

# HIV/AIDS in Swaziland

Swaziland has the highest HIV prevalence in the world.<sup>1,2,3</sup> Over a quarter of people aged between 15 and 49 were living with HIV/AIDS in 2007.<sup>4</sup>

UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibe estimated in 2010 that 3% of Swaziland's population will be infected with HIV annually. By 2012 this would represent 18,000 new infections each year.<sup>5</sup>



Food insecurity is associated with inconsistent condom use with a “non-primary” partner: women reporting food insufficiency in the previous 12 months had 80% increased odds of selling sex for money or resources, 70% increased odds of engaging in unprotected sex and reporting lack of sexual control and 50% increased odds of intergenerational sex.<sup>6</sup>

“The huge number of people dying from AIDS in Swaziland exacerbates existing poverty, which in turn leaves individuals vulnerable to the adverse affects of HIV. When those of productive age die from AIDS or are too sick to work, there is less income and therefore less food for families”

[www.avert.org](http://www.avert.org)<sup>8</sup>

Over half of the people newly infected through heterosexual transmission in Swaziland are infected within marriage or cohabitation.<sup>11</sup>

## Life Expectancy

The impact of Swaziland's HIV/AIDS epidemic has been so severe that life expectancy is one of the lowest in the world, and by some estimates the very lowest.

Recent estimates are 37 years (World Health Organization, 2004<sup>7</sup>), 37.5 years (United Nations Development Programme, 2006<sup>9</sup>) and 49 years (CIA World Factbook, 2011<sup>2</sup>).

47% of all deaths of children under 5 years of age are caused by HIV/AIDS (2000-2003). Among people of all ages, the percentage rises to 64% (2002).<sup>7</sup>

## Orphans

The catastrophic effect of HIV and AIDS on Swaziland's mortality rates has created a society in which approximately 38% of the population are under 14.<sup>2</sup>

An estimated 15% of the total population are orphans and vulnerable children,<sup>1</sup> many of whom live in child-headed households.

## Gender

Among 15-49 year olds the highest prevalence is among women, among whom it is 31% as opposed to 20% for men.<sup>1</sup>

Particularly high is the prevalence rate among pregnant women attending ante-natal clinics, which rose from 38.6% in 2002 to 42.6% in 2004.<sup>9</sup>

“The huge scale of AIDS-related illness and deaths is weakening the government's capacity to deliver healthcare and other services, with serious consequences for food security, economic growth and human development”

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In Swaziland a 2007 study showed that 33% of females 13-24 years old reported experiencing some form of sexual violence before reaching 18 years of age.<sup>10</sup>

“Currently, 262,000 people, representing a quarter of the population, rely on food aid due to poverty, drought and the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic”

**United Nations, 2006<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland (2010, March) 'Monitoring the declaration of commitment on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) Swaziland country report'.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/wz.html>. Last updated 14.6. 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Global Report: UNAIDS Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic 2010, p.28.

<sup>4</sup> 26.1%. The Henry J Kaiser Family Foundation HIV/AIDS Policy Fact Sheet October 2008 ([www.kff.org](http://www.kff.org)).

<sup>5</sup> UNAIDS (2010, 15th February) Taking stock of the AIDS response in Swaziland (cited from <http://www.avert.org/aids-swaziland.htm>)

<sup>6</sup> Weiser SD et al. Food insufficiency is associated with high risk sexual behaviour among women in Botswana and Swaziland. *PLoS Medicine*, 2007;1576-1577.

<sup>7</sup> World Health Organization Mortality Country Fact Sheet 2006. [www.who.int/whosis/mort/profiles/mort\\_afro\\_swz\\_swaziland.pdf](http://www.who.int/whosis/mort/profiles/mort_afro_swz_swaziland.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.avert.org/aids-swaziland.htm>

<sup>9</sup> UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) 2006-2010 Between The Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland and United Nations Development Programme (2006), p.4.

<sup>10</sup> Violence against children in Swaziland: Findings from a national survey on violence against children in Swaziland. New York, UNICEF, Atlanta, United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007.

<sup>11</sup> Mngadi S et al. Swaziland: HIV prevention response and modes of transmission analysis. Mbabane, National Emergency Response Council on HIV/AIDS, 2009, p.30.