

Poster presentation

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## Street hawking and HIV/AIDS

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### Background

Street hawking is an occupation engaged by children and young adults. Though there is a bill on child's labour that will soon be signed into law, yet it is a common sight in Nigeria cities. It is a business that requires prolong absence from home and families. The profession appears to be associated with increase risk of infection.

### Methods

This study was conducted in Abuja (Federal Capital City) in Nigeria. Period of days of sample collection was from January-December, 2005. Out of this, 317 days were taken as working days (Mondays-Saturdays). The hawkers were contacted at 12 places in the city. An average of 7 hawkers was interviewed individually per day. Therefore the sample size was calculated as  $317 \times 7 = 2219$ . Voluntary counseling and confidential testing (VCCT) was administered. HIV screening was done using determine; positive samples were confirmed by Capillus, while a tie breaker (immunocomb) was used for indeterminate results.

### Results

Their age group was 8–28 years. The educational backgrounds of the subjects were as follows: primary 982/2219 (44.3%), secondary 1020/2219(45.9%), tertiary 217/2219(9.8%).1200/2219 (54.1%) were males and 1019/2219 (45.9%) females. Among the sexually active adults (1800/2219) representing 81.1%; 986/1800 (54.8%) had history of visiting commercial sex workers (CSWs). According to them, they used condoms but not always. Out of the sexually active adults (81.1%), 550/

1800(30.6%) have had sexually transmitted infections at one point or the other. All the sexually active adults accepted VCCT; 246/1800 representing 13.7% tested HIV positive.

### Conclusion

They have heard about HIV/AIDS through one medium or the other. But access to VCCT facilities is very poor.