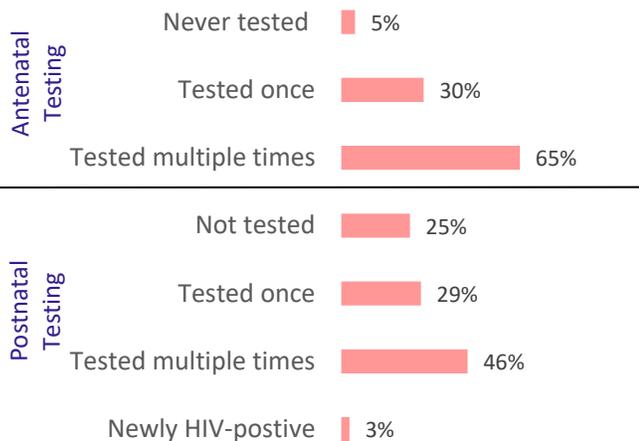
Active syphilis prevalence was low and more common among PLHIV FSW/SEC. About four in ten FSW/SEC had high risk HPV infection, putting them at risk for developing cervical cancer. HPV was more common among 15-24-year-olds.

Maternal Health: Pregnancy



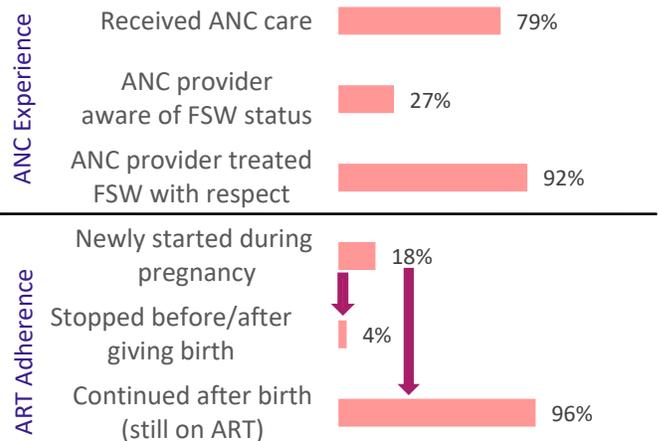
Three in five FSW/SEC reported currently using family planning. Most FSW/SEC reported being pregnant in the past and almost three-fifths had sold sex while having been pregnant. About half had ever had a miscarriage or had terminated a pregnancy.

Maternal Health: Ante- and Postnatal HIV Testing



Few pregnant FSW/SEC were never tested for HIV before giving birth; about one quarter were not tested for HIV while breastfeeding.

Maternal Health: Antenatal Care (ANC) and ART

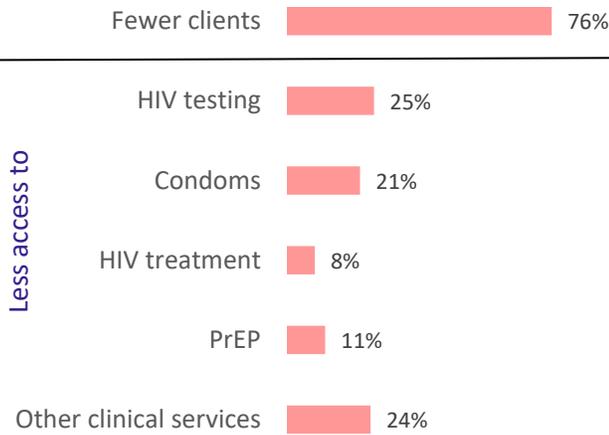


While pregnant, nearly eight in ten FSW/SEC at least received ANC. Only a quarter of ANC providers knew about their sex work. Of those receiving ANC care, about one in five newly started ART during pregnancy, and nearly all continued after giving birth.

Population size estimate: Using this survey and two separate rounds of sampling at hotspots (three source capture recapture) we estimated the Mbale FSW/SEC population size at about 1,200 (95% CI: 1,000-1,400) or 1.2% of the adult female population aged 15-49.

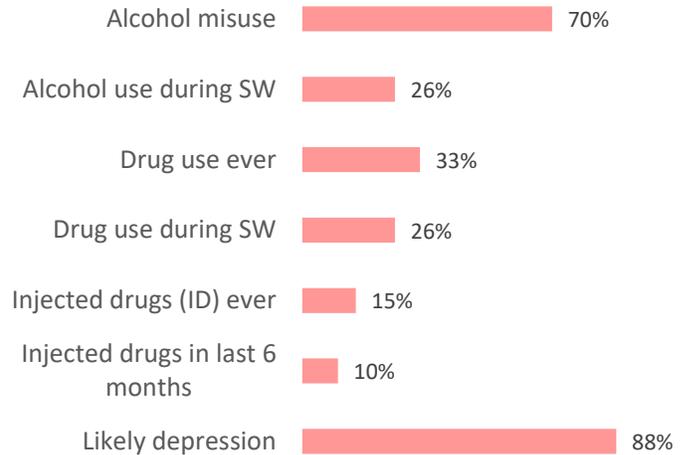
Pediatric HIV prevalence: The survey also sampled children of enrolled FSW/SEC. Out of 19 eligible children aged 0-17 years, 18 (95%) tested for HIV during the survey. Of these, 1 (2%) tested PLHIV (unweighted).

COVID-19 Impact



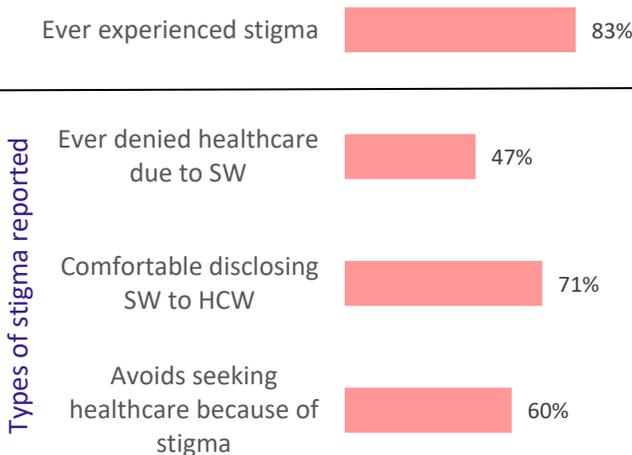
Over three quarters of FSW/SEC had fewer clients due to COVID-19 during lockdown. One in four reported decreased access to HIV testing and one in five reported decreased access to condoms.

Alcohol, Drug Use, Depression



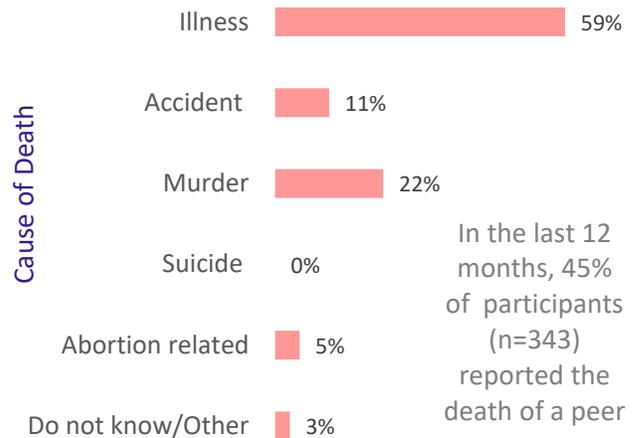
Seven in ten FSW/SEC screened positive for ever misusing alcohol and nearly nine in ten screened positive for likely depression. More than a quarter used alcohol during sex work, and a quarter used drugs during sex work. Three in twenty had ever injected drugs.

Sex Work (SW) Related Stigma



More than four in five FSW/SEC had ever experienced SW-related stigma and almost half had been denied health care due to their SW. Although most felt comfortable disclosing their SW to a health care worker (HCW), three in five avoided seeking healthcare for fear of stigma.

Mortality among Peers

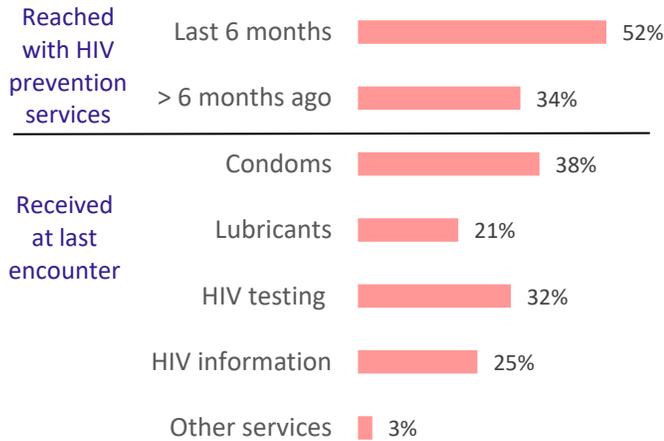


Enrolled FSW/SEC reported on deaths among their known peers. "Illness" in general was the most frequent reported cause of death followed by murder. Murder and accidents were the next most common.

Crane 3 Survey Summary: HIV Prevention

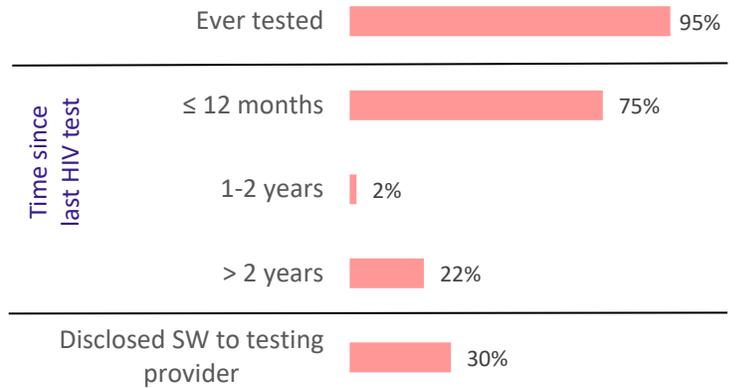
Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children in Mbale, Uganda 2023

Outreach Services



Nearly nine in ten FSW/SEC had been reached with outreach services, more than half within the last years. Condoms and HIV testing were most frequently received.

HIV Testing



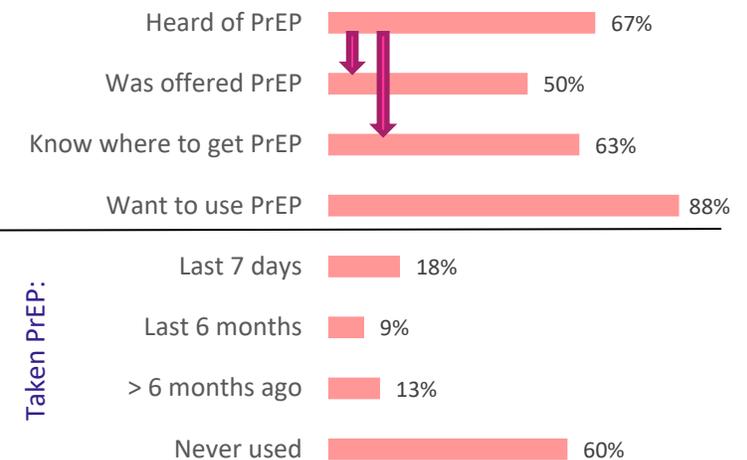
Among surveyed FSW/SEC, almost all had ever tested for HIV. Among those ever tested, three-quarters had tested in the last 6 months. Less than one-third of FSW/SEC disclosed their SW to their testing provider.

Reason for Not Testing for HIV in the Last 12 months



Among FSW/SEC who did not know their positive HIV status and had not tested in the past 12 months, almost two in five did not feel at risk and about one-third feared being positive. Other reasons included fear of others learning their result and fear of being stigmatized.

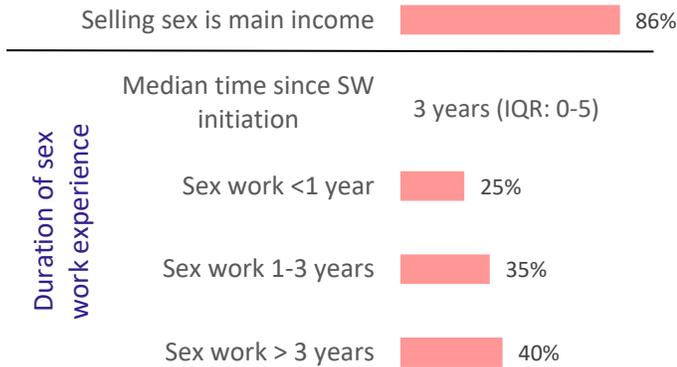
Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)



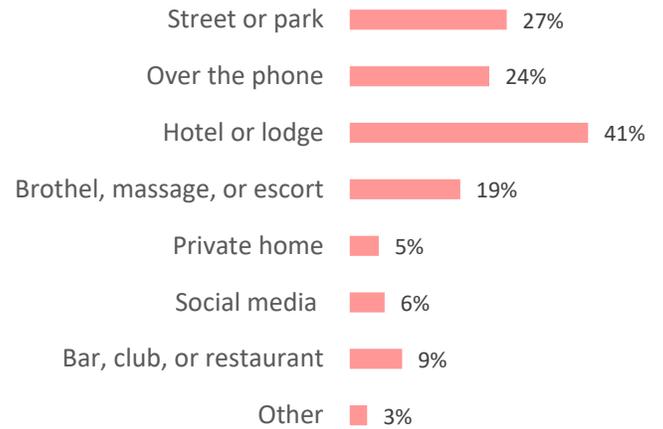
Seven out of ten FSW/SEC had heard of PrEP; of these, only half were offered PrEP. Most HIV-negative FSW/SEC wanted to use PrEP. Less than one in five FSW/SEC had used PrEP in the last 7 days; two in five had never used PrEP.

Non-Paying Partners (NPP): A NPP is a sexual partner who does not pay the FSW/SEC for sex, for example, a spouse or boyfriend. More than half (52%) of FSW/SEC had sex with an NPP in the last 12 months. Three quarters (74%) of FSW/SEC reported to have used a condom at least once during the last three sex acts with an NPP.

Sex Work Characteristics



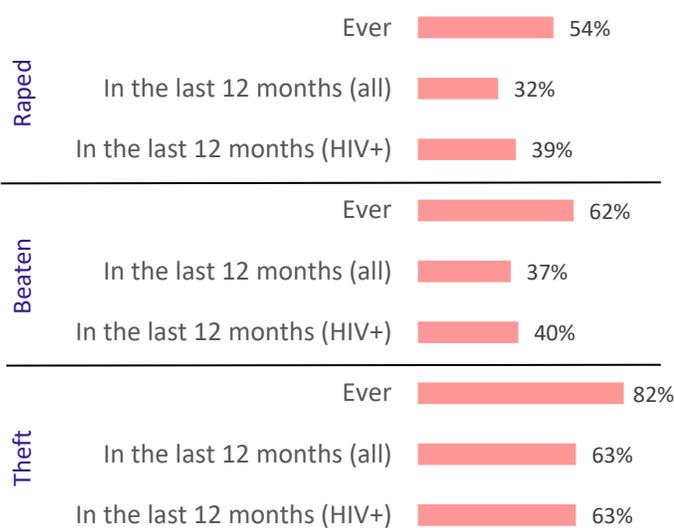
Where Sex Workers Meet Clients †



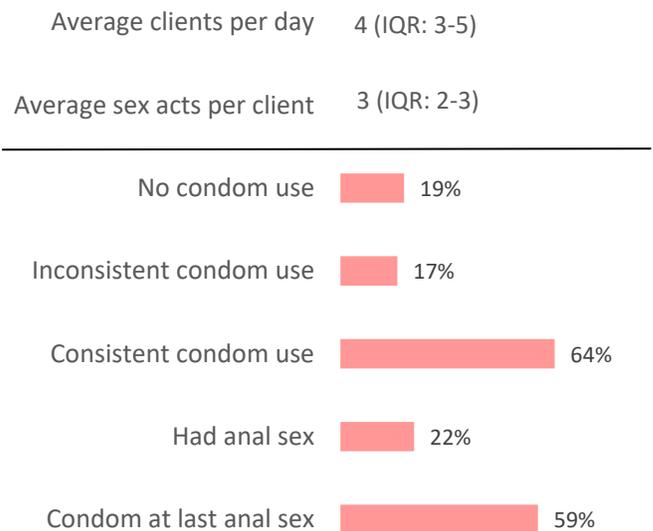
On average, four out of ten FSW/SEC started selling sex three years ago. Nearly nine in ten FSW/SEC saw sex work as their main income.

Most FSW/SEC met their clients at hotels, lodges, or the streets, in parks, or over the phone. († More than one response could be selected.)

Experienced Violence



Sex Acts & Condom Use



More than half of all FSW/SEC reported ever having been raped, nearly one-third in the past 12 months. More than three in five had ever been beaten. Theft was also reported frequently.

On average, FSW/SEC reported four clients per day and three sex acts with each client; one in five did not use condoms. About one in five ever had anal sex with a client; three in five used condoms during the last act of anal sex.

Crane 3 Survey Summary: Care and Treatment

Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children in Mbale, Uganda 2023

Viral load testing: Among FSW/SEC living with HIV and aware of their status, 46% stated that their VL had been measured in the preceding 12 months. Of these, 71% had received and understood their result.

U=U: Nearly half (47%) of FSW/SEC living with HIV in Mbale had heard about *Undetectable=Untransmittable*. After learning the meaning of U=U, most (84%) stated that they believed U=U was true.

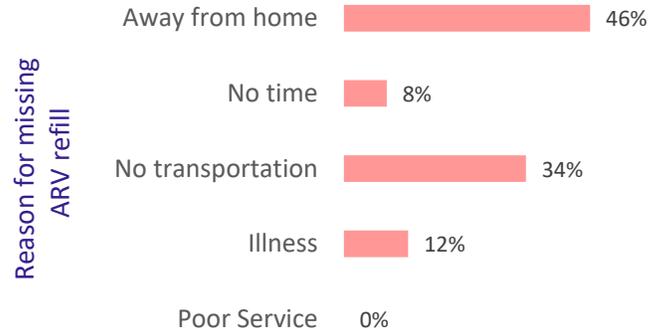
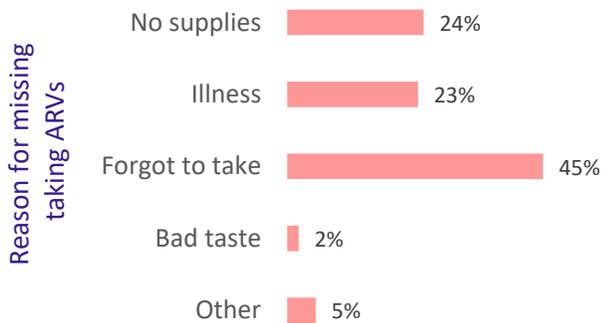
Food security: A quarter (27%) of FSW/SEC living with HIV reported they do not usually have enough food.

Missed ARV Dose(s)

Missed ARV Refill

Missed in last 3 months 37%

Missed in last 12 months 37%

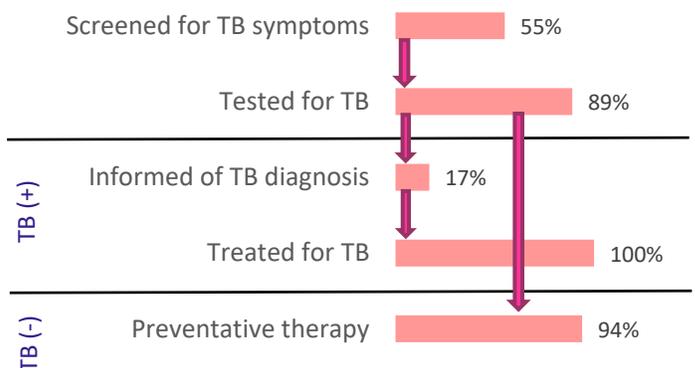
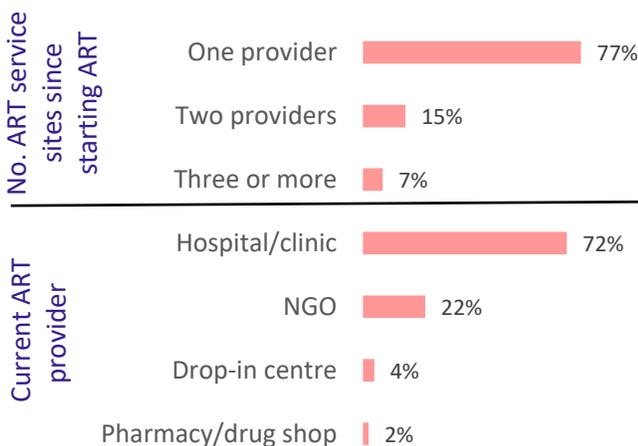


Nearly two in five of FSW/SEC on ART missed taking their ARVs in the last 3 months; the most frequent reason was forgetfulness.

Nearly two in five FSW/SEC on ART missed refilling their ARVs in the preceding 12 months, mostly due to being away from home or not having transport.

Select ART Characteristics

Tuberculosis (TB) Among HIV Positive FSW/SEC



Among FSW/SEC on ART, less than one-quarter had switched ART service sites at least once. Nearly three-quarters received ART from a hospital or clinic.

Among FSW/SEC living with HIV, about a half reported having been screened for TB symptoms when diagnosed with HIV; of these, most got tested for TB and among those with a TB positive result all received TB treatment. Almost all TB-negatives received preventive treatment.

