

The results were presented during the National HIV/AIDS Seminar in Thalat in November 2001 and also at a consensus meeting in Vientiane in February 2002. The four-day meeting in February brought together key persons in the surveillance activities and representatives of all partners of the NCCA.

There was also a low prevalence of syphilis in the study population. The highest rate of treponemal antibodies detected was 1.3% among the LDTDs, while there was only one case among SWs (0.2%) and no treponemal antibodies detected among FFWs. Chlamydial infection is the most prevalent STI. Chlamydia and gonorrhoeae were notably high among the SWs (32% and 14% respectively) and lower rates among LDTD (9.3% and 1.3% respectively). About 20% of the service women visited public health facilities for STI care.

BSS results showed that approximately one third of truck drivers and one quarter of police reported paying for sex in the past year. The proportion of condom use with a client during last sex and consistent condom use with clients in the past 12 months were high among SWs (91.4% and 72.7% respectively). Consistent condom use with commercial partners in the past 12 months was also reported at high rates, from 65.2% among male seasonal migrant workers to

74.2% among LDTD. No respondent reported ever having injected a non-medically prescribed drug and few had ever used marijuana or amphetamines. More than half of the service women drank alcohol everyday. In the other subpopulations, daily alcohol drinking was reported by less than 4.0%.

Findings on behaviours in the HSS-SPPS showed that the mean number of commercial partners in the past 12 months per service women was 20 (range: 3.1 in Luang Prabang to 45.4 in Savanakheth) and per LDTD it was three. Government workers were the most common clients of service women. Consistent use of condom with commercial partners in the past 12 months was reported at 60% among service women and 44.3% among LDTD. Low level of sexual activity was noted among FFWs (only 14% ever had sex).

The development of second-generation surveillance since 2000 has provided baseline data on HIV, other STI and relevant risk behaviours for monitoring their trends in future. This information can assist Lao PDR in targeting and improving their national program on STI/HIV/AIDS. Although the prevalence of HIV is low, based on these data, its presence and the high STI prevalence indicate the potential for an increasing HIV epidemic in Lao PDR and a need to strengthen STI control.

UPDATE ON HIV/AIDS CASE REPORTING IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

Thirty-seven countries and areas of the Western Pacific Region have submitted reports on HIV/AIDS cases annually to WHO. While sentinel surveillance can help measure HIV prevalence among target populations and monitor its trends over time, HIV/AIDS case reporting, although incomplete, provides information about some aspects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It is particularly helpful in areas where the epidemic is still at the early stage.

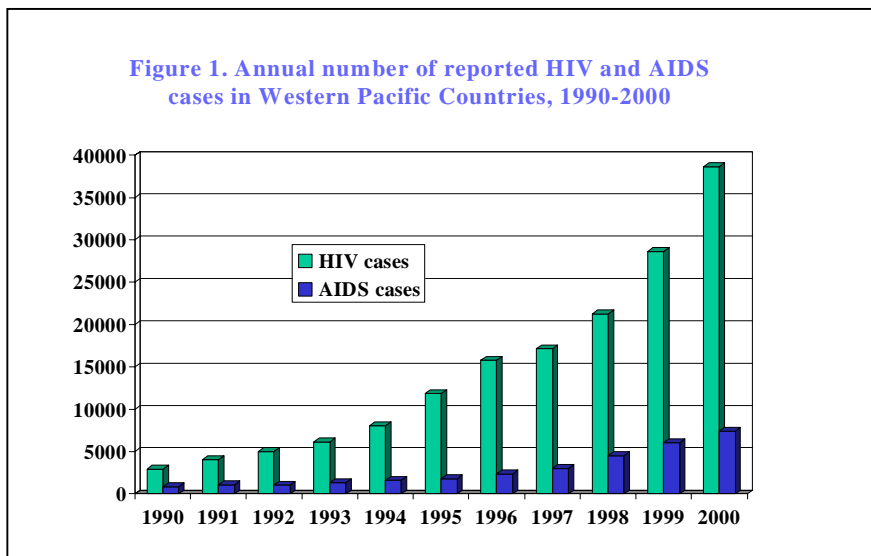
As of October 2001, a cumulative total of 186 237 HIV cases and 36 907 AIDS cases and 18 045 deaths due to

AIDS in the Western Pacific Region had been reported. In the mean time the total number of HIV infections among the 15-49 year-old population of Western Pacific by the end of 2001 was estimated by UNAIDS to be about 1.2 million. Underreporting is likely.

The annual reported HIV/AIDS cases showed a dramatically increasing trend in the reported numbers in the Region (Figure 1).

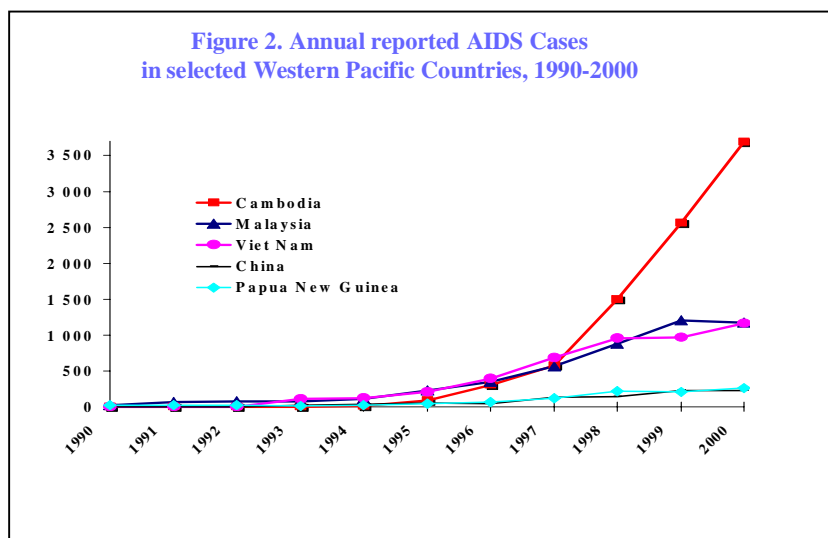
References:

1. MOH/NCCA et al. *Behavioural Surveillance Survey- LAO PDR 2000-2001*
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Abstract ThPe7540 XIV International AIDS Conference, Barcelona, July 7-12



Cambodia, Viet Nam and China are reporting a rapid increase in reported HIV/AIDS cases is noted in. In Cambodia, although HIV sentinel surveillance system showed a decrease in HIV prevalence in recent years due to efforts in prevention measures, this country

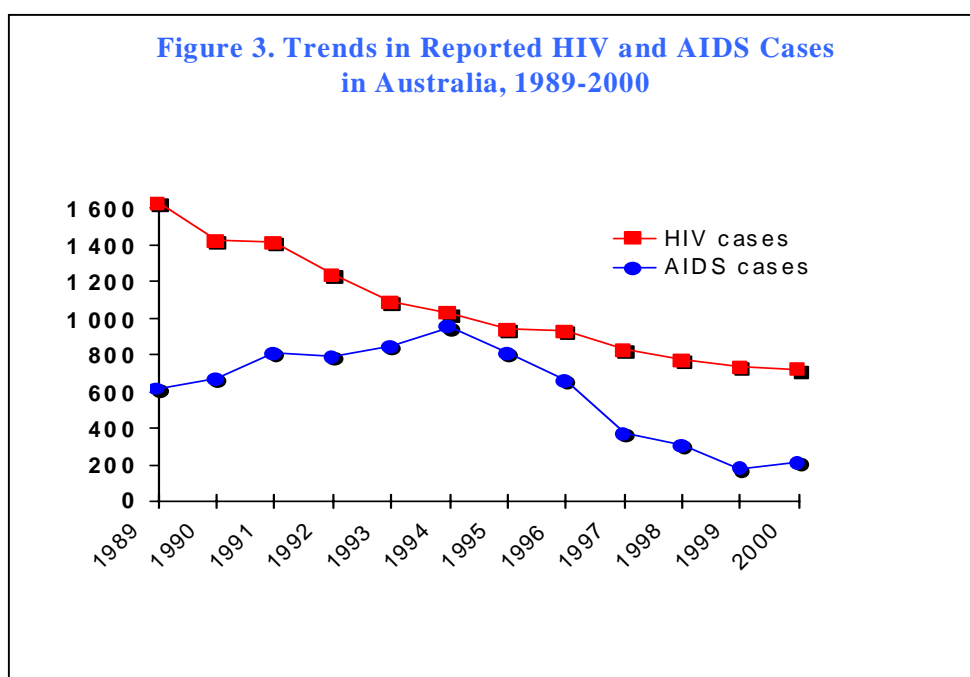
registers the greatest increase in AIDS cases among the Region from 1999 to 2000 (at 44%). This status is due to a high cumulative number of HIV infections that continue to develop into AIDS. Reported AIDS cases are raising sharply in Viet Nam and Malaysia too (Figure 2).



Twenty countries of the Pacific Islands (excluding Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea) report a cumulative total of 797 HIV cases and 302 AIDS cases as of September 2001. New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Guam account for 76% of reported HIV infections in this sub-Region. No cases of HIV infection and AIDS have been reported in Cook Island, Niue, Tokelau and Vanuatu. A case of HIV/AIDS was first reported in American Samoa in 2000. In these countries with small populations, the presence of HIV/AIDS cases is a sign for the need for advocacy for planning of prevention programs, particularly in Fiji and

Kiribati. Both are recording an increasing number of reported HIV infections (Table 1).

There has been a steady decline of reported HIV and AIDS cases in Australia and New Zealand in the past years (Figure 3). The introduction of highly active anti-retroviral therapy (HAART) and the stabilized level of transmission among men who have sex with men (MSM) are factors in this declining trend. (*STI HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, Nov 2000*). In Brunei Darussalam, there was also a recent decrease in numbers of reported HIV/AIDS cases.



An increasing proportion of the 15-24 year-old population infected in the cumulative number of reported HIV cases was observed in recent years (from 4.5 % in 1997 to 8.3% in 1999, 13.3% in 2000 and 18.3% in the first 9 months of 2001).