



# Risk behaviours and risk perception among women at high risk for HIV in Tanzania and Uganda

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- MRC/UVRI – Kampala  
Uganda
- MITU – Mwanza  
Tanzania
- Develop cohorts for  
future microbicide trials
- Build capacity

## Objectives

- Baseline data on risk behaviour and risk perception
- Prevalence of intra-vaginal practices (IVP)

### Mwanza, Tanzania

- 979 HIV –ve women enrolled
- Recruited from 3 mining & road side towns in NW Tanzania
  - Working in guesthouses, bars or local food venders

### Kampala, Uganda

- 443 HIV –ve women enrolled
- Recruited from red-light-areas in Kampala
  - Self-acknowledging sex workers and women working in entertainment facilities

# Methods

Standardized questionnaires, asking about:

- Risk behaviour in the past three months
  - Condom use: by type of partner
  - Vaginal practices: e.g. cleansing before and after sex, and insertion practices
  
- Risk perception
  - “Do you think your chances of getting HIV/AIDS are high, moderate, low or no risk at all?”

## Consistent condom use in the past three months

Type of partner	Uganda	Tanzania
Marital/cohabiting*	4/35 (11.4%)	342/879 (38.9%)
Paying clients	259/415 (62.4%)	Not collected
Others	70/123 (56.9%)	289/514 (56.2%)

\*In the Tanzania CRF, questions ask only about spouse or regular partner

## Reasons for not using condoms consistently, Uganda

	<b>Married</b> (n=31)	<b>Paying clients</b> (n=156)	<b>Others</b> (n=53)
Not available	0	5 (3.2%)	5 (9.4%)
I don't like them	1 (3.2%)	2 (1.3%)	1 (1.9%)
Trying for a child	0	7 (4.5%)	4 (7.5%)
Partner dislikes them	17 (54.8%)	87 (55.8%)	28 (52.8%)
Failure to negotiate	2 (6.5%)	17 (10.9%)	4 (7.5%)
Trust	11 (35.5%)	28 (17.9%)	9 (17.0%)
Others	0	10 (6.4%)	2 (3.8%)

## Reasons for not using condoms consistently, Tanzania

	Married (n=537)	Other (n=225)
Not available	2 (0.4%)	1 (0.5%)
I don't like them	17 (3.2%)	8 (3.7%)
Trying for a child	57 (10.8%)	20 (9.2%)
Partner dislikes them	161 (30.6%)	60 (27.5%)
Failure to negotiate	4 (0.8%)	4 (1.8%)
Trust	203 (38.5%)	78 (35.8%)
Others	49 (9.3%)	27 (12.0%)
No reason given	44 (8.2%)	27 (12.0%)

## Risk Perception

Risk perception	Uganda (n=443)	Tanzania (n=968)
Low risk	162 (36.6%)	472 (48.8%)
High Risk	274 (61.8%)	188 (19.4%)
Don't know	7 (1.6%)	308 (31.8%)

Note: In the Uganda cohort, consistent condom use was 71.0% in the low risk perception group, and 51.0% in the high risk perception group.

# Intra vaginal practices

- A diverse set of practices in which women use a variety of methods and substances to dry, tighten, wet or wash inside their vagina
  - Cleansing
  - Insertion
- Women may engage in vaginal practices to maintain health or hygiene, but a recent systematic review shows that such practices may put women at increased risk of HIV or other infections

## Vaginal cleansing in the last 3 months

	Uganda (n=443)	Tanzania (n=973)
<b>Cleansing</b>	<b>415 (93.7%)</b>	<b>887 (91.2%)</b>
Substance		
Water only	381 (92.0%)	354 (39.7%)
Soap/soap and water	234 (56.5%)	662 (74.4%)
Method		
Fingers	413 (99.8%)	849 (95.4%)
Cloth/cotton/paper/other	113 (27.3%)	108 (12.1%)

## Vaginal cleansing in the last 3 months

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	<b>Uganda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
Before sex	234 (56.5%)	688 (77.0%)
After sex	371 (89.6%)	787 (88.1%)

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## Vaginal insertion in the last 3 months

	Uganda (n=443)	Tanzania (n=973)
Traditional Medicine	104 (23.5%)	55 (5.7%)
Detergent	47 (10.6%)	26 (2.7%)
Soda	82 (18.5%)	Not collected
Lemon juice	Not collected	15 (1.5%)
Petroleum-based gels	71 (16.0%)	40 (4.1%)
Saliva	72 (16.3%)	88 (9.0%)
Other	97 (21.9%)	24 (2.5%)

# Conclusions

- There is low condom use and low perception of risk of HIV in this population
  - There is need to strengthen health education
  
- Vaginal cleansing practices are common in both cohorts. Vaginal insertion practices are more common in Uganda than in Tanzania
  - Analysis of association between IVP and HIV risk is planned
  - Implications for microbicide studies

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