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Arlette Simo Fotso, Connor G. Wright, Andrea Low

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How does HIV-related stigma correlate with HIV prevalence in African countries?

Distinct perspectives for HIV positive and negative individuals.



Arlette Simo-Fotso¹, Connor G Wright², Andrea Low²

¹ French Institute for Demographic Studies (INED), 9 Cr des Humanités, 93300 Aubervilliers, France
² ICAP at Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, New York, NY

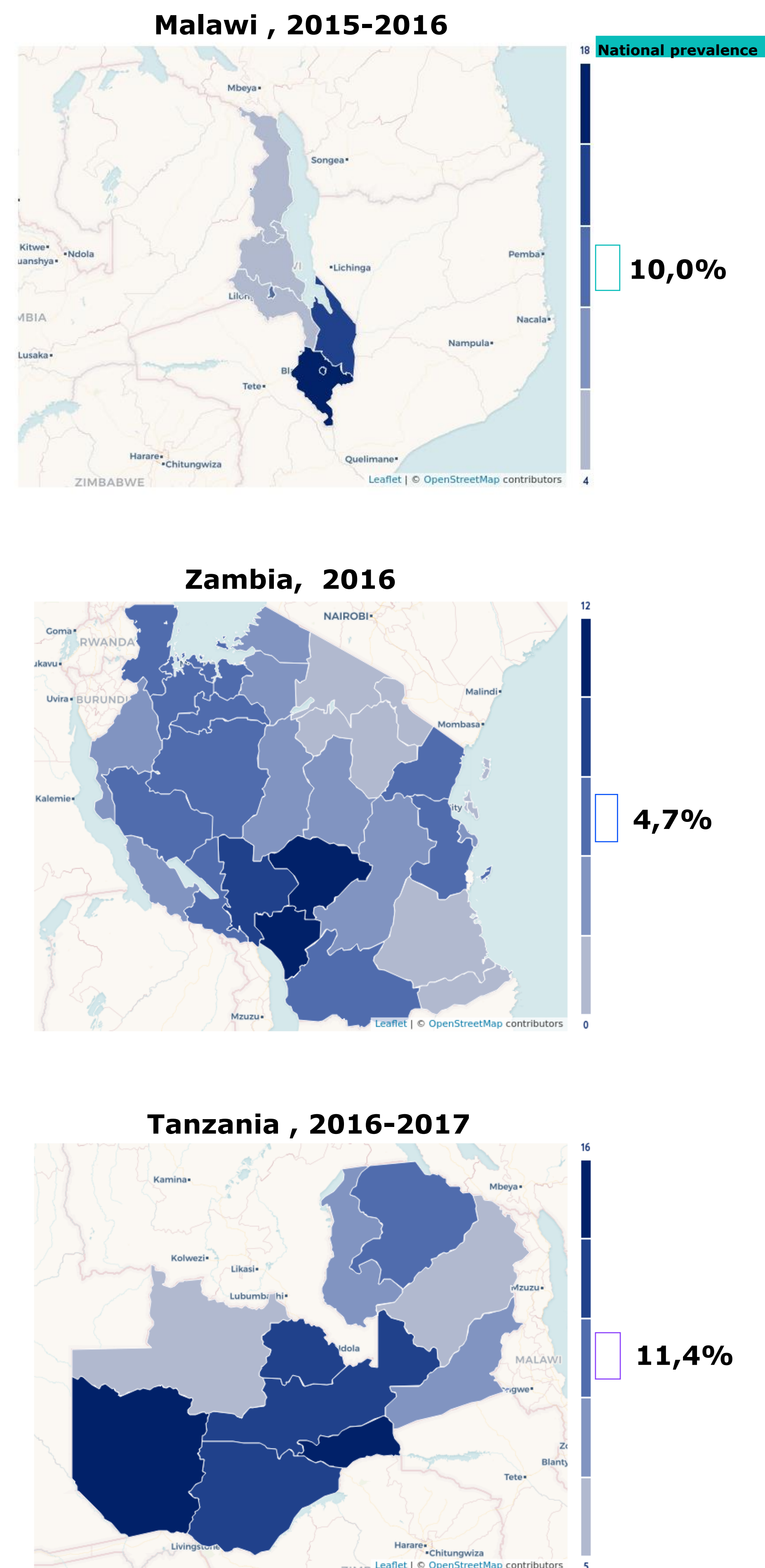
Contact: arlette.simo-fotso@ined.fr



Background & Aim

- Population-level research evaluating HIV-related stigma across national contexts with varied national HIV prevalence is scarce and **barely takes into account the heterogeneity of HIV burden within countries** (Figure 1).
- This study aims to **analyze how HIV-related stigma correlates with subnational HIV prevalence** in three African countries with varied HIV epidemics.
- It distinguishes between **the perspectives of self-reported HIV positive and negative individuals**

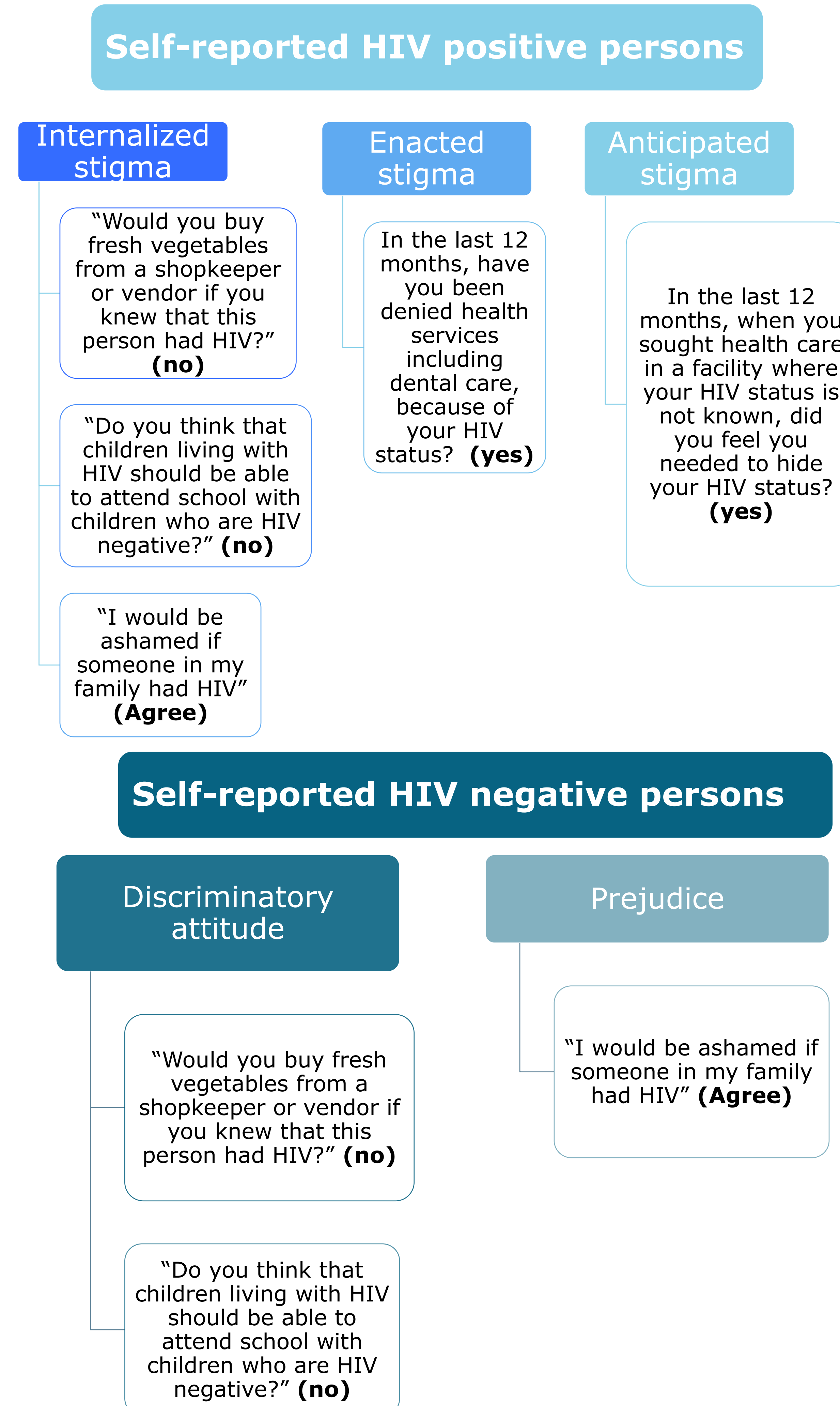
Figure 1: HIV sub-national prevalence among 15-49 years are heterogenous



Methods

- This paper used data from three nationally representative surveys, the Malawi, Zambia, and Tanzania **Population-based HIV Impact Assessments (PHIA)**, collected from **2015 to 2017**
- Logistic regression and multilevel models** were performed to assess the associations between HIV prevalence level and each HIV-related stigma measures among self-reported HIV-negative people and PLWH
- The current study focuses on the adult population **aged 15 to 49 years**
- Different aspects of HIV related stigma were assessed in this study following the guidelines provided by Earnshaw and Chaudoir (2009) (Figure 2)

Figure 2: Measurement of HIV-related stigma with PHIA surveys



Results

1) Results for HIV-negative individuals (Table 1)

- The results show that odds of expressing discriminatory attitude towards people living with HIV is significantly lower for HIV-negative individuals living in mid and high HIV prevalence regions compared to persons living in low HIV prevalence regions.
- Living in mid and high HIV prevalence regions was also associated with lower odds of expressing prejudice toward people living with HIV

Table 1: Logistic regression of HIV related stigma among HIV negative individuals

| | Discriminatory attitude | | Prejudice | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| | OR | (95% CI) | OR | (95% CI) |
| Subnational HIV prevalence: (Low) | | | | |
| Mid | 0.87** | (0.77-0.98) | 0.96 | (0.87-1.05) |
| High | 0.74*** | (0.65-0.84) | 0.83*** | (0.73-0.94) |
| Country: (Zambia) | | | | |
| Malawi | 0.34*** | (0.30-0.40) | 0.69*** | (0.61-0.79) |
| Tanzania | 0.83*** | (0.74-0.93) | 0.74*** | (0.66-0.84) |

2) Results for HIV-positive individuals (Table 2)

- People living with HIV living in high prevalence regions were more likely to express internalized stigma than those living in mid or low prevalence regions.
- No significant association was found between enacted and anticipated stigma and subnational HIV prevalence.

Table 2: Logistic regression of HIV related stigma among HIV positive individuals

| | Internalized stigma | | Enacted stigma | | Anticipated stigma | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| | OR | (95% CI) | OR | (95% CI) | OR | (95% CI) |
| Subnational HIV prevalence: (Low) | | | | | | |
| Mid | 0.83 | (0.51-1.35) | 1.86 | (0.60-5.79) | 1.24 | (0.75-2.05) |
| High | 1.51* | (0.96-2.37) | 1.32 | (0.45-3.89) | 1.11 | (0.71-1.74) |
| Country: (Zambia) | | | | | | |
| Malawi | 0.56*** | (0.37-0.83) | 0.87 | (0.45-1.68) | 0.52*** | (0.36-0.73) |
| Tanzania | 0.88 | (0.59-1.31) | 1.59 | (0.73-3.44) | 1.36 | (0.93-1.99) |

Conclusion

- The results indicate that **among HIV-negative individuals subnational HIV prevalence is negatively associated with self-reported discriminatory attitudes and prejudice towards people living with HIV**
- HIV prevalence was positively associated with self-reported internalized stigma among people living with HIV.**
- These results provide insight on how resources could be invested to reduce HIV related stigma among both PLWH and HIV-negative people.

References

- Earnshaw VA, Chaudoir SR. From conceptualizing to measuring HIV stigma: a review of HIV stigma mechanism measures. AIDS and behavior. 2009. PubMed Central PMCID: PMC4511707.
- ICAP at Columbia University. Population-based HIV Impact Assessment (PHIA) Data Use Manual [Internet]. New York, USA2021 [cited 2022 Nov 2]. Available from: <http://phia.icap.columbia.edu>.