



Treatment and Care for Everyone

People Living with HIV in the Philippines in the Time of COVID-19

Survey Results and Recommendations
27 March 2020

By Engr. Xavier Javines Bilon

Proposed citation:

UNDP and UNAIDS (2020). *Treatment and Care for Everyone: People Living with HIV in the Time of COVID-19 (27 March 2020 Report)*.

The author of this report is Xavier Javines Bilon.

The report is based on the survey conducted by UNDP and UNAIDS. The views expressed in this publications are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, including UNDP, donor agencies, or the UN Member States.

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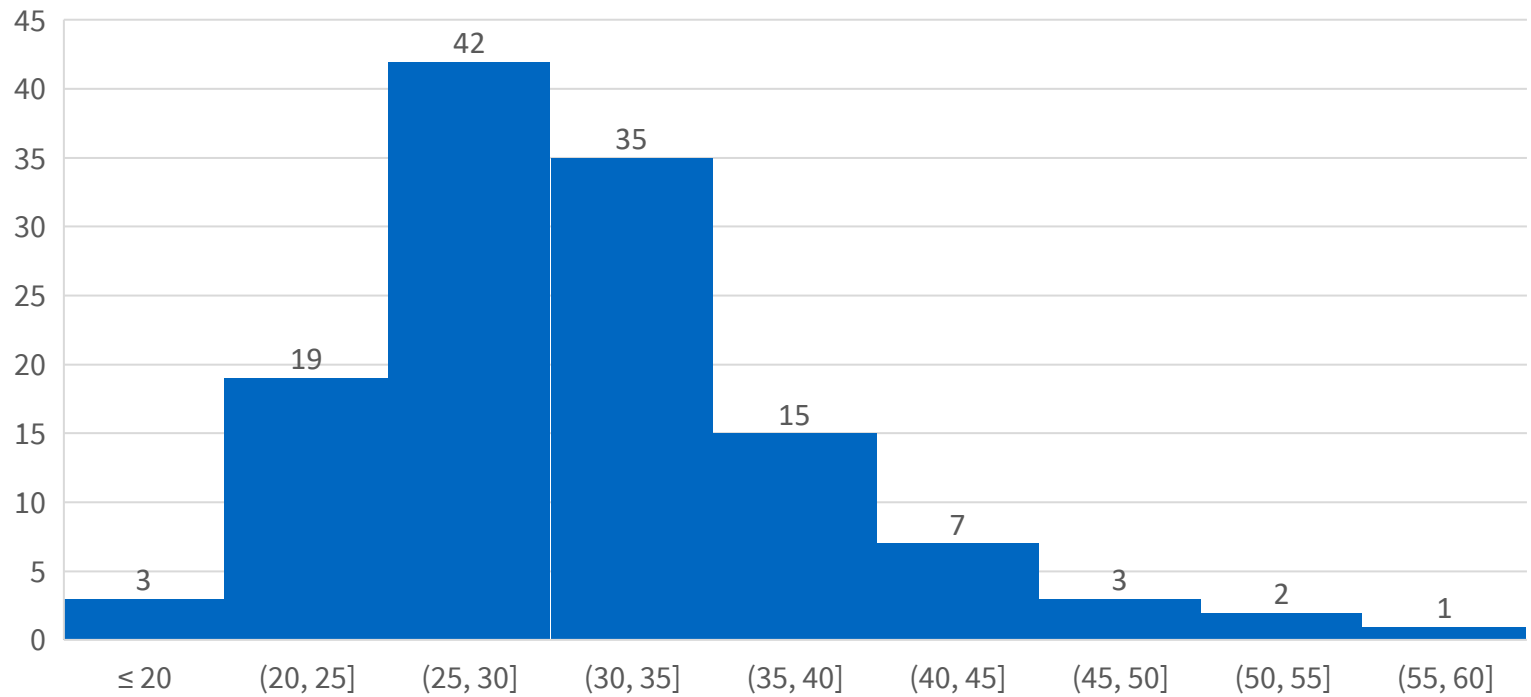
Background

as of 27 March 2020

- Across different social media platforms, the reach of the survey is estimated at 75,315 people.
- We received 127 responses, with 5 duplicates.
- After processing, we have a sample of 122 valid responses (n = 122).
- Average time to complete the survey is 8 minutes, 59 seconds.
- New results and recommendations are underlined or highlighted in light pink.

Age

Demographic Characteristics



Mean = 46.5

Minimum = 19

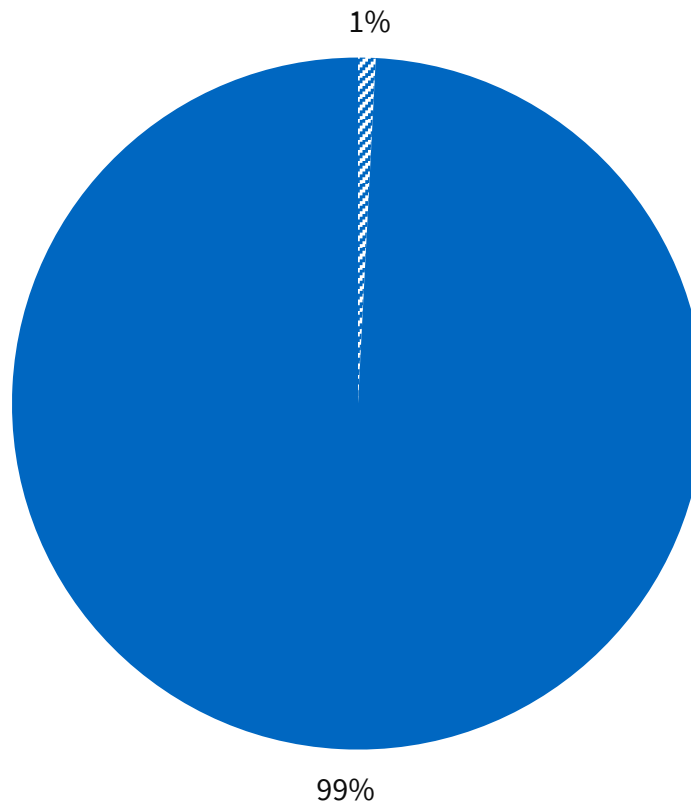
Median = 30.5

Maximum = 56

Assigned Sex at Birth

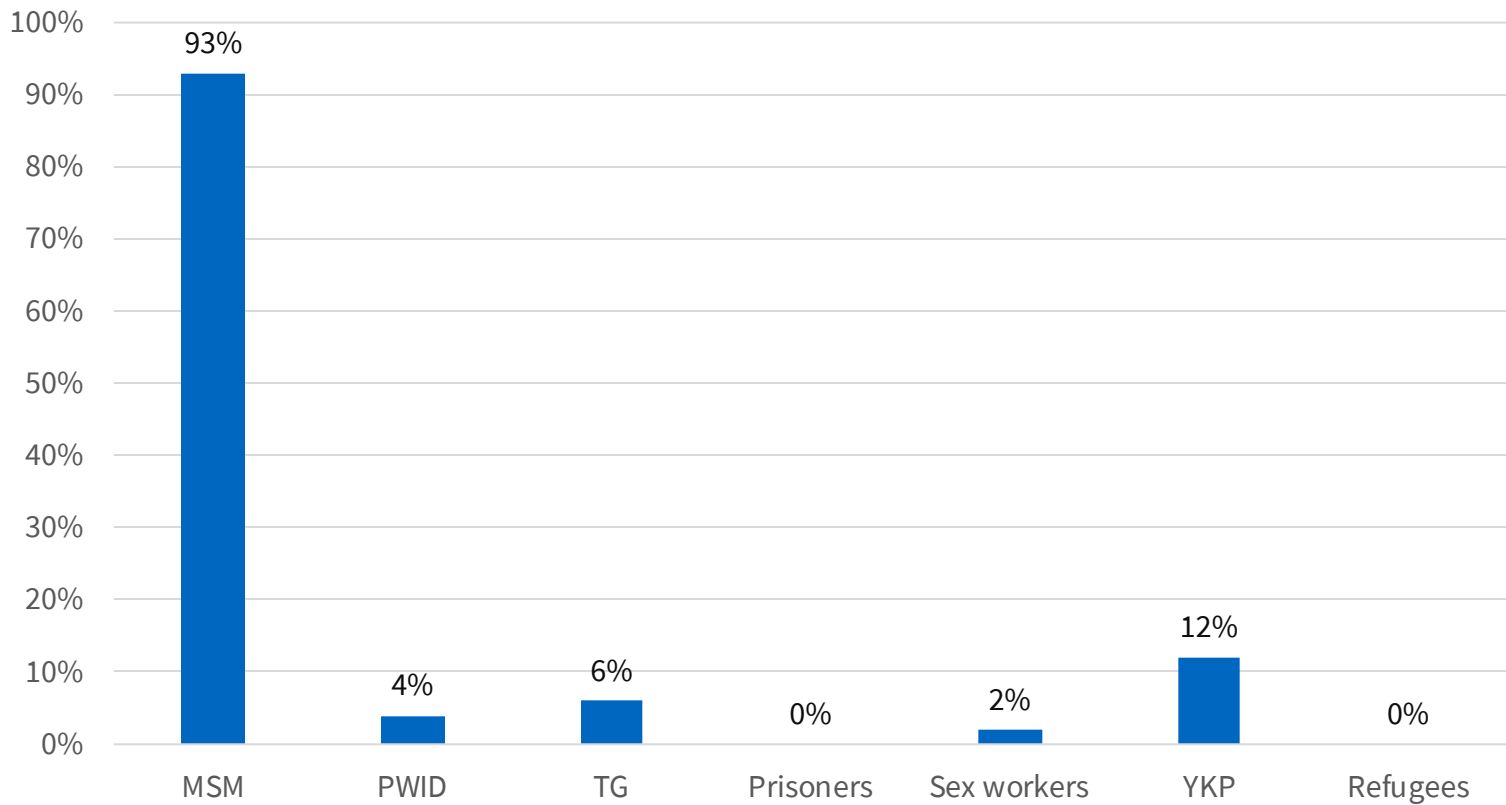
Demographic Characteristics

▨ Female
■ Male



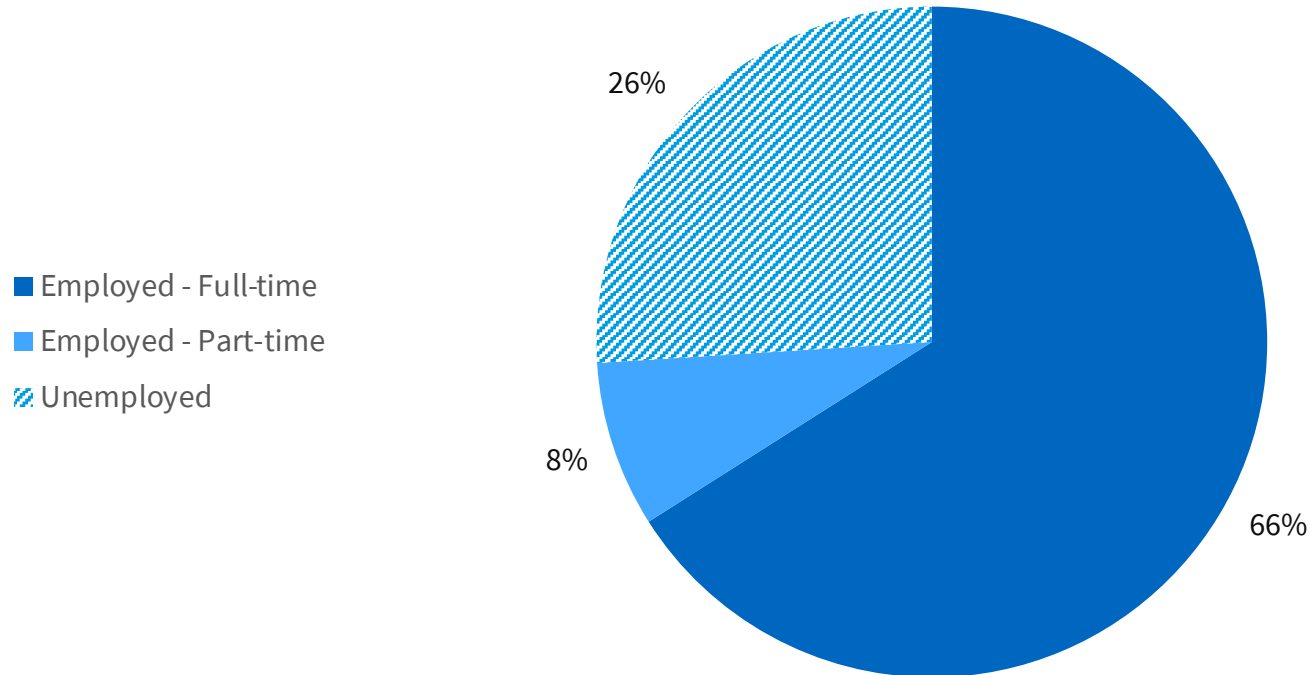
Membership to Key Populations

Demographic Characteristics



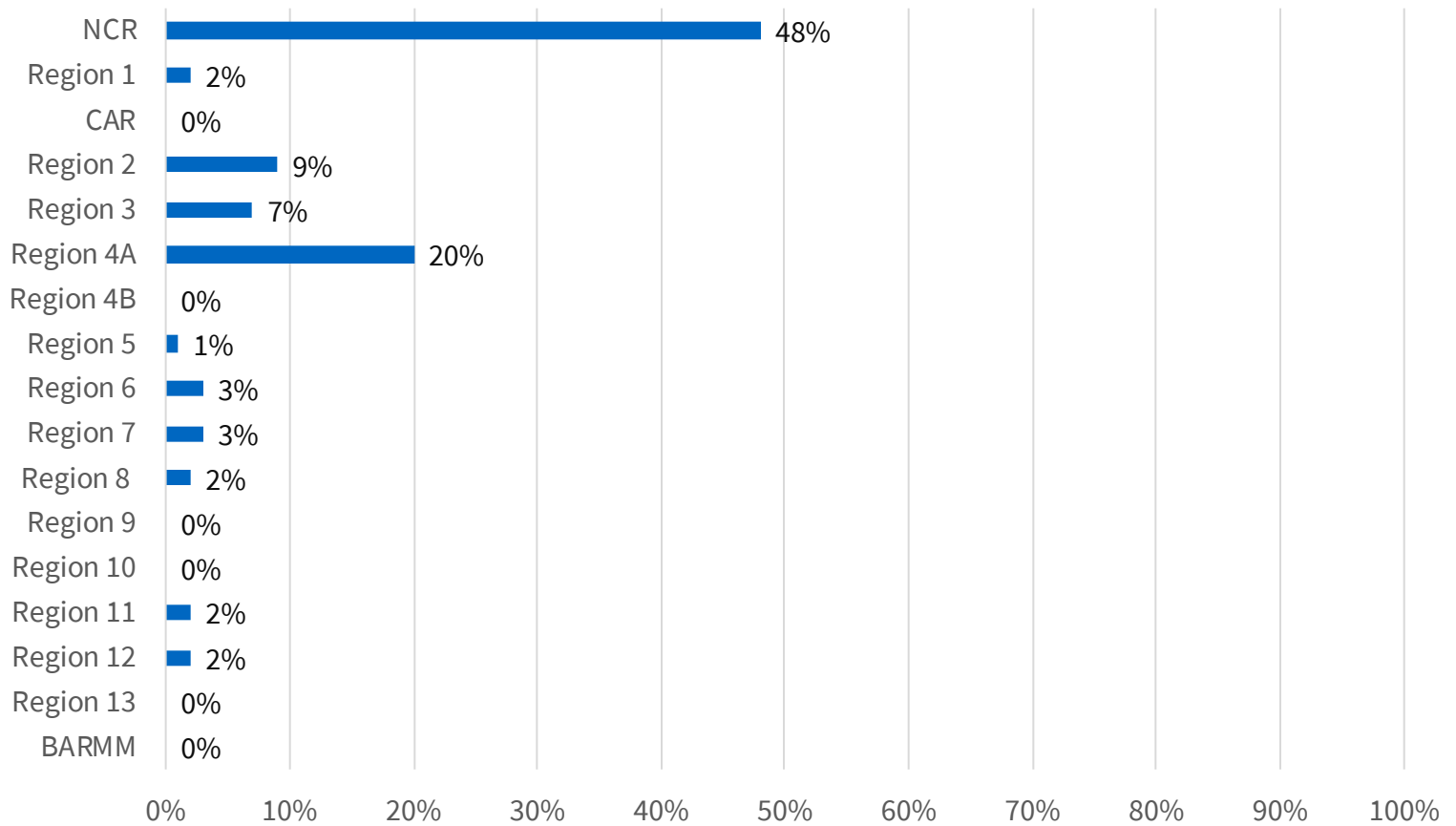
Employment Status

Demographic Characteristics



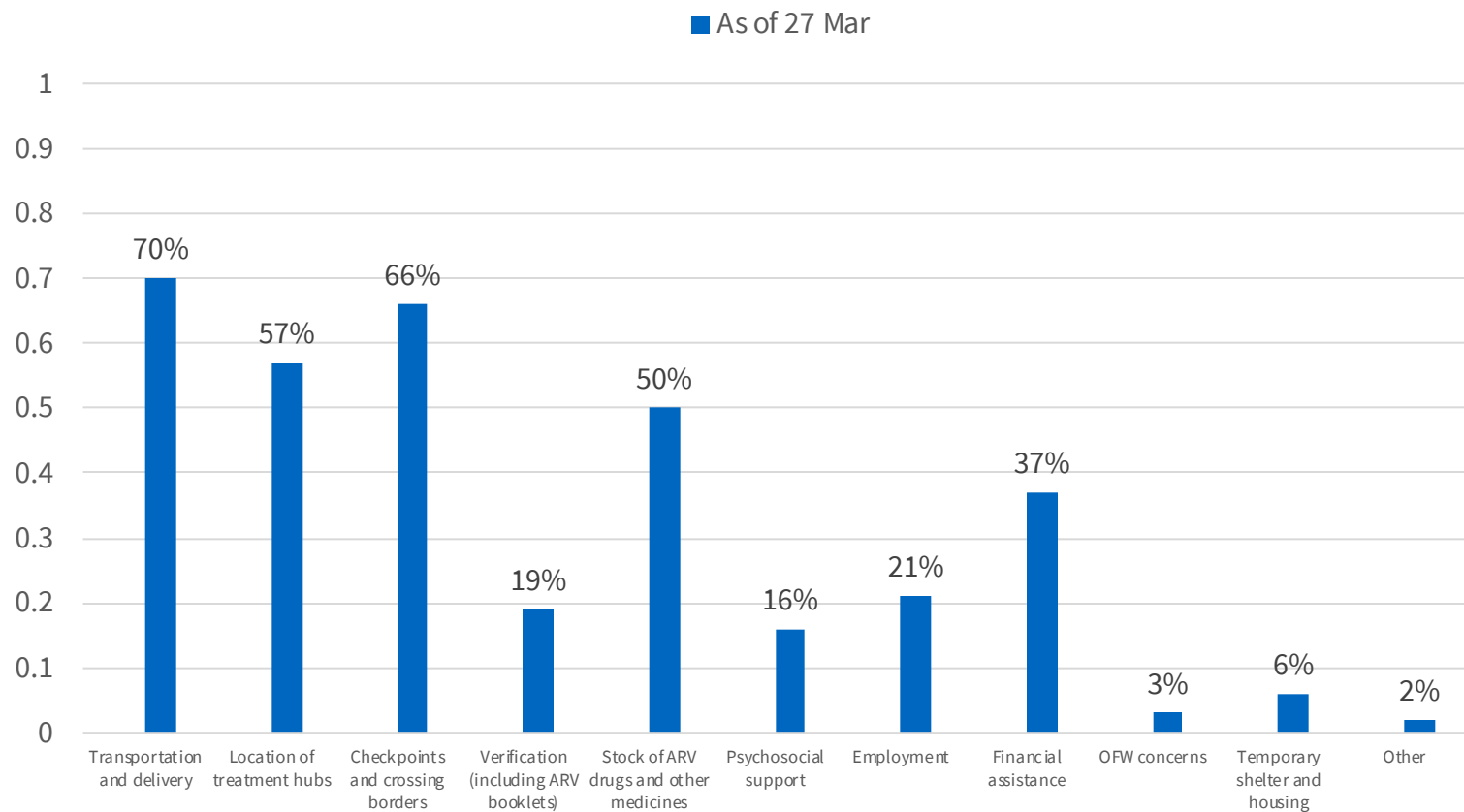
Region of Residence

Demographic Characteristics



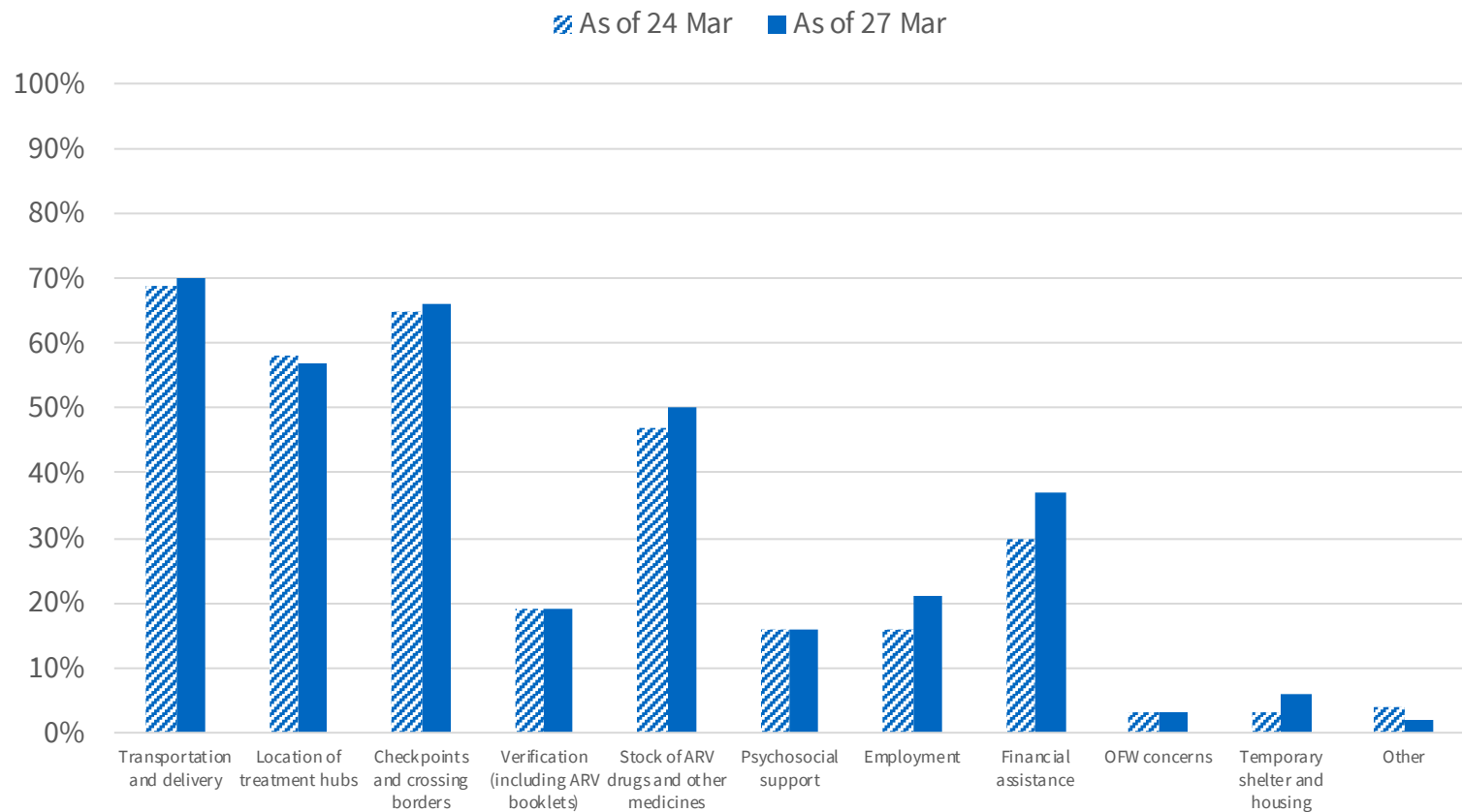
Type of Concern

Results



Type of Concern (Comparison)

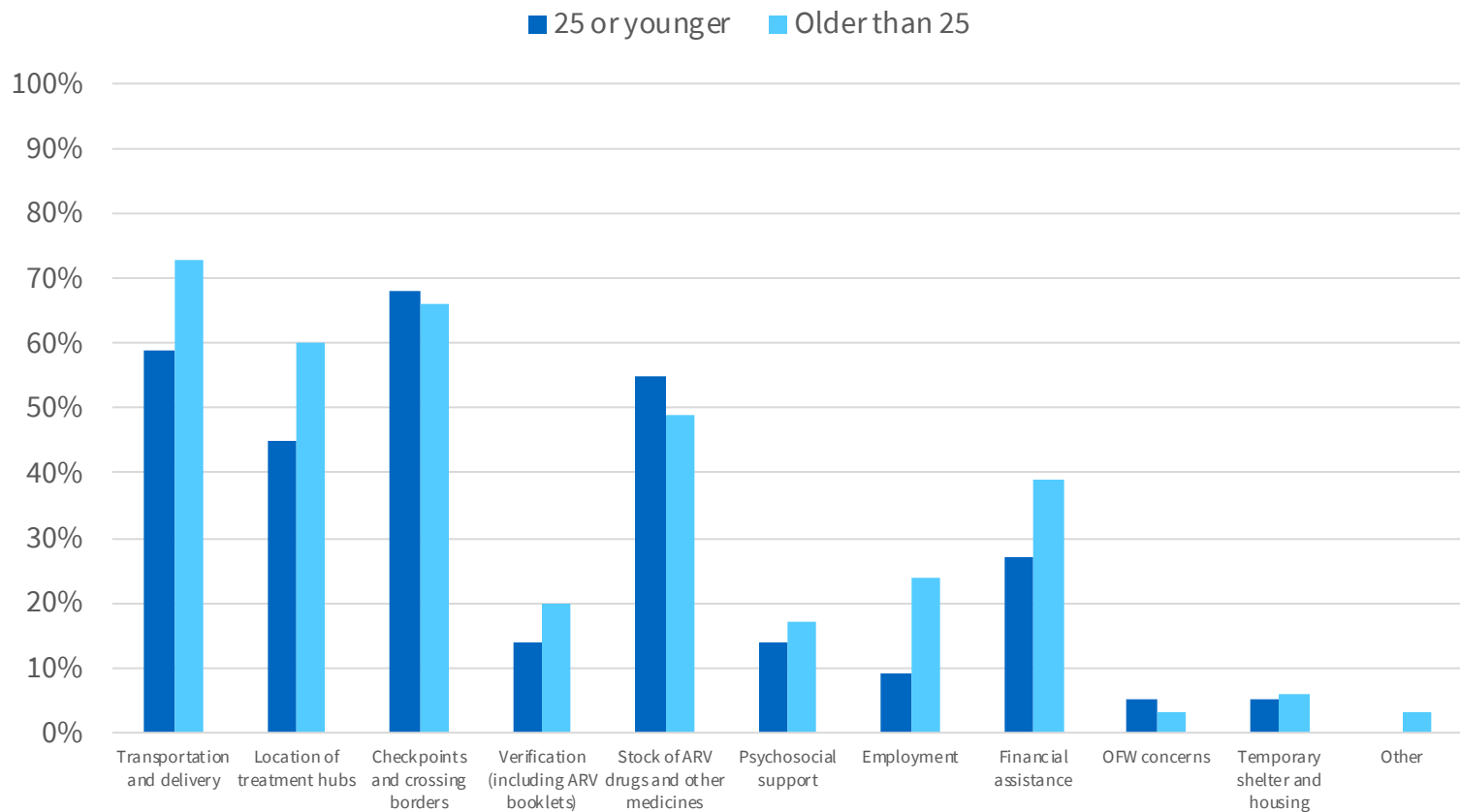
Results



Disaggregated: Age

Type of Concern

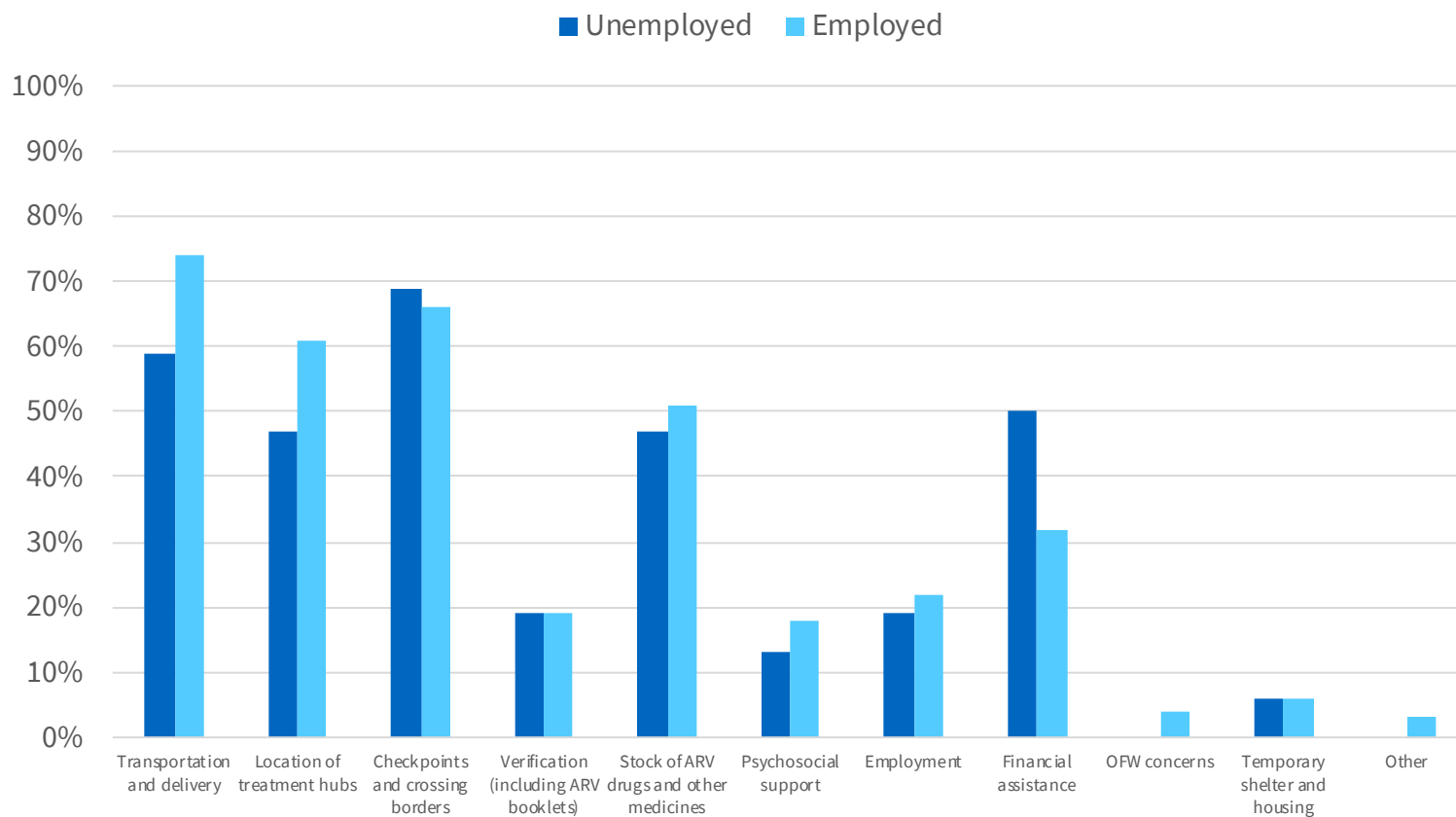
Results



Disaggregated: Employment Status

Type of Concern

Results



Issues with

Transportation & Delivery

Results

- No public transportation available within a city/municipality, across cities in Metro Manila, across provinces, and going in and out of Metro Manila, especially for those who need to go to an HIV facility for consultation.
- Although some people living with HIV reside in areas near an HIV facility, some have to go to a farther facility because of unavailability of their treatment in the nearest facility.

Issues with

Location of Treatment Hubs

Results

- For PLHIVs in Metro Manila, it is possible to use transportation services by LGUs and courier services (such as Angkas and Grab).

Residence of Client	Nearest HIV Facility	Average Distance in km	Average Distance in Hours by Walking
Mandaluyong	Mandaluyong City Social Hygiene Clinic	1.3	0.3
	LoveYourself - Anglo	2.3	0.5
Manila	Several treatment hubs in Manila		
Muntinlupa	Asian Hospital and Medical Center	3.2	0.7
	Research Institute for Tropical Medicine	3.9	0.8
<u>Navotas</u>	<u>Malabon City Social Hygiene Clinic</u>	<u>4.9</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Pasig	The Medical City (i-REACT Clinic)	6.1	1.3
	Pasig City Treatment Hub (PATH)	2.8	0.6
Quezon City	Several treatment hubs in Quezon City		

Issues with

Location of Treatment Hubs

Results

- For PLHIVs residing outside Metro Manila, the nearest HIV facility is too far. The average time it will take to walk from their residence to the nearest HIV facility is up to 10.7 hours.

Residence of Client	Nearest HIV Facility	Average Distance in km	Average Distance in Hours by Walking
Dasmariñas, Cavite	Dasmariñas City Health Office I (SHC)	4.7	0.9
Los Baños, Laguna	Calamba Doctors Hospital	14.6	3.0
<u>San Pablo, Laguna</u>	<u>San Pablo Social Hygiene Clinic</u>	<u>1.4</u>	<u>0.3</u>
Sta. Rosa, Laguna	Ospital ng Biñan	8.3	1.7
La Union	Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center	3.1	0.6
Bay, Laguna	San Pablo Social Hygiene Clinic	20.1	4.2
	Calamba Doctors Hospital	20.9	4.2
Taytay, Rizal	Cainta Reproductive Wellness - Social Hygiene Clinic	3.8	0.8

Issues with

Location of Treatment Hubs

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Residence of Client	Nearest HIV Facility	Average Distance in km	Average Distance in Hours by Walking
Sta. Maria, Bulacan	RE De Jesus Mulli-Specialty Clinic and Diagnostic Center (GreenClinic)	0.1	0.1
<u>Bocaue, Bulacan</u>	<u>RHU 1 Marilao Bulacan (Kanaryong Silungan)</u>	<u>6.3</u>	<u>1.0</u>
<u>Meycauayan, Bulacan</u>	<u>Meycauayan City Primary HIV Care Clinic (Home of Bamboo)</u>	<u>2.4</u>	<u>0.5</u>
<u>Moncada, Tarlac</u>	<u>Guimba Community Hospital (Balay Ti Namnama)</u>	<u>27.9</u>	<u>5.6</u>

Issues with

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Residence of Client	Nearest HIV Facility	Average Distance in km	Average Distance in Hours by Walking
Urdaneta City, Pangasinan	Region 1 Medical Center	27.9	5.7
Tuguegarao City, Cagayan	Cagayan Valley Medical Center	5.4	1.1
Cabagan, Isabela	Cagayan Valley Medical Center	52.7	10.7
Cauayan City, Isabela	Santiago City Health Office HIV/AIDS Action Team (SCHO-HAT)	41.1	8.4
Santiago City, Isabela	Santiago City Health Office HIV/AIDS Action Team (SCHO-HAT)	1.3	0.3
<u>Echague, Isabela</u>	<u>Santiago City Health Office HIV/AIDS Action Team</u>	<u>23.7</u>	<u>4.8</u>

Issues with

Location of Treatment Hubs

Results

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Residence of Client	Nearest HIV Facility	Average Distance in km	Average Distance in Hours by Walking
Antipolo City, Rizal	Antipolo Social Hygiene Clinic	9.7	2.2
	Marikina City Satellite Treatment Hub	3.4	0.7
	Cainta Reproductive Wellness - Social Hygiene Clinic	7.3	1.5
Calamba City, Laguna	Calamba Doctors Hospital	5.1	1.0
Lucena City, Quezon	Quezon Medical Center	1.8	0.4
Marilao, Bulacan	RHU 1 Marilao Bulacan (Kanaryong Silungan)	0.7	0.1
San Jose City, Nueva Ecija	Guimba Community Hospital (Balay Ti Namnama)	33.1	6.7
	Talavera General Hospital (Talavera's HOPE)	29.2	5.9

Issues with

Location of Treatment Hubs

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- For PLHIVs residing outside Metro Manila, the nearest HIV facility is too far. The average time it will take to walk from their residence to the nearest HIV facility is up to 10.7 hours.

Residence of Client	Nearest HIV Facility	Average Distance in km	Average Distance in Hours by Walking
Cebu City, Cebu	Cebu City Social Hygiene Clinic	3.3	0.7
	Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center	1.9	0.3
	Visayas Community Medical Center (Balay Malingkawasnon)	1.9	0.4
Moalboal, Cebu	Cebu Provincial Hospital - Carcar City	46.0	9.4
<u>Miagao, Iloilo</u>	<u>FPOP Iloilo</u>	<u>46.5</u>	<u>9.4</u>
<u>Bacolod City, Negros Occidental</u>	<u>Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Regional Hospital</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>0.3</u>

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Location of Treatment Hubs

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Residence of Client	Nearest HIV Facility	Average Distance in km	Average Distance in Hours by Walking
Carmen, Davao del Norte	Davao Regional Medical Center	19.3	3.9
<u>North Cotabato</u>	<u>Cotabato Regional and Medical Center</u>	<u>119.0</u>	<u>23.7</u>
<u>Surallah, South Cotabato</u>	<u>South Cotabato Provincial Hospital</u>	<u>26.4</u>	<u>5.3</u>
<u>Digos, Davao del Sur</u>	<u>General Santos City Social Hygiene Clinic</u>	<u>85.8</u>	<u>17.6</u>

Issues with

Checkpoints & Crossing Borders

Results

- Some PLHIVs have to go to a different city/municipality or province to go to the nearest HIV facility.

Residence of Client	Nearest HIV Facility	Average Distance in km	Average Distance in Hours by Walking
<u>Navotas</u>	<u>Malabon City Social Hygiene Clinic</u>	<u>4.9</u>	<u>1.0</u>
<u>Moncada, Tarlac</u>	<u>Guimba Community Hospital (Balay Ti Namnama)</u>	<u>27.9</u>	<u>5.6</u>
Los Baños, Laguna	Calamba Doctors Hospital	14.6	3.0
Sta. Rosa, Laguna	Ospital ng Biñan	8.3	1.7
Bay, Laguna	San Pablo Social Hygiene Clinic	20.1	4.2
	Calamba Doctors Hospital	20.9	4.2
Taytay, Rizal	Cainta Reproductive Wellness - Social Hygiene Clinic	3.8	0.8
Urdaneta City, Pangasinan	Region 1 Medical Center	27.9	5.7

Issues with

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Cauayan City, Isabela	Santiago City Health Office HIV/AIDS Action Team (SCHO-HAT)	41.1	8.4
<u>Echague, Isabela</u>	<u>Santiago City Health Office HIV/AIDS Action Team</u>	<u>23.7</u>	<u>4.8</u>
Antipolo City, Rizal	Antipolo Social Hygiene Clinic	9.7	2.2
	Marikina City Satellite Treatment Hub	3.4	0.7
	Cainta Reproductive Wellness - Social Hygiene Clinic	7.3	1.5

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	Talavera General Hospital (Talavera's HOPE)	29.2	5.9
Moalboal, Cebu	Cebu Provincial Hospital - Carcar City	46.0	9.4
<u>Miagao, Iloilo</u>	<u>FPOP Iloilo</u>	<u>46.5</u>	<u>9.4</u>
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<u>Digos, Davao del Sur</u>	<u>General Santos City Social Hygiene Clinic</u>	<u>85.8</u>	<u>17.6</u>

Issues with

Checkpoints & Crossing Borders

Results

- Some PLHIVs are not comfortable disclosing their HIV status at checkpoints to be allowed to enter the area where their treatment hub is.
- Some PLHIVs are worried that people securing the checkpoints will not understand their health condition. Some are worried they might be discriminated against when they disclose their HIV status at checkpoints.

Issues with

Verification

Results

- Some PLHIVs do not have ARV booklet or confirmatory result which are being asked from them by their employer or treatment hub. This makes it difficult for them to access ARV refill.

Issues with

Stock of ARV Drugs

Results

- No stock of Isoniazid Cotrimoxazole azitro and vitamins at Region 1 Medical Center
- No stock of Efavirenz at Las Piñas Social Hygiene Clinic.
- Some PLHIVs are reporting partial refills (being provided with one or two bottles, instead of the usual three bottles).
- Some PLHIVs are asking if stock of ARV drugs will be affected in case the period of enhanced community quarantine will be extended.

Issues with

Psychosocial Support

Results

- Some PLHIVs experience anxiety and depression, with no psychosocial support available.

Issues with

Employment

Results

- One PLHIV reported that their employer, who knows their HIV status, told them that they won't help them with their expenses if they get diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Some PLHIVs report that they do not have enough income. Some of them have jobs, but their companies employ a “no work, no pay” policy.

Issues with

Financial Assistance

Results

- Some PLHIVs experience problem in paying for their PhilHealth contribution, given the employment issues some of them face.
- A person living with HIV who has a disability and is currently unemployed is requesting for financial assistance for their medicines.
- Some PLHIVs require financial assistance for delivery of ARV refills, food, and other essential needs.

Other Concerns

Results

- Some PLHIVs want to know whether they are at a higher risk with COVID-19. Is HIV infection a pre-existing condition in relation to COVID-19? Is the recovery rate of PLHIVs the same with the general population?
- There are reports from PLHIVs that stock of certain ARV drugs in some treatment hubs is running low.
- Some PLHIVs are asking if it is possible to have their refill for two months, instead of one, when going to their treatment hub.
- Some PLHIVs who live alone and in places with no kitchens have no access to healthy food.
- PLHIVs who are OFWs are unsure where they can get treatment when they come home to the Philippines.
- One PLHIV reported that TMC i-REACT is not allowing them to have their ARV refill delivered through courier services.

Other Concerns

Results

- There is a need for proper and concrete treatment and care plans for PLHIVs in a time of crisis or medical emergency.
- Some PLHIVs are under quarantine with people whom they are not comfortable disclosing their HIV status with.
- Some PLHIVs are reporting lack of access to condoms during the period of enhanced community quarantine.

General Recommendations

- Ensure that local government units are able to extend their transportation services to people living with HIV going to an HIV facility for ARV refill.
- Provide additional transportation/delivery assistance to patients whose nearest HIV facility are outside their province or those that are too far from their residence, such as facilities that are around 10 km or 2 hours by walking from their residence.
- Coordinate with PNP and AFP to ensure that people living with HIV are allowed entry at checkpoints when going to an HIV facility for ARV refill. Additionally, DOH can provide guidelines to PNP and AFP to guarantee that privacy and rights of people living with HIV are respected at checkpoints.

General Recommendations

- Ensure that ARV medicines will be available across all HIV facilities despite the enhanced community quarantine being implemented.
- Extend accessible psychosocial support services to people living with HIV during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Coordinate with DSWD regarding assistance needed by people living with HIV in the time of COVID-19, such as food, medicines, other essential supplies, and financial assistance.
- Disseminate information on HIV and COVID-19, FAQs for people living with HIV and accessing treatment in the time of COVID-19, and how to protect one's mental health during community quarantine.
- Have an explicit and detailed advisory or guidance note from PhilHealth that allows utilization of OHAT package to cover ARV delivery costs, in line with DOH's advisory.

General Recommendations

- Develop and implement a more concrete treatment and care plan for PLHIVs during emergencies and crises, given the possibility of extended period of enhanced community quarantine.
- Ensure continued access to condoms for PLHIVs and key populations during the period of enhanced community quarantine.
- Assess the feasibility of providing more than 1-month worth of ARV medicines to PLHIVs upon their refill, to avoid frequent visit to HIV facilities or delivery, given the possibility of extended period of enhanced community quarantine.



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