

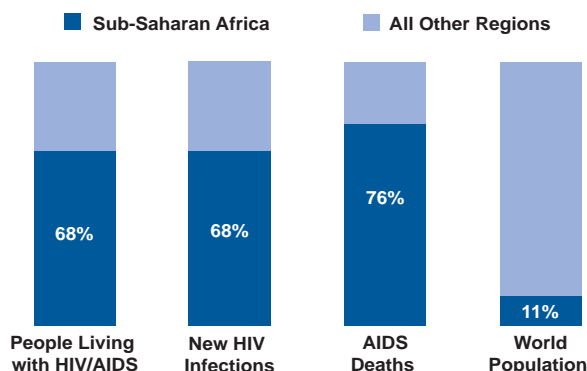
### The HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa

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The HIV/AIDS epidemic has had its most profound impact to date in sub-Saharan Africa. The majority of people living with HIV/AIDS (68%), new HIV infections (68%), and AIDS-related deaths (76%) are in this region, which only accounts for 11% of the world's population.<sup>1,2</sup> HIV is the leading cause of death in the region and studies have found declines in life expectancy due to HIV in many of the hardest hit countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Botswana, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.<sup>3</sup> There are more than 5 million people living with HIV in South Africa alone, the greatest number of any country in the world, and Swaziland has the world's highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (percent of people with HIV/AIDS).<sup>1,4</sup> Almost all countries in sub-Saharan Africa have generalized epidemics; that is, their prevalence rates are greater than 1%, and, in eight countries, it exceeded 15% in 2005.<sup>1,4</sup> Women comprise the majority of those living with HIV/AIDS in the region,<sup>5</sup> and young people are at particular risk.<sup>1,3</sup> The epidemic has already posed serious development challenges for the region, where most countries are already considered to be low-income and heavily or moderately indebted, according to the World Bank,<sup>6</sup> affecting communities, families, livelihoods, and numerous sectors of society.<sup>7</sup> Some of these countries also face other challenges that may exacerbate or be exacerbated by HIV, including food insecurity, internal migration, and conflict. Yet the epidemic is quite diverse throughout sub-Saharan Africa and, despite these challenges, there have been success stories and even new, encouraging signs. The latest estimates from UNAIDS and WHO indicate that new HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa declined between 2001 and 2007 (although they still are the highest in the world, at 1.7 million in 2007, or more than 4,500 new infections per day), and HIV/AIDS prevalence has stabilized.<sup>1</sup> Finally, in those countries where declining HIV prevalence has begun, there are also shifts toward reduced risk behavior.<sup>1</sup> Most countries in sub-Saharan Africa have developed national responses to HIV/AIDS through National AIDS Commissions, legislation, programs, and services.<sup>8,9</sup>



Figure 2: Sub-Saharan Africa as a Percent of the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic, 2007<sup>1,2</sup>



### Overview

- The first case of what was later identified as AIDS was officially reported in Africa in 1982.<sup>10,11</sup>
- As of the end of 2007, an estimated 22.5 million people were living with HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, representing more than two-thirds (68%) of the global total of people living with HIV/AIDS.<sup>1</sup>
- The adult HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in sub-Saharan Africa was the highest of any region in the world (5.0% as of the end of 2007), and significantly higher than the global prevalence rate (0.8%).<sup>1,4</sup> However, the prevalence rate in sub-Saharan Africa has declined from 5.8% in 2001.
- Of the 2.5 million new HIV infections estimated to occur worldwide in 2007, more than two-thirds (68%) were in sub-Saharan Africa. An estimated 1.7 million people became infected with HIV in the region in 2007, a decline from 2.2 million in 2001.
- Also in 2007, there were an estimated 1.6 million deaths due to AIDS in the region, or three-quarters (76%) of all AIDS-related deaths worldwide.<sup>1</sup> HIV is the leading cause of death in Africa.<sup>1</sup>
- HIV in Africa is spread primarily through heterosexual sex, although transmission patterns vary across the region and within countries.<sup>1</sup>

### Populations and Regions Affected

- Women account for the majority of adults estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS in the region (61%).<sup>1,5</sup> Compared to other regions, the impact on women is the most pronounced in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>1</sup>
- Young people are at particular risk and young women are especially vulnerable. Among young people aged 15–24 in sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated 4.6% of women and 1.7% of men were living with HIV in 2005—an almost three-fold difference.<sup>12</sup> The impact on young people is exacerbated by the fact that the population of sub-Saharan Africa is quite young relative to other regions in the world, with 43% of the population below the age of 15 (compared to 28% globally).<sup>2</sup> But there are encouraging signs. Recent data indicate that HIV prevalence among young pregnant women attending antenatal clinics has declined since 2000/2001 in a number of countries with sufficient data for such analysis in the region. In addition, preliminary data from a few sub-Saharan African countries indicate reductions in risk behavior among young people.<sup>1</sup>

- Most children<sup>13</sup> living with HIV/AIDS are in sub-Saharan Africa (2.2 million, or 88% of the global total, as of the end of 2007), as are most (11.4 million) of the world's AIDS orphans.<sup>1,14,15</sup>
- The epidemic has had a varied impact across the region, with the most severe impact in Southern Africa which accounted for about one-third of all people living with HIV/AIDS, new HIV infections, and AIDS deaths worldwide in 2007.<sup>1</sup>

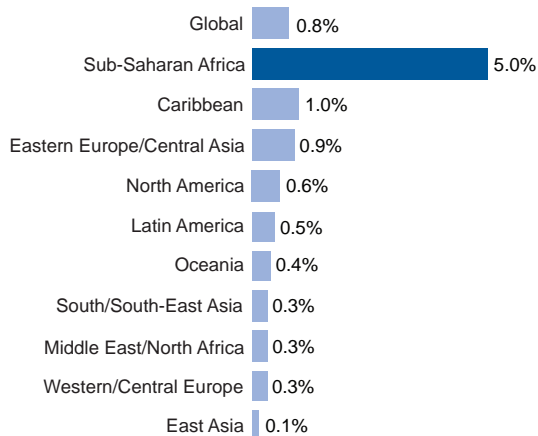
### Other Key Data

- **Knowledge of HIV/AIDS:** Studies have found varied levels of general awareness of HIV/AIDS in African countries, as well as persistent examples of misconceptions and stigma.<sup>3</sup>
- **Prevention:** Recent estimates indicate that sub-Saharan Africa faces a significant prevention funding and coverage gap.<sup>16</sup> For example, in a survey of 12 high prevalence countries in the region, only 12% of men and 10% of women had access to HIV testing services and only 11% of pregnant women with HIV received antiretrovirals for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.<sup>16</sup>
- **Access to Antiretroviral Therapy (ART):** Access to ART has dramatically expanded in sub-Saharan Africa—an estimated 1.3 million people in the region were receiving ART as of December 2006, a more than ten-fold increase since December 2003. Despite this progress, sub-Saharan Africa faces the greatest need for ART in the world. Only slightly more than a quarter (28%) of the 4.8 million people living with HIV/AIDS who need ART in the region currently have access to this treatment.<sup>16</sup>

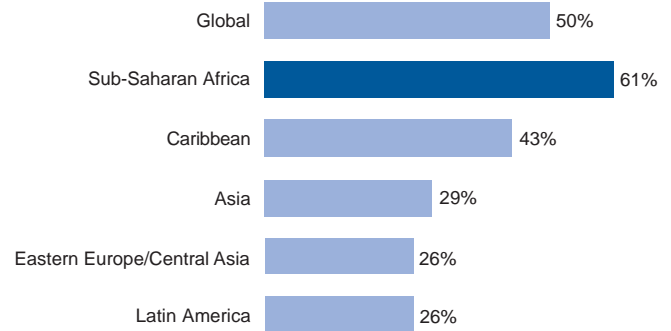
### International Support/Major Donors

- Numerous donor governments provide funding and other support to address HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, both through regional and country-specific efforts. Sub-Saharan Africa is a major focus of the United States Government's President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which provides most of its bilateral funding to 15 countries, 12 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>17</sup> U.S. bilateral aid for these 12 countries totaled \$2.5 billion in FY2007.<sup>18</sup> The U.S. also provides funding for HIV/AIDS efforts around the world through its contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (The Global Fund).
- The Global Fund has approved nearly 90 HIV/AIDS grants (including HIV/TB grants) in 38 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, totaling \$3.6 billion in approved funding and representing more than 60% of all Global Fund grants approved in the region.<sup>19</sup>
- UNAIDS and its 10 co-sponsors support numerous HIV/AIDS programs, partnerships, and other activities throughout sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>9,20</sup> One of the biggest such funding efforts is the World Bank's Multi-Country HIV/AIDS Program (MAP) for Africa, launched in 2000; to date, MAP has committed \$1.5 billion in grant funding (\$1 billion has been disbursed) to 29 African countries and 5 sub-regional projects.<sup>21</sup>

**Figure 3: Percent of Adults Estimated to be Living with HIV/AIDS by Region, 2007<sup>1,4</sup>**



**Figure 4: Women as a Percent of Adults (15+) Living with HIV/AIDS by Region, 2007<sup>1</sup>**



### Key Sources/Websites

- African Council of AIDS Service Organizations (Africaso): [www.africaso.net](http://www.africaso.net)
- Southern African Network of AIDS Service Organisations (SANASO): [www.sanaso.org.zw](http://www.sanaso.org.zw)
- Western Africa Network of AIDS Service Organizations (WANASO): [www.wanaso.org/](http://www.wanaso.org/)
- Southern Africa HIV/AIDS Information Dissemination Service (SAfAIDS): [www.safaid.org.zw/index.cfm](http://www.safaid.org.zw/index.cfm)
- UNAIDS, Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Page: [http://www.unaids.org/en/Regions\\_Countries/Regions/SubSaharanAfrica.asp](http://www.unaids.org/en/Regions_Countries/Regions/SubSaharanAfrica.asp)
- World Bank, HIV/AIDS in Africa: [www.worldbank.org/afr/aids/](http://www.worldbank.org/afr/aids/)
- World Health Organization, HIV/AIDS Regional Page for Africa: [www.afro.who.int/aids/](http://www.afro.who.int/aids/)
- African Broadcast Media Partnership Against HIV/AIDS: [www.broadcasthivafrica.org](http://www.broadcasthivafrica.org)

### References

- 1 UNAIDS, *2007 AIDS Epidemic Update*; December 2007.
- 2 Population Reference Bureau, *2007 World Population Data Sheet*; 2007.
- 3 UNAIDS, *2006 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic*; May 2006.
- 4 Among those between the ages of 15 and 49.
- 5 Among those aged 15 and over.
- 6 World Bank, "Country Classification": [www.worldbank.org/data/countryclass/countryclass.html](http://www.worldbank.org/data/countryclass/countryclass.html).
- 7 Kaiser Family Foundation, *The Multisectoral Impact of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic—A Primer*; July 2007.
- 8 UNAIDS, Countries: [http://www.unaids.org/en/Regions\\_Countries/Countries/default.asp](http://www.unaids.org/en/Regions_Countries/Countries/default.asp).
- 9 UNAIDS, *UNAIDS at Country-Level: Progress Report*; 2004.
- 10 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Update: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)—Worldwide," *MMWR*, Vol. 37, No. 18; May 13; 1988.
- 11 Serwadda D et al., "Slim disease: a new disease in Uganda and its association with HTLV-III infection," *The Lancet*, Vol. 2; 1985.
- 12 UNAIDS, "Sub-Saharan Africa" page: [http://www.unaids.org/en/Regions\\_Countries/Regions/SubSaharanAfrica.asp](http://www.unaids.org/en/Regions_Countries/Regions/SubSaharanAfrica.asp).
- 13 Under age 15.
- 14 Aged 0–17, living in 2007, who have lost one or both parents to AIDS.
- 15 UNAIDS, *Slides and Graphics, Global Summary of the AIDS Epidemic 2007*; December 2007.
- 16 WHO/UNAIDS/UNICEF, *Towards Universal Access, Scaling Up Priority HIV/AIDS Interventions in the Health Sector, Progress Report*; April 2007.
- 17 The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief: [www.pepfar.gov](http://www.pepfar.gov).
- 18 The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, Country Profiles: <http://www.pepfar.gov/countries/c19418.htm>.
- 19 The Global Fund: [www.theglobalfund.org](http://www.theglobalfund.org); as of November 27, 2007.
- 20 UNAIDS: [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org).
- 21 World Bank, "AIDS Regional Update: Africa": [www.worldbank.org/afr/aids/overview.htm](http://www.worldbank.org/afr/aids/overview.htm).