

## HIV/AIDS SURVEILLANCE DATA: FEMALE SEX WORKERS (FSW)

### What Does HIV Surveillance Data Tell Us About Knowledge, Attitudes & Practices (KAP) and Exposure to Communication

#### Background

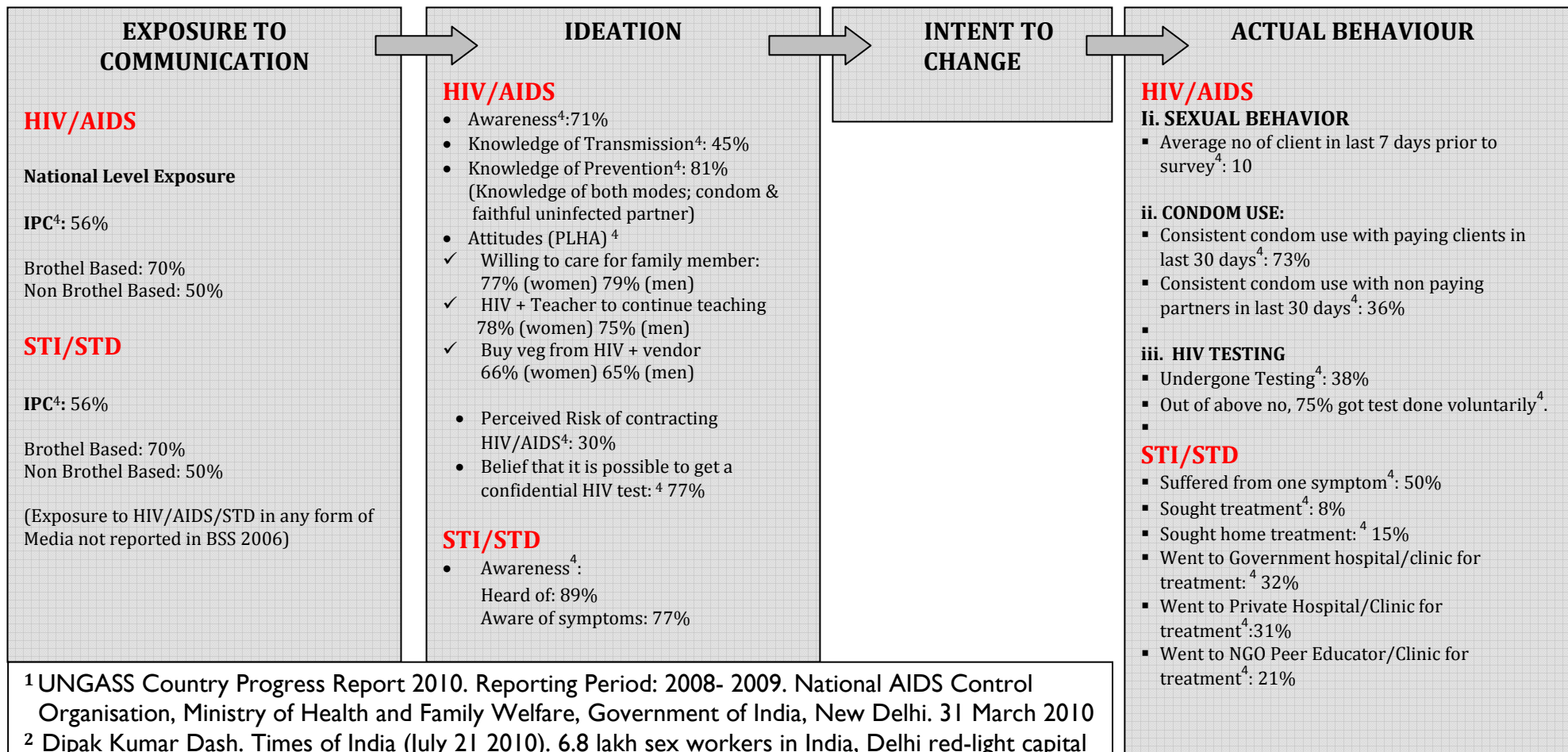
The UNGASS-NACO India Progress Report<sup>1</sup>, 2010 estimates that there are 1.26 million female sex workers in India, and the capital city Delhi leads the list of registered FSW (37,900) followed by the city of Mumbai<sup>2</sup>.

National AIDS Control Organization's (NACO) 2008-2009 report<sup>3</sup> showed that female sex worker sites in the three large cities Mumbai, Pune and Thane had an HIV prevalence of more than 30% and that while there had been a decline in the southern states, this was contrasted by an increase in the north east. The widespread prevalence only further increases the HIV burden among FSWs making them more marginalized than others.

#### Key Findings:

- 71% of the FSWs (brothel based 77%, non-brothel based 69%) reported that they had heard of HIV as well as AIDS. <sup>4</sup>
- Even though 89% of FSWs have ever heard of STD, 77% are aware of symptoms of STD in women. This figure has declined since 2001 when almost 88% of FSWs were aware of the symptoms of STD in women. <sup>4</sup>
- 38% of respondents on the national level have been reported to have “comprehensive correct knowledge” about HIV transmission and prevention. <sup>4</sup>
- 30 % of FSWs reported high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. This figure has gone up significantly since 2001(17%).<sup>4</sup>
- Consistent condom usage (in the last 30 days) with paying clients has been reported as 73%. Of these, 64% suggested the use of condom themselves while having sex with a paying client, and 21% reported that the client had suggested the use of condom. <sup>4</sup>
- Out of the 38% of FSWs who have undergone HIV testing, over three-fourths had gone for the test voluntarily. <sup>4</sup>
- About half of the FSWs had suffered from any one symptom of STD during last 12 months prior to the survey. The corresponding percentage was relatively lower in 2001(46%).<sup>4</sup>

Moving from Communication to Behavior Change



<sup>1</sup> UNGASS Country Progress Report 2010. Reporting Period: 2008- 2009. National AIDS Control Organisation, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi. 31 March 2010  
<sup>2</sup> Dipak Kumar Dash. Times of India (July 21 2010). 6.8 lakh sex workers in India, Delhi red-light capital  
<sup>3</sup> NACO (2008) 'Annual Report NACO 2008-09  
<sup>4</sup> NACO, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Government of India (2007) National Behavioral Surveillance Survey 2006