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Truckers visit FSWs in India too:
Among the truckers who ever had sex with FSWs, altogether 5.3% percent reported that they ever had sexual contact with FSWs in India too. The mean number of FSWs visited in India was about two. Significantly higher percent of the truckers who ever had sex with FSWs in India (5.3%) had such encounters in the last 12 months preceding the survey in 2009. Data indicate that percentage of truckers visiting FSWs in India is increasing over time (26.7% in 2003 and 31.6% in 2006). Only one percent truckers reported having sex with male partners in the last year.

Condom use with FSWs is increasing over time:
A large majority (93.4%) of the study population reported that they had used condom in the last sex with FSWs. The figure for the same was 84.7% in 2003 and 89.8% in 2006. Altogether about 81 per cent of the truckers had used condom consistently in the last year while having sex with FSWs. The percentage of truckers who had consistently used condom with FSWs was 83 per cent in 2006 and 71 per cent in 2003 (Fig. 3). In 2009, percentage of truckers reporting consistent condom use with other female friends, girl friends and wives was 74 percent, 46 percent and four percent respectively. About 46.7 percent truckers have reported that they carry condoms regularly.

Fig. 3: % of truckers reporting condom use with FSWs

HIV and STI prevalence is low among truckers:
Among the 400 truckers who participated in the study, no one was found to be HIV positive in 2009. HIV prevalence was 1.5 percent in 1999, 1.8 percent in 2003 and one percent in 2006. Altogether 0.3 percent of the truckers were found to be currently infected with syphilis. In the previous rounds of IBBS, 2.7 percent truckers in 2003 and 1.8 percent in 2006 were infected with current syphilis. Both HIV and Syphilis among truckers shows a declining trend (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5: HIV and Syphilis prevalence among Truckers

Program Implications
• The truckers reported that they were away from home for an average of 19.5 days per month. Approximately 47 percent of the married truckers spent around 15-21 days per month away from their homes. Programs should be targeted to such truckers to encourage them for practicing safe sex while they are away from home.
• Almost 63 percent of the truckers had maintained sexual contact with FSWs. Behavioral communication programs should be targeted to such truckers in a specific way through one-on-one communication activities so that they can either change the behavior of visiting FSWs or practice safe sex with them.
• Among the truckers who visit India, the behavior of visiting FSWs in India is increasing over time. This behavior has greater risk of HIV and STI. Therefore, programs should have specific counseling activity to such truckers to reduce their high risk behaviors.
• Altogether 81.2 percent of the truckers had used condoms consistently with FSWs and around 74.1 percent of them with other female friends in the past year. But use of condoms was reported to be low with wives and girl friends. As more housewives are being infected through their husbands, HIV programs targeted to truckers also should have special activities to aware and motivate them for consistent and correct condom use with their wives too, if they have practiced unsafe sex outside home.

Use of alcohol and drugs among Truckers:
About 26.7 percentage truckers reported that they had consumed alcohol on a daily basis in the past month. About 25 percent consume 2 to 3 times in a week. Moreover, about six percent truckers have reported the use of other drugs as well.

Truckers report very high STI treatment seeking behavior:
Only 2.8 percent of the truckers reported at least one STI symptom experienced in the past year. All the truckers with such symptoms had got treatment for problems experienced. However only 42.9 percent of truckers who went for treatment had received counseling on HIV and STI.