

CHAPTER 10

KNOWLEDGE OF AIDS

The VNDHS-II included a series of questions on Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in order to assess the knowledge and attitudes of respondents regarding prevention of infection with the AIDS virus. Respondents were first asked if they had ever heard of AIDS and, if so, from what source. They were then asked whether they thought that it was possible to prevent AIDS and, if so, how.

10.1 AIDS Knowledge

Table 10.1 shows the percentage of women reporting knowledge of AIDS and the source of their information. In the VNDHS-II, 91 percent of ever-married women said they had heard of AIDS. Urban women were more likely to have heard of AIDS than rural women (97 versus 89 percent).

The level of knowledge of AIDS is quite high in all regions. However, women in the Red River Delta, North Central, and Southeast regions are more likely to know of AIDS than women in other regions, while women in Central Highlands are least likely to have heard of AIDS (78 percent).

The largest differentials in knowledge of AIDS are by level of education. While only 54 percent of women with no education reported knowing of AIDS, virtually all women (99 percent) with completed higher secondary education had heard of AIDS.

10.2 Source of Information

In Vietnam, dissemination of AIDS information is the responsibility of the National AIDS Control Program of the National Committee for AIDS Prevention. The messages channeled to the public include information about modes of transmission and prevention strategies. This information is received by the Vietnamese people through various sources. Table 10.1 shows the responses obtained when respondents who had heard of AIDS were asked to indicate the source of their information. Respondents were asked to report all sources from which they had heard of AIDS.

Table 10.1 indicates that AIDS information is quite widely disseminated. The most frequently cited source of information was television, with 76 percent of women citing it as a source. More urban women than rural women had obtained AIDS information from television (92 versus 72 percent, respectively).

Two-thirds of ever-married women (68 percent) reported hearing about AIDS on the radio. Women in the Red River Delta were most likely to have received AIDS information from radio (79 percent), while the figure for the Central Highlands is much lower (35 percent).

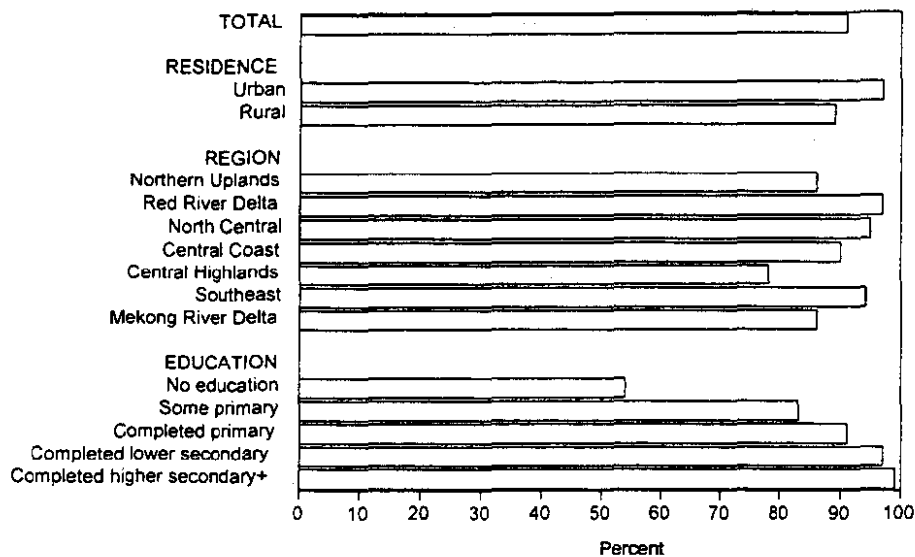
Twenty-two percent of women received information on AIDS from newspapers. Urban women were three times more likely to have received information from newspapers than rural women (50 versus 16 percent, respectively).

Table 10.1 Knowledge of AIDS

Percentage of ever-married women by knowledge of AIDS and source of knowledge, according to background characteristics, Vietnam 1997

Background characteristic	Knows of AIDS	Source of knowledge										Number of women	
		Radio	TV	News-paper	Pam-plet	Heath worker	Church/ Temple	School	Community meeting	Friend/ Relative	Work place		Other source
Age													
15-19	78.6	54.9	59.6	13.7	2.7	1.9	0.0	0.0	6.8	10.2	1.8	0.0	129
20-24	89.4	67.0	71.9	17.5	4.5	2.8	0.0	0.6	4.3	12.6	0.6	0.7	732
25-29	91.3	66.6	74.4	19.3	4.4	2.8	0.1	1.0	5.3	16.9	2.6	0.2	1,016
30-39	92.6	69.1	78.0	24.5	5.9	3.0	0.1	1.2	7.6	13.9	1.7	0.4	2,331
40-49	89.3	69.9	77.6	24.2	6.0	3.0	0.1	2.0	7.8	11.1	2.0	0.1	1,457
Current marital status													
Currently married	91.2	68.9	76.4	22.6	5.5	3.0	0.1	1.3	6.8	13.5	1.7	0.3	5,340
Formerly married	83.0	58.7	70.6	18.5	3.8	1.6	0.0	1.6	6.0	12.6	3.3	0.6	324
Residence													
Urban	97.2	76.5	91.9	50.0	12.4	4.5	0.4	2.7	6.5	12.9	4.3	0.5	1,069
Rural	89.3	66.4	72.4	15.9	3.8	2.6	0.0	0.9	6.9	13.6	1.2	0.3	4,595
Project province													
No	91.3	68.2	75.9	23.0	6.0	2.9	0.1	1.2	7.0	14.1	1.8	0.2	3,976
Yes	89.5	68.4	76.3	20.6	4.1	2.9	0.0	1.4	6.3	12.0	1.7	0.5	1,688
Region													
Northern Uplands	86.1	68.5	64.7	18.7	4.6	4.0	0.0	1.7	13.0	14.9	1.5	0.3	1,168
Red River Delta	97.2	79.3	93.0	29.0	10.0	1.4	0.0	1.4	7.8	5.5	1.3	0.5	1,247
North Central	95.4	72.6	83.2	22.0	1.3	3.4	0.0	1.3	5.8	21.7	3.9	0.1	681
Central Coast	90.2	61.5	77.6	22.4	3.7	2.4	0.0	0.9	5.1	7.5	0.1	0.1	599
Central Highlands	78.1	35.0	61.1	16.1	2.7	3.5	0.0	3.1	4.8	11.2	0.7	0.8	182
Southeast	94.1	71.4	83.3	33.5	6.0	5.4	0.7	1.2	2.8	13.8	4.1	0.6	691
Mekong River Delta	85.9	60.1	61.5	12.7	4.6	1.8	0.1	0.7	3.5	19.2	0.9	0.0	1,097
Education													
No education	53.9	28.4	29.3	1.1	1.8	2.3	0.0	0.2	3.8	13.5	0.0	0.0	271
Some primary	82.6	53.7	51.9	5.3	2.2	1.8	0.1	0.1	6.0	16.7	0.8	0.3	1,078
Completed primary	91.1	67.8	74.8	15.0	3.9	3.6	0.0	0.1	4.4	13.7	1.4	0.3	1,665
Completed lower secondary	96.9	76.0	89.4	26.7	5.9	2.4	0.0	0.7	8.5	12.2	1.5	0.5	1,865
Completed higher secondary +	99.3	84.8	96.3	58.3	13.2	4.5	0.5	7.3	10.0	11.3	5.4	0.1	785
Total	90.8	68.3	76.1	22.3	5.4	2.9	0.1	1.3	6.8	13.5	1.8	0.3	5,664

Figure 10.1
Percentage of Ever-married Women Who Know of AIDS
According to Background Characteristics, Vietnam 1997



10.3 AIDS Prevention

A question was also asked to determine what a person could do to avoid becoming infected with the human immunodeficiency virus. Table 10.2 shows the responses received when respondents were asked if they believed that AIDS can be prevented and, if so, how. Respondents were asked to report all methods or behaviors that would reduce their risk of contracting AIDS.

Only 4 percent of women think that there is no way to avoid AIDS. More than two-thirds (70 percent) say that staying with only one sexual partner can help prevent the spread of the disease, whereas about one in five respondents (21 percent) mentioned avoiding prostitutes as a way of prevention. Thirty-two percent of women cited condom use as a way to prevent AIDS. Also, a substantially larger proportion of urban than rural respondents mentioned condom use and avoidance of prostitutes as ways to avoid contracting AIDS. One in four (27 percent) respondents cited avoiding injections as a way of avoiding AIDS.

Table 10.2 AIDS prevention

Percent of ever-married women by knowledge of ways to avoid AIDS and the percentage of women with misinformation about AIDS prevention, according to background characteristics, Vietnam 1997

Background characteristic	Ways to avoid AIDS						Don't know any way	Percentage with misinformation ¹
	No way to avoid	Abstain from sex	Use condom	One sexual partner	Avoid prostitutes	Avoid injection		
Age								
15-19	4.1	1.5	29.4	67.8	11.6	17.0	14.7	1.9
20-24	5.2	4.2	29.5	68.8	16.1	22.3	17.0	2.4
25-29	2.5	3.3	34.4	68.4	18.6	25.6	14.4	2.7
30-39	4.2	3.2	32.8	72.2	21.9	27.5	13.0	3.2
40-49	3.1	3.1	29.0	68.2	24.0	29.7	15.2	4.6
Marital status								
Currently married	3.7	3.4	32.0	70.5	20.8	26.9	14.0	3.3
Formerly married	4.2	0.9	25.2	59.3	23.6	25.1	21.0	3.4
Residence								
Urban	1.9	4.6	40.3	75.2	32.5	37.2	7.6	3.4
Rural	4.2	2.9	29.5	68.6	18.0	24.2	16.1	3.3
Project province								
No	3.9	3.4	33.4	68.2	21.0	26.4	15.4	2.9
Yes	3.3	2.9	27.3	74.1	20.7	27.9	11.9	4.4
Region								
Northern Uplands	3.5	1.6	37.4	79.6	12.3	30.9	7.9	3.6
Red River Delta	1.2	1.4	35.3	85.3	20.3	32.7	4.2	8.0
North Central	0.3	6.8	36.9	72.3	14.1	20.9	8.1	1.2
Central Coast	7.1	8.0	34.6	55.1	21.5	20.0	20.4	1.3
Central Highlands	16.3	0.7	15.0	53.6	23.5	33.0	27.8	1.9
Southeast	6.4	2.8	31.7	62.7	30.3	20.5	19.3	0.2
Mekong River Delta	3.9	3.1	17.9	54.2	28.4	26.4	29.8	2.2
Education								
No education	11.3	5.7	12.6	35.8	12.9	8.9	47.7	1.2
Some primary	6.0	3.5	16.8	55.0	16.8	15.5	30.4	1.3
Completed primary	5.3	2.9	31.1	64.0	19.2	22.4	18.1	2.1
Completed lower secondary	1.8	2.6	34.3	78.6	21.5	30.2	5.7	4.3
Completed higher secondary+	0.9	4.9	47.2	84.9	29.1	44.0	2.6	6.2
Total	3.7	3.3	31.6	69.9	20.9	26.8	14.4	3.3

¹ Includes avoiding kissing and mosquito bites; seeking protection from a traditional healer.

10.4 AIDS-related Perceptions

The VNDHS-II also included the following questions: “Is it possible for a healthy-looking person to have the AIDS virus?” and “Do you think that persons with AIDS almost never die from the disease, sometimes die, or almost always die from the disease?” The results are presented in Table 10.3.

More than two-thirds (69 percent) of respondents believe it is possible for a healthy-looking person to be carrying the AIDS virus. Urban women were more likely to answer in the affirmative than rural women (79 and 66 percent, respectively). Responses to this question vary by region. Women in the Red River Delta were most likely to believe that a healthy-looking person can have AIDS (82 percent), while the percentage in the Mekong River Delta is much lower (43 percent).

Table 10.3 AIDS perceptions

Percent distribution of ever-married women who know of AIDS by responses to questions on perceptions of AIDS, according to background characteristics, Vietnam 1997

Background characteristic	Can a health-looking person have AIDS?			Total	Is AIDS a fatal disease?				Total	Number of women ¹
	Yes	No	Don't know		Almost never	Sometimes	Almost always	Don't know		
Age										
15-19	63.6	4.2	32.2	100.0	3.1	7.4	77.9	11.6	100.0	101
20-24	65.9	8.7	25.4	100.0	4.1	6.3	71.2	18.4	100.0	654
25-29	68.1	10.0	21.9	100.0	3.1	5.5	76.6	14.8	100.0	928
30-39	70.9	8.4	20.7	100.0	3.3	5.9	76.7	14.1	100.0	2,158
40-49	68.4	8.8	22.9	100.0	3.6	6.0	75.2	15.2	100.0	1,300
Marital status										
Currently married	69.5	8.7	21.7	100.0	3.5	5.9	76.1	14.5	100.0	4,872
Formerly married	58.7	8.9	32.4	100.0	2.1	6.8	67.4	23.7	100.0	269
Residence										
Urban	79.3	7.3	13.4	100.0	2.5	4.0	84.0	9.5	100.0	1,039
Rural	66.4	9.1	24.6	100.0	3.7	6.4	73.5	16.4	100.0	4,102
Project province										
No	68.6	7.5	23.8	100.0	3.8	5.4	73.7	17.1	100.0	3,632
Yes	69.8	11.6	18.6	100.0	2.6	7.1	80.2	10.1	100.0	1,510
Region										
Northern Uplands	73.6	11.8	14.7	100.0	1.6	6.0	85.2	7.3	100.0	1,005
Red River Delta	82.0	8.8	9.2	100.0	1.6	4.3	90.9	3.3	100.0	1,212
North Central	75.6	4.6	19.8	100.0	8.1	9.8	69.5	12.6	100.0	650
Central Coast	71.4	5.1	23.5	100.0	9.4	11.7	59.4	19.5	100.0	540
Central Highlands	63.9	9.4	26.7	100.0	1.4	9.6	62.6	26.3	100.0	142
Southeast	67.6	6.8	25.6	100.0	1.8	4.1	71.0	23.1	100.0	650
Mekong River Delta	43.1	11.5	45.4	100.0	2.7	2.7	64.6	30.0	100.0	942
Education										
No education	29.6	6.2	64.2	100.0	5.0	4.6	46.8	43.6	100.0	146
Some primary	45.2	9.1	45.8	100.0	3.7	5.8	59.9	30.6	100.0	891
Completed primary	64.0	11.1	24.9	100.0	4.5	6.4	69.8	19.3	100.0	1,517
Completed lower secondary	80.2	7.5	12.3	100.0	2.8	5.3	85.1	6.7	100.0	1,808
Completed higher secondary +	87.3	7.0	5.7	100.0	2.1	6.8	88.4	2.7	100.0	779
Total	69.0	8.7	22.3	100.0	3.4	5.9	75.6	15.0	100.0	5,142

¹ Number of women who have heard of AIDS

Highly educated women are more likely to think that a healthy-looking person can be carrying the AIDS virus. For example, 87 percent women with completed higher secondary answered in the affirmative to this question, compared with only 30 percent of women with no education.

Thirty-one percent of women replied "No" or "Don't know" to the question "Can a healthy-looking person have AIDS?" A larger proportion of rural than urban respondents gave those responses (34 and 21 percent, respectively). A very high percentage of women with no education or some primary schooling reported either "No" or "Don't know" (70 and 55 percent, respectively).

About three-quarters (76 percent) of women believe that AIDS is almost always a fatal disease. Only 3 percent of women think that AIDS almost never leads to death while 6 percent believe that AIDS sometimes results in death.

Educated women are more likely than uneducated women to think that AIDS is almost always fatal. For example, 88 percent of women with completed higher secondary reported that AIDS is almost always fatal compared with 47 percent of women with no education.

10.5 Knowledge of Where to Obtain Condoms

Table 10.4 shows the percentage of women with knowledge of condoms and, among these, the percentage who know of a source for obtaining them. Almost all women know about condoms (95 percent). There are only small differences in this percentage by background characteristics.

Background characteristic	Knows about condoms	Knowledge of a source for condoms					Number of women ¹
		Public source	Private medical	Pharmacy	Other source	Don't know a source	
Age							
15-19	91.7	45.4	0.0	10.2	3.9	40.5	101
20-24	92.3	53.4	0.4	12.3	0.3	33.6	654
25-29	94.9	58.0	0.3	12.5	0.0	29.1	928
30-39	96.0	61.8	0.7	13.2	0.2	24.1	2,158
40-49	94.2	54.6	0.2	11.7	0.1	33.4	1,300
Marital status							
Currently married	95.1	59.2	0.5	12.7	0.3	27.4	4,872
Formerly married	89.3	34.8	0.0	9.4	0.0	55.8	269
Residence							
Urban	97.0	46.7	1.0	29.4	0.3	22.6	1,039
Rural	94.3	60.7	0.3	8.2	0.2	30.5	4,102
Project province							
No	94.2	55.8	0.3	12.5	0.3	31.1	3,632
Yes	96.2	63.0	0.8	12.5	0.2	23.5	1,510
Region							
Northern Uplands	98.0	77.8	0.1	5.6	0.4	16.0	1,005
Red River Delta	99.3	70.9	0.8	15.4	0.5	12.4	1,221
North Central	98.9	72.1	0.1	5.0	0.2	22.7	650
Central Coast	93.0	44.8	0.4	6.9	0.0	47.9	540
Central Highlands	85.3	33.9	0.0	9.3	0.0	56.7	142
Southeast	88.8	34.3	0.4	23.3	0.1	41.8	650
Mekong River Delta	89.4	37.5	0.8	17.6	0.0	44.0	942
Education							
No education	84.7	35.9	0.0	6.0	0.0	58.1	146
Some primary	89.5	46.2	0.4	8.6	0.0	44.8	891
Completed primary	92.5	54.7	0.4	11.2	0.3	33.4	1,517
Completed lower secondary	98.4	65.6	0.5	12.6	0.3	21.0	1,808
Completed higher secondary +	98.9	64.0	0.7	20.6	0.3	14.4	779
Total	94.8	57.9	0.5	12.5	0.2	28.9	5,142

¹ Number of women who have heard of AIDS

Table 10.4 indicates that the main source for condoms is the public sector (58 percent). The proportion of women who do not know a source for condoms is quite high (29 percent). This figure is higher for rural women than for urban women (31 versus 23 percent, respectively).

Lack of knowledge of a source for condoms is highest among women in the Central Highlands (57 percent), while women in the Red River Delta are least likely to not know a source for condoms (12 percent).

The proportion of respondents not knowing a source for condoms varies by education. For example, only 14 percent of women with completed higher secondary education do not know where to obtain condoms, compared with 58 percent of women with no education.

