

CHAPTER IV

Data Collection Exercise

4.1 Introduction:

An estimated 5.8 million new HIV infections occurred worldwide during 1998. More than 95 percent of these infections occurred in the developing countries. There were approximately 16,000 infections each day (Report on the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, 1998).

The HIV infection rate remains low in several South and Southeast Asian nations. In Bangladesh, Indonesia, Laos, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, infection has not reached 1 adult in 1000 yet. However other countries in the region- including Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam- show much higher levels of HIV. In those areas that have seen only a modest spread so far, given the widespread occurrence of risk behaviour including commercial sex workers, and in some places, drug injecting (Report on the global HIV/AIDS, 1998).

The Cambodian AIDS Social Research Project reported that one-third of Cambodian's young women are sexually active but do not use condoms. About 87 percent of the young men surveyed said that they have sex with their girlfriends or prostitutes. Nearly half of the sexually active men said that they never use a condom (Reuters, 1996). One third of prostitutes in the capital city of Phnom Penh are under 18 years of age (UNICEF-The Progress of Nations). Many of these women or girls have reportedly been forced or sold into the prostitution by their husbands or parents (Business Times, 1996). An estimated 100 Cambodians contract HIV daily, and 180,000 people are already infected with the virus. Unprotected heterosexual sex is the primary mode of transmission in Cambodia, and officials note that HIV is spreading from high-risk groups to the general community. Forty one percent of HIV infection is among the commercial sex workers. Three out of five of Cambodian sex workers surveyed ask their customers to use a condom every time they have intercourse (AIDS Care, August 1999).

I would like to test my proposal by doing the data exercise among the commercial sex workers in Tuol Kork.

4.2 Objectives

To test and verify the methodology including questionnaires on knowledge, attitude, and skill among the commercial sex workers in Tuol Kork.

4.3 Survey methodologies:

The data exercise was set up to collect the primary data, use the quantitative method, and the purposive sampling. The target population was among the female commercial sex workers. Twenty female commercial sex workers were selected from brothels for interview. We trained two female staffs from the National Centre for HIV/AIDS Dermatology and STD. This training provided them with some strategies for interview. The interviews were completed in two days. The process of data collection was conducted between the interviewers and interviewees, face to face. There were 14 questions that were related with the general information, knowledge, attitudes and practices on HIV/AIDS. The trainees or interviewers, in fact, have experience in interviewing. Thus, one day training was enough. Interviewers would have a pattern system to control and monitor the data collection process.

4.4 Study Site:

The study site was the community of female commercial sex worker in Tuol Kork, located in the Northwest of Phnom Penh City, on the edge of the city.

4.5 Statistical Analysis:

The results were analysed using the EPI-INFO software. Frequencies of general information, knowledge, attitudes, and practises were related with HIV/AIDS.

4.6 Results:

4.6.1 General Information:

The average age of female sex workers interviewed was 21 years old. Fifty-two percent of them were single and 36 percent were divorcee. About 42 percent completed primary education while 36 percent received no education at all.

Table No. 4.1

Questionnaires (CSWs)	Percentage
Age group:	
17 or lower	13.5
18 -20	38.1
21 - 23	23.7
24 - 26	11.2
27 - 29	7.4
30 - 32	2.8

33 - 35	3.3
Marital status:	
- Married	6.5
- Divorced	35.8
- Widow	5.6
- Single	51.6
- Separate	0.5
- No answer	0.0
Income per month:	
- US\$ 6 or lower	5.6
- US\$ 6 - 12	8.4
- US\$ 12 - 22	5.1
- US\$ 22 - 28	0.5
- US\$ 28 - 34	7.0
- US\$ 34 - 40	4.3
- US\$ 40 - 46	0.9
- Higher than US\$ 46	68.2
Education:	
- No schooling	36.3
- Primary education	41.8
- Secondary education	17.2

- High school	4.7
- More than high school	0.0
- Other	0.0
- No answer	0.0

4.6.2 Knowledge on HIV/AIDS:

Eighty-nine percent of the female commercial sex workers interviewed knew about AIDS. But when asked about AIDS preventive methods, only 6 percent could identify at least two correct prevention methods while 23 percent could not name any correct method at all. The type of prevention method mentioned most was “the use of condom”. On other preventive methods subjects related to blood such as not sharing needles with others or not touching wounds or blood products of others, very few knew about them.

About 82 percent of the female commercial sex workers interviewed received AIDS information through conversation with others; this was followed by other sources of mass media such as television and radio respectively. Reading materials, for example newspapers, and posters were media sources that these women were not familiar with. This was probably due to their limited ability to read and write.

Table No.: 4.2

Questionnaires (CSWs)	Percentage
Have ever heard about AIDS:	
- Yes	88.8
- No	11.2
- No answer	0.0
Sources of information:	
- Television	52.9
- Radio	33.0
- Newspaper/magazine	3.1
- Poster	1.0
- Verbal conversation	81.7
- Others	0.0
- No answer	0.0
Method to avoid getting AIDS:	
- Do not share needles	6.5
- Avoid touching blood of the others	0.0
- Do not transfuse blood	0.0
- Do not use injectif drugs	0.6
- Do not share cutting equipment	1.2

Percent who know about condoms:	
- Know	95.8
- Don't know	4.2
- No answer	0.0

4.6.3 Sexual Behaviour and the Use of Condom:

The interviews showed that the female sex workers worked on an average of 6 days a week. There were approximately 15 customers per week or 2-3 customers per day. Ninety-six percent of them knew about condoms but only 63 percent were able to use them correctly. Sources of condom supply that were familiar to these women were brothels (51%), drugstores (39%) and general stores (16%) respectively. When asked about the use of condoms with customers, 96 percent confirmed having used them from their own supply (53%) while some informed the interviewer that customers brought condoms with them (28%) or purchased condoms from the brothel (19%). About 1/4 of the sex workers indicated infrequent condom use among customers.

Thirty-eight percent of these women had sexual relationship with men who were their regular sex partners. They confessed that they seldom used condoms with their regular sex partners.

Table No.: 4.3

Questionnaires (CSWs)	Percentage
Number of customers per week:	
1 - 5 customers	14.6
6 - 10 customers	22.5
11 - 15 customers	27.7
16 - 20 customers	8.0
More than 20 customers	27.2
Number of working days per week:	
1 - 2 days	1.9
3 - 4 days	14.9
5 - 6 days	25.6
7 days	57.6
Percent of CSWs who know about condoms:	
- Know	95.8
- Don't know	4.2
- No answer	0.0
Percent of CSWs who know how to use a condom:	
- Know	62.6
- Don't know	37.4

- No answer	0.0
Source of condoms:	
- Drug store	38.8
- Convenience store	15.0
- Brothel	51.0
- Health centre/clinic/hospital	7.8
- Others	4.9
Percent of CSWs who have sex with regular partner:	
- Yes	37.6
- No	62.4

4.7 Discussion and recommendation:

Ninety percent of the brothel owners promoted the use of condoms. Reviewing the sources of condom supply that were popular among the commercial sex workers and their partners showed that the commercial sex workers establishment or brothel was significantly mentioned by them. An interview with sex workers on the source of condom supply showed that the brothel has been the major source of condom supply. But knowledge about using condoms correctly was low (63 percent of the female sex workers interviewed). A campaign for using condoms in commercial sex establishments should be

one of the important project activities in addition to persuading brothel owners to encourage more condom use.

4.8 Limitations:

It was too hard to contact some brothels for morning interviews because they were still closed. All commercial sex workers worked so long at night, they slept late in the morning. They did not provide alternative opportunities for interviews. It was hard to complete the whole questionnaires for each commercial sex worker. They were busy contacting their clients. They concentrated less on the questionnaires even though the interviewers tried all their communication skills.

4.9 Conclusion:

All the commercial sex workers have low knowledge of HIV/AIDS prevention. They should improve their knowledge, attitudes and practises in order to have safer sex. Otherwise the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among commercial sex workers will remain high forever.

In addition, condom distribution should be free for commercial sex workers (the National Centre for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology, Venerology and STD will provide condoms to my project). Most of the condoms were bought from the owner or outside. If the

condoms are free and there are more for them, probably, the commercial sex workers will use them. Free condom distribution and skills in using condoms are needed for the commercial sex workers.

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