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Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices about HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) among Adolescents in the Republic of Georgia

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Georgia faces a steady increase in HIV incidence. Although Georgia is located in a geographic region considered having the world's fastest-growing epidemic, HIV prevention efforts targeting adolescents and young adults are limited. When new education programs begin, baseline surveys of knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) related to HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STI) are conducted. This information is utilized to guide educational programs. Two additional surveys are administered to program attendees to monitor changes in KAPs and further inform program development and short-term effectiveness.

We will present the results of a secondary quantitative data analysis of the three cross-sectional KAP surveys among 600 Georgian youth (ages 15-17 years). The youth were randomly selected from two districts in the Imereti Region, Georgia. The Imereti projects were implemented by John Snow International (JSI) in 2004 and 2005. The program used a multistage sampling based on established age and gender quota; the data are weighted to keep the findings representative of the population. The majority of the questionnaire was administered by an interviewer, with some sensitive questions being self-administered. We are currently waiting IRB approval to analyze the data. The statistical analysis will include descriptive analysis to assess the overall level of knowledge of HIV/STI and related risk factors, as well as bivariate and multivariate analysis to identify factors associated with the lack of HIV/STI awareness and risky behaviors among youth. We expect the findings will contribute to devising effective, affordable and culturally appropriate adolescent-specific prevention strategies in the country.