This research explored the occurrence of gender-based violence among men who have sex with men, female sex workers and people who inject drugs in Nigeria.

BACKGROUND

Men who have sex with men (MSM), female sex workers (FSW) and people who inject drugs (PWID) are categorized as key populations (KPs) and classified as highly impacted by the HIV epidemic in Nigeria. HIV prevalence in 2014 was measured at 22.9%, 19.4% and 3.4% for MSM, FSW and PWID respectively. Violence against KPs, coupled with a lack of an enabling environment to seek services, can be a potential contributor to poor uptake of HIV and other STI services. In a survey on violence against sex workers in Nigeria, Dawole and Dagunduro (2014) found the prevalence of violence in six months preceding the survey to be 52.5% with sexual violence the most common type (41.9%) of violence experienced.

Data from TIERS Nigeria between December 2015 and November 2016 showed that LGBT persons are victims of violence, most notably arbitrary arrest, invasion of privacy, blackmail and extortion and battery and assault.

METHODS

POPULATION

Between October 2016 and June 2017, a total of 78,693 KPs (FSW: 54,418, MSM: 18,654, PWID: 5,621) were reached across seven Nigerian states with HIV prevention services.

PROCEDURES/INTERVENTION

Due to the high levels of violence, HAI/IMHIPP integrates GBV prevention and mitigation activities as part of comprehensive HIV services. This is essential to mitigating the impact of HIV on KPs. All services are provided at “One-Stop Shop” (OSS) where KPs can access all relevant health services. At every OSS in every state, carefully trained gender focal persons (GFPs) and nurse case managers provide KPs safe spaces to report violence and receive post-violence care.

DATA

Data on KPs who accessed GBV care services such as medical, legal and mental health services including post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for rape victims, STI and HIV screening and testing, and psychosocial counselling and legal support such as access to a network of KP-friendly pro bono lawyers.

A mixed method approach (qualitative and quantitative) is used to record program data collated by the Gender Focal Persons and nurses. Data collection methods include interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions.

The study conducted an analysis of the program data from the period of October 2016 to June 2017.

RESULTS

2,404 KPs (FSW: 1,493; MSM: 588; PWID: 323) received post care services between October 2016 and June 2017. The proportions of the total # of KPs who were screened for GBV and who needed and received services are shown in table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KP Type</th>
<th>All KPs</th>
<th>FSW</th>
<th>MSM</th>
<th>PWID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # screened for GBV</td>
<td>78,693</td>
<td>54,418</td>
<td>18,654</td>
<td>5,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # who needed and received GBV Services</td>
<td>2404</td>
<td>1493</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type % # screened and receiving services</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>3.15%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSIONS

Findings highlight that GBV among KP is a growing concern. A notable challenge is the significant number of GBV cases that remain unreported due to fear of reprisal and prosecution. Greater emphasis must be placed on GBV prevention and treatment services as a holistic approach to HIV care and ensuring a safe environment for KPs to access healthcare services.

References

1Heartland Alliance International, Nigeria

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Quotes from victims who received services:

“Our landlords and the Chief abandoned us. Our landlords were only concerned with their rent. Any time it happens, we will call on you.”

“I appreciate all you did for us. We thought they would take us to prison, but you intervened.”

Figure 1: Numbers of KPs reporting GBV cases disaggregated by KP Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violence Reported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>physical and emotional violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trauma informed mental health care and psychosocial support (TMHPPSS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PEP</td>
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<td>sexual assault not rape</td>
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The Initiative for Equal Rights

1Heartland Alliance International, Nigeria

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