

# Young women at highest risk of HIV do not access government support programmes in Botswana: recruitment survey during the INSTRUCT cluster randomised controlled trial

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## Background

Many young women in Botswana are not able to implement choices to protect themselves against HIV; they are choice-disabled. The Inter-ministerial National Structural Intervention Trial (INSTRUCT) tests the impact on HIV rates in young women of interventions implemented in 5 randomly selected districts, including supporting young women to apply to government structural support programmes (for example to improve educational qualifications or to set up small enterprises).

## Methods

Local leaders and health workers helped to identify young women aged 15-29, not in school and not in work. Fieldworkers interviewed them, showed them video clips about available programmes, and invited them to attend workshops to build social and communication skills and meet local programme officers. We report here data collected from **2908 young women** during 2016 and 2017.



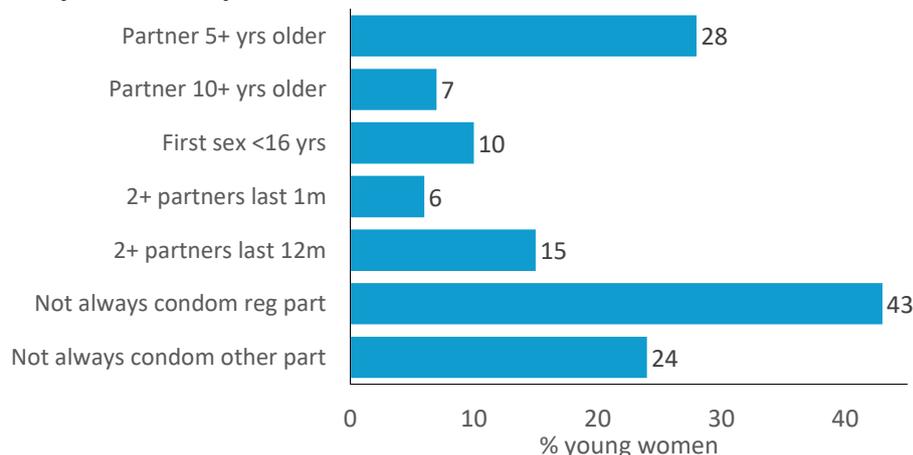
## Findings

### Many of these young women are choice-disabled

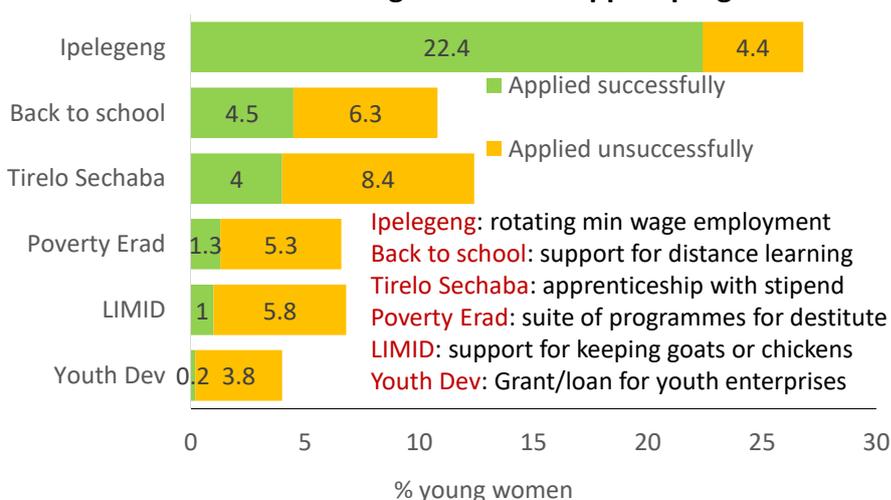
- 8% reported forced sex; 1/3 of them before age 16
- 63% have at last one child; 30% of those aged 15-20
- 35% did not have enough food in the last week
- 66% did not complete secondary education
- 40% have income disparity with partner
- 21% with a partner experienced IPV last 12m
- 88% have had sex; 63% have a current partner



### They have multiple HIV risk factors



### Few of them benefitted from government support programmes



## Conclusion and way forward

The high risk of gender violence and HIV among these choice disabled young women could be reduced by existing government structural support programmes. But most do not apply to the programmes and are seldom successful when they do apply. The programmes were not designed to reach young women or to reduce HIV.

Early results indicate that many young women who attend the INSTRUCT workshops subsequently do apply to programmes and have a higher success rate. But the programmes need to re-focus to improve access of young women. Young women and programme officers are currently exploring the problems young women face to access the programmes, and co-designing solutions.