



Population Size Estimate of Drug Addicted Women of Reproductive Age and Drug Addicted Pregnant Women in Ukraine

POPULATION SIZE ESTIMATE OF DRUG ADDICTED WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE AND OF DRUG ADDICTED PREGNANT WOMEN IN UKRAINE

This publication is intended to people responsible for efficient project planning, implementation and evaluation of projects aimed at scaling up of integrated services for drug addicted women vulnerable to HIV infection, in order to reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and to monitor the country's achievements towards complete elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

This publication contains consolidated population size estimates of drug using women of reproductive age, and calculations of these female populations at the national level. It was made within the Institutional Research «Assessment of the Population Size of Drug Addicted Women of Reproductive Age and of Drug Addicted Pregnant Women in Ukraine» conducted in 2012-2013 by the 'Social Monitoring Centre' with the technical support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Ukraine in the cities of Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv and Poltava and in Volyn oblast.

RELEVANCE

According to the national experts' estimates, it is rather difficult for women to get access to the proper psychosocial and health care services, if they are known to be «HIV-positive» or «drug users». Women, who are using drugs, are 2-3 times less likely to receive prevention interventions compared to pregnant women from general population, while the probability to transmit HIV to their infants is growing. Specific problems occur when the attempts are made to cover women from most-at-risk populations with the prevention interventions, including social support services.

The sub-group of drug using women is the most vulnerable to mother-to-child transmission of HIV during pregnancy and/or labour and breastfeeding. Coverage of pregnant IDUs with ARVP was 49.0%. More than half (56.0%) of the surveyed women had low adherence to ARV treatment. This situation is also related to the fact that IDUs most often learn about their HIV-positive status right before delivery or in labour, while the preventive ART should be initiated from the 24th week of gestation. Besides, more than half (56.0%) of the interviewed women had a low adherence to already prescribed ARV treatment¹.

Methodological Approaches

1) Evaluation of the size of female IDU population was conducted in two directions using the method of singling out (see *Diagram 1*):

- from the total number of injecting drug users in Ukraine – the number of female IDUs of reproductive age; from them – the number of HIV infected female IDUs; from them – the number of HIV infected pregnant women and new mothers;
- from the total number of pregnant women and new mothers in Ukraine – the number of women, who are using drugs; from them – the number of HIV infected pregnant women and new mothers.

2) Collection of statistical information:

- Secondary analysis of available data of bio-behavioural study among IDUs conducted in 2011.

¹ Інституційне дослідження «Соціально-демографічні та медичні детермінанти ризику передачі ВІЛ від матері до дитини в Україні»: аналіт. звіт. / Центр соціальних експертиз Інституту соціології НАН України. – К., 2013. – С. 23.

- Collection of medical statistical data (Ukrainian Centre of Control over Socially Dangerous Diseases of the MOH of Ukraine, antenatal clinics at maternity hospitals), statistics of the social support centres, non-governmental organizations for 2012.
- Analysis of available data from the pilot projects «Prevention of Mother-to-child Transmission of HIV and Improving Neonatal Outcomes among Drug-Dependent Pregnant Women and Children Born to Them in Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Poltava» initiated by UNICEF.

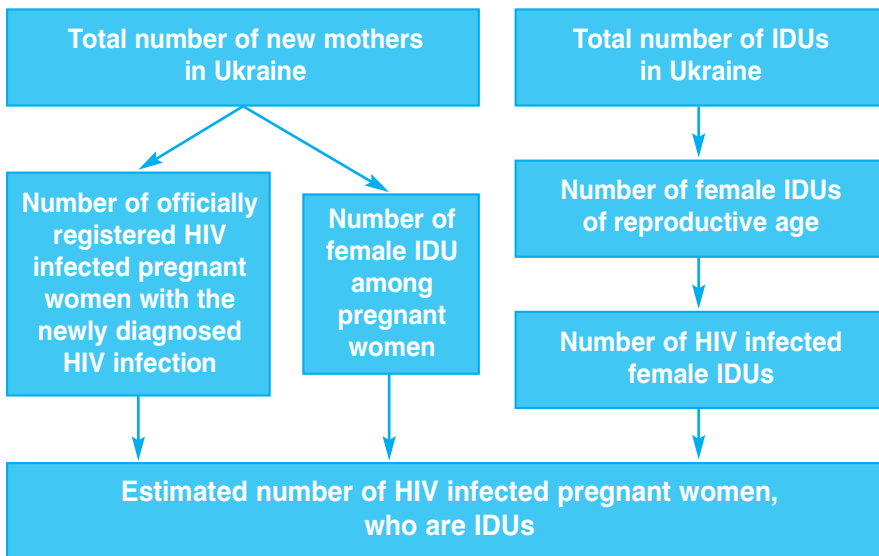


Diagram 1. Stages of evaluation of the population size

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF WOMEN WHO USE DRUGS

Estimated number of women, who inject drugs according to the estimates of the total population size of IDUs and secondary analysis of the results of bio-behavioural study among IDUs

Regions	Estimated population size of IDUs	Proportion of female IDUs, %	Estimated number of female IDUs	Proportion of female IDUs of reproductive age, %	Estimated population size of female IDUs of reproductive age
	A	B	C=A*B/100	D	C*D/100
Dnipropetrovsk	10,300	28.2	2,905	87.2	2,532
Kyiv	31,300	29.8	9,327	100.0	9,327
Volyn oblast	5,500	18.5	1,018	94.5	961
Poltava	2,900	37.1	1,076	97.0	1,044
Total for Ukraine	310,000	27.5	85,250	96.5	82,266

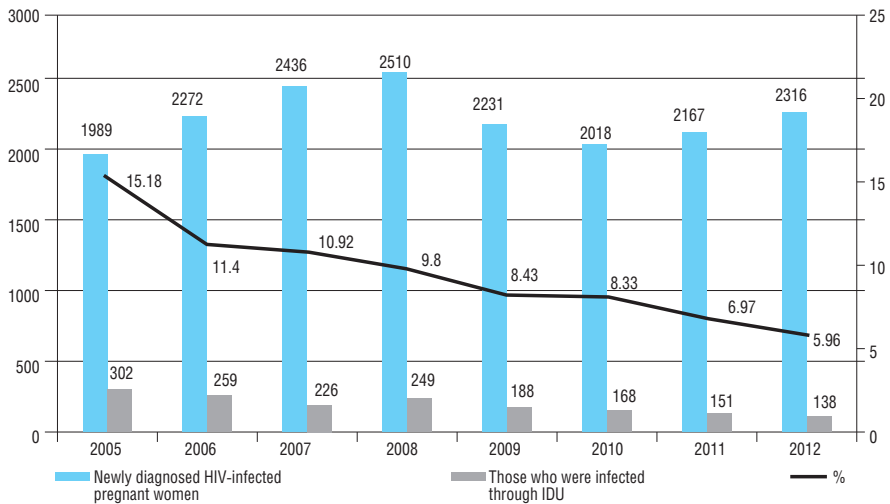


Diagram 2. Proportion of IDUs among officially registered HIV infected pregnant women
(data of the Ukrainian Centre for Socially Dangerous Disease Control at the MOH of Ukraine)

43 women (1.86%) of the total number of officially reported HIV infected pregnant women with the newly diagnosed HIV infection, who were infected through injecting drug use and were active injecting drug users, were registered in 2012.

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF NEW MOTHERS WHO ARE USING DRUGS

Proportion of new mothers, who were using drugs, in the total number of new mothers in the researched regions, was 0.12–0.39%.

Estimated number of new mothers, who were using drugs in Ukraine in 2012

Number of new mothers	Proportion of new mothers, who were using drugs, % ²	Estimated number of new mothers, who were using drugs (<i>min–max</i>)
A	B	A*B/100
516,020	0.12–0.39	619–2,012

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF HIV INFECTED WOMEN AND HIV INFECTED PREGNANT WOMEN, WHO WERE INFECTED AS A RESULT OF DRUG USE

This estimate was calculated on the basis of the estimated number of women of reproductive age, who used injecting drugs in Ukraine in 2012, and of the proportion of HIV infected women of reproductive age on the basis of bio-behavioural study «Monitoring of Behaviour and HIV Prevalence among Injecting Drug Users as a Component of Second Generation Surveillance of HIV».

Estimated number of women of reproductive age, who were HIV infected through injecting drug use in Ukraine in 2012

Estimated number of female IDUs of reproductive age	Proportion of HIV infected women of reproductive age among IDUs, %	Estimated number of HIV infected women of reproductive age, who were infected through injecting drug use
A	B	A*B/100
82,266	24.0	19,744

² This proportion was calculated for the 4 regions of research and then extrapolated to all other regions taking into account the regional birth rates.

**Estimated number of HIV infected pregnant women,
who were infected through injecting drug use
in Ukraine in 2012**

Women under follow-up by the end of 2012 ...	A	Proportion of HIV infected pregnant women, who were infected through injecting drug use, %	B	Estimated number of HIV infected women of reproductive age, who were infected through injecting drug use (min-max)	A*B/100
HIV infected women, whose pregnancy resulted in delivery or abortion	4,133	8.8–38.9		364–1,608	
HIV infected pregnant women	999	8.8–38.9		88–389	
TOTAL				452–1,997 women	

**CONSOLIDATED ESTIMATES OF DIFFERENT
CATEGORIES OF DRUG USING WOMEN
OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE IN UKRAINE IN 2012**

	Indicators	Number of women	%
	Total number of women of reproductive age (15–49 years)	11,441,025	100
	Number of new mothers	516,020	4.51
1.	Estimated number of female IDUs of reproductive age	82,266	0.71
2.	Estimated number of HIV infected women of reproductive age, who were infected through injecting drug use	19,744	0.17
3.	Recommended estimate of the number of pregnant women, who are injecting drugs	2,600	0.023
	3.A. Estimated number of pregnant women, who are active injecting drug users	2,860 (1,144–4,576)	0.025 (0.01–0.04)
	3.B. Estimated number of new mothers, who were injecting drug users	1,316 (619–2012)	0.01
4.	Estimated number of HIV infected pregnant women in Ukraine, who were infected through injecting drug use	1,225 (452–1997)	0.01

³ Data on officially registered HIV infected women at health care facilities that perform follow-up for HIV infected people / Data from the Centre for Monitoring and Evaluation of Programme Activities of the Ukrainian Centre for Socially Dangerous Disease Control at the MOH of Ukraine.

ESTIMATION RESULTS

Minimal estimated number of female injecting drug users of reproductive age is 0.71% of the total number of women of reproductive age.

Estimated number of HIV infected women of reproductive age, who were infected through drug use amounts to almost 20,000 individuals (19,744). Taking into account the national estimate of the total number of people living with HIV in the beginning of 2013 (238,000 people) and their gender structure (45% are women), it can be stated that **every one in five HIV positive women was infected through injecting drug use.**

Minimal estimated number of pregnant women, who inject drugs, is 2,600 individuals.

Estimated number of HIV infected pregnant women, who were infected through injecting drug use in Ukraine, is 1,225 women.

Taking into account that the rate of HIV transmission from drug addicted mothers to their children is 11%, according to the official data, the estimated number of newborns, who will be HIV infected by the new mothers from this group, may amount to approximately **135 children** annually⁴.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to receive more specific data on the number of drug addicted women of reproductive age; of pregnant women, who are injecting drug users, including HIV positive ones, **it would be expedient:**

- To improve the general system of registration of drug addicted persons disaggregated by sex and age (in their relationship) and to ensure the opportunities to analyze the data not only on the national, but also on an oblast, district and individual settlement levels in order to plan respective interventions.
- To update the tools for identification of drug use among pregnant women with HIV positive status, as it provides an opportunity for earlier initiation of medical interventions to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and to enrol the patients in the social follow-up.

⁴ According to the data of Ukrainian Centre for Socially Dangerous Disease Control at the MOH of Ukraine, in 2011 HIV diagnosis was established in 136, in 2010 – in 174 and in 2009 – in 169 children born to HIV positive mothers.

- To develop reporting forms in order to identify and register drug addicted pregnant women (irrespective of their reproductive plans) at all facilities that provide health services to pregnant women and/or follow up the gestation course. These data are important to evaluate the needs and to ensure provision of integrated services to this category of women.

The proposed changes in the procedures of identification, registration and reporting should be implemented through the improvement of legal and normative acts.

Authors:

O. Balakireva, PhD., Sociology;
T. Bondar, PhD., Sociology;
T. Tarasova; Y. Sazonova.

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ЦЕНТР
“СОЦІАЛЬНИЙ МОНІТОРИНГ”

office 507, 26 Panasa Myrnogo Str.,
01011 Kyiv
Tel./fax: (+380 44) 280-83-05
smc@smc.org.ua



United Nations Children's Fund
Office in Ukraine

5 Klovsky Uzviz, 01021 Kyiv

Tel.: +380 44 254 2450

Fax: +380 44 230 2506

kiev@unicef.org

www.unicef.org.ua

www.facebook.com/unicef.ukraine

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