

Topic: Reproductive Health
Session 301: Reproductive Health

Female social networks and change in household composition over time: the evidence from a longitudinal study in Malawi.

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Abstract

HIV/AIDS epidemic across SSAF has induced changes of family structure (size, gender and age composition). Direct and indirect effects of the AIDS diffusion are to be taken into account: the population changes induced by AIDS spreading are, indeed, both the results of demographic events (e.g. the increase of mortality level), and the consequences of people's behaviours (e.g. marriage and divorce dynamics). MDICP surveys gathered behavioural information from three distinct rural district, adopting a social-oriented approach. Beginning from those surveys, this paper has structured in two parts: ·Identification of female social networks and their changes over time (composition and density). ·Elaboration of an adequate model, using social network analysis, to explain relationships between female social networks and couple dissolution and formation dynamics. A better understanding of household structures enhances the knowledge of those families who are caring for persons living with AIDS, and it could be the basis to elaborate integrated prevention and action programs against HIV/AIDS, considering not only individual characteristics and household features, but also their larger social networks.