


Publication

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￼ [2]; **Background**

In Ethiopia, over 60% of all people who are eligible for antiretroviral therapy (ART) receive it. However, coverage is only 12% among children under 15 years of age. Due to scarcity of data and limited awareness of possible HIV infection, especially in older children, the AIDS epidemic among Ethiopian children appears neglected in national programs.

Methods

We analyzed national HIV data for Ethiopia, using the Spectrum/Estimation and Projection Package (EPP) and primary data on children living in households with at least one HIV-infected adult in the Amhara and Tigray regions of Ethiopia. Descriptive analysis of the age and sex distribution of HIV-infected orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in Ethiopia was performed.

Findings

Our Spectrum/EPP analysis estimated the population of HIV-infected children under 15 years old to be 160,000 in 2013. The majority of children (81.6%) were aged 5 to 14 years. The estimated number of orphans due to AIDS was 800,000. The empirical data from almost 10,000 OVC under 18 years showed that 11.9% were HIV-infected, the majority of whom were between 5 and 10 years old with no significant difference between males and females.

Interpretation

There is a large population of children living with HIV in Ethiopia, the magnitude of which was not previously recognized. The majority were vertically infected and never identified nor linked into treatment. OVC represent a reachable group that could account for a substantial proportion of HIV-infected older children. We recommend that HIV programs urgently synergize with social protection sectors and provide these children with HIV testing and related services

Source URL: <http://www.msh.org/resources/%EF%BF%BCthe-missed-hiv-infected-children-of-ethiopia>

Links

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